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Radio, community and the public : Community radio in Western Australia

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**RADIO, COMMUNITY AND THE PUBLIC: COMMUNITY RADIO IN
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.**

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This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Media Studies at Edith Cowan University.

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Supervisor: Dr Brian Shoesmith.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines community radio in Western Australia and its relationship to "the public sphere".

The public sphere is that field in which private persons interact with other private persons and in so doing construct a "public". Public opinion is formed through this interaction in the public sphere. The media provide a major part of that interaction. Moreover, the media determine which voices are privileged within the communicative sphere.

Drawing from Jurgen Habermas I explore theories of the public sphere arguing that community radio constructs a new form of public sphere in contemporary culture.

I explore notions of democratic radio following the theories of Harold Innis to explore how elites have attempted to control communication. I argue that community radio provides a participatory medium which democratises the medium and allows for a more comprehensive formation of public opinion through the creation of informed rational discussion in the public sphere.

This thesis provides an overview of broadcasting and the public in Western Australia with background on the history and development of community radio. It examines the notion of the public as a site of struggle and examines how community radio seeks to challenge the status quo in Western Australian culture as well as seeking to facilitate ideas on the role of radio as a democratic medium.

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Date..... 30/11/97

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PREFACE

If you waste your time a talking to
The people who don't listen
Who do you think's going to hear?
And if you should die explaining how
The things that they complain about
Are things they could be changing,
Who do you think's going to care? (Kristofferson, 1966)

My involvement in the medium of community radio for the past thirteen years has cultivated my interest in the topic of democratic radio. During that time I have been privileged to meet many radio activists who are attempting to raise voices from the margins. The passion of the people I have met has inspired me and I have also shared with them some of the pain in attempting to speak to an audience that at times doesn't seem to care.

Community radio provides an alternative to mainstream radio broadcasting, national or commercial, in the Australian mediascape. From the activism of stations such as Brisbane based 4ZZZ and Melbourne based 3CR to the classical music of 2MBS and the easy listening Christianity of Perth's Sonshine radio, community broadcasters have brought a passion to broadcasting. Whether that passion is for a political ideology, environmental cause, musical style or any of the thousands of other voices raised in a multitude of languages and accents it represents the diversity and enthusiasms of the Australian public. The voices presented may not be as polished as those of the professionals, but they are the voices

of those who choose to speak rather than those who are paid to speak. Some community broadcasters will become professionals – it is increasingly common for the mainstream broadcasters to employ those who began their broadcasting on community stations, some will enjoy their fifteen minutes of local fame while others will maintain a commitment to community radio that will see them continue in the sector where the experience enriches both the presenter and the public. By raising their voices in the public sphere those broadcasters are challenging the status quo of the professional gatekeepers.

In their introduction to Harold Innis' *Bias of Communication* Paul Heyer and David Crowley state

... despite the ideology of a free press, this technology like others before it, developed restrictions on what was acceptable content, and fostered a particular kind of social control, which in turn led to a new series of monopolies of knowledge.

... what should be cultivated is an ongoing challenge to the extremes and inequities that result. (Heyer and Crowley, 1991, p. xx)

Historically new media (i.e. new technologies of communication) have allowed voices to challenge the dominant communication ideologies. Not only can the new rise to such a challenge but so too can the discarded or taken for granted. Citizen Band (CB) radio, for example, was once a widespread toy and status symbol that demonstrated a fetish for new technologies. Now long passed by as plaything and relegated primarily to the use of truck and long distance bus drivers, activists have used it to subvert dominant communication channels (Zilm, 1993). While former users have not dumped radio in as spectacular a manner, it has become

taken for granted as a medium of the status quo. Community radio challenges this taken-for-granted nature of the medium by inserting marginalised voices, such as RTR FM's programme *Sheer Queer* which provides a voice for Perth's gay and lesbian community or 6AR which provides a voice for Perth's Nyungah people, in the public sphere rather than the voice of the professional broadcaster (gatekeeper). This insertion creates a site of struggle. To actively seek to subvert the status quo can mean that community radio itself is marginalised.

To dismiss the voices of the non-professional as "amateur" (Williams, 1996) is to marginalise the medium for being outside the very mainstream it challenges. This leads to a crisis of legitimisation and a crisis of funding for the broadcaster. As community radio seeks to insert voices within the public sphere it aims to provide a balance between presenting an acceptable face to attract funding and audiences while seeking to challenge the very "common sense" notions those funding sources and potential audiences hold. A rather unfortunate trend from some community broadcasters in the nineties facing a funding crisis is to seek to maximise audiences in an attempt to attract sponsors to provide the necessary finance to continue. To maximise the audience the voices that challenge the status quo are silenced and replaced by easier listening music, a programming move considered necessary by those stations as many of the traditional funding sources, such as the universities, are not continuing to support the stations. This funding crisis has caused some community stations to adopt a more "commercial" style. While this may be seen as evidence of the praxis of community broadcasting abandoning the "alternative" philosophy on which it was founded, I would argue that the diversity of community radio through stations such as 6AR and 6EBA (Ethnic Broadcasting) and programmes such as RTR FM's *Sheer Queer*,

and *Understory*, an environmental activist program ensure that it does provide an alternative to the status quo of the commercial and public sectors.

This thesis will examine the role of community radio broadcasting as it seeks to supplement the commercial and public sectors of broadcasting through the provision of alternate programming and so build a more informed public with access to a more pluralistic range of information.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Harold Innis has said that all technologies have a contradictory potential (Drache, 1995). This thesis will examine the contradictory use of one technology, radio. I will argue that because of the way radio constructs an audience, mainstream radio is biased towards networks and ignores local communities and communities of interest and uses the medium to construct audiences from an imagined demographic or national perspective. Community radio is contradictory in that it constructs an audience from an imagined community of interest or from an imagined local community and so works against the spatial bias of networking and national communities.

Community radio is local and non-commercial. Unlike commercial radio that broadcasts to make money, community radio seeks to make money to broadcast. Voluntary labour predominantly runs community radio, there may be a skeleton staff but the majority of community broadcasters are unpaid workers. The primary reason for the existence of community radio is to provide entry to the public sphere for those who may normally be excluded. Just as some cities provide speaker's corners where a person may stand on a soapbox and talk to those within earshot who choose to listen, community radio provides a larger soapbox on which the speaker does not have to confine her or himself to those within earshot. Radio then extends the range of the speaker's voice expanding space for the speaker by allowing her/him to speak to a larger audience and compressing space for

the listener allowing her/him to be close enough to hear the speaker without physical proximity. The radio space is a form of virtual space.

It is publicity (comment in the public sphere) that forms, reinforces and directs public opinion. On the one hand we can argue that a fully informed public is better equipped to form public opinions while on the other hand it is to the advantage of various interest groups to control the voices heard in the public sphere. A truly participatory democracy requires a full range of voices to be raised in the public sphere. "Voice" in this context is an index.

A voice may be interpreted merely as the index of a human presence; or on another level as the index of a personality (a country bumpkin, seductive French women, and so on); or on yet a third level as the index of a programme, broadcasting institution or entire nation. It might be useful to see the latter two levels as examples of *extended signification*. (Crissell, 1994, p 44)

To these examples of extended signification I would add voice as an index of a community or micro-public sphere. The voices heard on radio should not be drawn exclusively from powerful, educated, rich or politically favoured sections of society or from other elites within a community. Private persons, sub-cultures and voices from the margins must be heard to ensure public opinion is not dominated by either special interest groups or the status quo.

When radio first became a mass medium in the 1920s it was seen as a marvel (Johnson, 1988) and through the thirties, forties and fifties demand for radio broadcasts and receivers increased (Jones, 1995). In 1935, for example, Australia had sixty-eight medium wave stations, only the United

States of America (USA) and Canada had more (Jones, 1995). Australian radio developed a dual nature that remained constant throughout this period with the ABC dominating the national market and commercial radio dominating local, urban and metropolitan markets. This structure remained fixed by government policy, until the growing demands for access to the airwaves resulted in the new sector of community radio in the nineteen seventies (or "public" radio as it was officially known before 1992).

Community radio provides access for voices from the margins. As local broadcasters, stations provide a balance for the spatially biased national and international networks that McLuhan (1964) considered to be inevitable given the nature of the medium as a space-biased or imperial medium. However such simple technological determinism does not allow for the contradictory potential of the technology that leads community broadcasters to seek to subvert the nature of the medium and challenge the growth of media imperialists by flipping the medium towards the local and the community. Paul Heyer and David Crowley argue,

In today's world, space-biased media in the form of modern electronic communications have assumed unparalleled influence. In the guise of giving greater access to and democratizing information, they can entrench modes of domination that in some way resemble what took place in previous epochs. It is the rich and powerful nations able to exploit this technology to its limits who, in the guise of making it available to others, extend their information empires. (Heyer and Crowley, 1991, p. xix)

Garnham (1987) has argued that the growth of the information empires in the form of multi-media conglomerates such as News Ltd and Thorn-EMI² exercise oligopolistic control of the channels of distribution and raise barriers for alternative channels of distribution seeking an audience. Community radio has resisted such domination and claimed control of the means of production in the cultural sphere. This action has enabled resistance to the controls of the multi-media conglomerates and provided access to another audience than those constructed by the multi-national, multi-media conglomerates.

Community radio resists the spatial bias of the multi-national and national media empires and, by presenting a local and alternative view, helps to provide a contradictory temporal bias to the medium.

The whole globe may be transmitting, and satellites may be moving these transmissions around with fantastic precision, but the most healthy form of radio broadcasting today is community intensive. It resists invasion. (Schafer 1993, p. 296)

Radio resists invasion when it engages with communities and the public rather than with a demographic. That engagement is of a pluralistic nature. Community radio is a democratic medium. The democratic nature of the sector relies upon the participatory nature of community broadcasting. It is only as a participatory medium at all levels that radio can claim to be a democratic medium.

²Thorn-EMI and News Ltd do not own radio licences in Australia. They are presented here in the example provided by Garnham to represent multi-national media conglomerates.

In this thesis I will examine the role of community radio through the theorisation of the public sphere. Engaging with Habermas, I argue that the public sphere was an invention of the Enlightenment. Through exploring the development of the public sphere I present community radio as a site of entry to the public sphere for marginalised voices in contemporary Western Australian culture. By probing the history of radio in Australia I show that community radio was born out of a demand for more access to the public sphere and a demand that policy makers reconstruct the airwaves as a public resource rather than a resource that capitalist interests could exploit for profit or elites could control for some imagined benefit. In short, the demands created what Habermas calls the 'polycentric public' (Habermas, 1987) in that the demands for access to the airwaves generated plurality rather than singularity in the voices heard on community radio.

The thesis also draws upon the work of Harold Innis, particularly his theories of centres and margins and monopolies of knowledge. I will present a case study of the closure of radio station 6UVS FM and re-emergence of RTR FM in 1991 as an example of a challenge to monopolies of knowledge and an example of how control of the means of production can be transferred to those who are seeking access to the airwaves. The University of Western Australia and Murdoch University held the licence for 6UVS FM. It was a decision of the Senate of the University of Western Australia that closed the station. This was at the same time as the university opened a new art gallery. I suggest that the decision to close the radio station and open an art gallery demonstrates an elite view of culture, a view also present in government policy. My study of the re-emergence of the station under the name RTR FM with the licence held by a co-operative company, Arts Radio Ltd, provides a concrete example of the

struggle for cultural meaning and access to the public sphere. I also examine Perth's newest community station, 6AR (Aboriginal Radio) as an instance of radio as a voice for minority expression. Models of community will be examined to help deconstruct the meaning of 'community'. I argue in this thesis that community radio presents a valid entry point for a vibrant public sphere in Western Australia.

In the field of media studies radio is an overlooked medium. Press, film and television attract much more analysis than radio does. Radio attracted wider academic attention when it was a new medium. As new media expand and technology brings developments to existing media radio continues to be a neglected medium. Although there has been an attempt to reclaim radio as an academic interest through the publication of a small number of books and the dedication of an issue of the journal *Continuum* (6:1, 1992), the number of academic discussions of radio remains small when compared to academic writings on other forms of mass media. This attests to the way that radio has become internalised as a cultural site. Radio no longer attracts the wide-spread sense of wonder it once did. When radio was new magazines dedicated to the medium reflected the listener's sense of wonder at the technology (Johnson 1988). Radio was even linked to the supernatural. Pseudo-science conceived of an "ether" out of which came both the disembodied voice of radio and the disembodied spirits of the dead (Walker, 1973, p. 34).

A glance at the radio magazines from the dawn of the broadcasting era demonstrates the way that radio was the epitome of the modern age, a role that it forfeited to television, video, pay T.V. and other new technological development. Radio as an area of academic or popular discourse has been

superseded, yet as the ratings figures demonstrate, radio still remains a popular medium in terms of audience size.

Today's radio reaches more people than its broadcasting sister, television, because of its accessibility and variety of programming. Practically every car (98%) has a radio and 75% of drivers listen as they drive. The average adult spends over twenty three hours per week listening to radio. (Baird, 1992, p. 10)

The relative lack of recent critical inquiry into radio demonstrates the way that radio has become a normalised part of life in modern cultures. The *Broadcasting Services Act* (1992) presented radio as a mature medium and provided for the deregulation of the medium. I explore the medium after the changes introduced to policy by that act.

My hypothesis is that an examination of community radio will show that the medium allows access from the margins to the centre in the public sphere. This thesis will also demonstrate that community radio resists the trend in media, identified by Hall (1970), towards the valorisation of the status quo. I will show that community radio demonstrates a site of struggle embedded in the public sphere.

Community radio presents itself as democratic media. To examine democratic media I consider the meaning of democracy and the ideologies surrounding the term, particularly as it relates to the construction of a public. The construction of community radio as a democratic medium leads to the question of how democratic the internal structures of community radio organisations are. Is there an elite who control the

direction of the medium or are decisions taken by the participants in a democratic manner?

I will examine these questions from the qualitative perspective of media studies.

Theoretical Framework.

Jensen and Rosengren (1990) identify five paradigms within the field of media studies

- Effects Research,
- Uses and Gratifications,
- Literary Criticism,
- Cultural Studies,
- Reception Analysis.

They identify effects research and uses and gratifications as coming from a social sciences or quantitative perspective and literary criticism and Cultural Studies as being part of the humanistic or qualitative tradition. Reception analysis, they assert, is cross-disciplinary in that it draws from both quantitative and qualitative theoretical perspectives.

The qualitative paradigm sees the media as operating as part of a wider cultural environment. This approach allows for a wide ranging study of media from the base and/or superstructure. I would argue that it is necessary to examine the media as an holistic entity with consideration for the cultural, policy, economic and social sites that the media operates in. The paradigm facilitates an examination of the sender and receiver of the

message. It enables exploration of the nexus of media policy, media producer and media audience.

As my study is concerned with the lived experience of radio and the public sphere, my research is conducted within a Cultural Studies framework. The Cultural Studies position posits the media within a socio-political setting.

Cultural studies has focused on the relations between social relations and meanings – or more exactly on the way social divisions are made meaningful.

... Cultural studies has been characterised by attention to the politics both of methods of study and academic disciplines. There has been a continuing criticism of the ideologies of objectivity and empiricism, and Cultural Studies makes explicit what other academic disciplines often leave implicit – that *the production of knowledge is always done either in the interests of those who hold power or of those who contest that hold* [emphasis added]. (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders and Fiske, 1983, p. 60-61)

Similarly I perceive radio as text produced either in the interests of those who hold power or those who contest those power relationships. Drawing from Hall (1970) I argue that mainstream radio does not challenge the status quo and so does not contest existing power relationships within Australian culture. Community radio does challenge the status quo and notions of "professionalism" or "expertise" and so contests existing power relationships. Through seeking to provide alternate views, marginal voices and challenging taken for granted or "common sense" ideologies community radio actively challenges the influence of mainstream media.

Method

My research encompasses a survey of the literature on the public sphere and an examination of Australian radio policy and radio praxis. Through use of the tools of textual analysis and participant observation I will examine radio in Western Australia. The subjects of my research are the community broadcasters, more specifically community radio located in Perth, Western Australia, in both the institutional sense of broadcasters and the individual sense of presenters/broadcasters.

The research includes a case study of the closure of community radio station 6UVS FM and the subsequent successful application by Arts Radio Ltd (ARL), broadcasting as RTR FM, to hold the licence. I hypothesise that this examination of the crisis of legitimisation in the case of 6UVS FM and the subsequent re-emergence of the station as RTR FM, reveals a difference in orientation by the respective licence holders, Universities Radio Ltd and Arts Radio Ltd towards notions of public culture. As it is these sites of public culture that I specifically wish to explore, the case study will provide information about these different sites and of the meaning of 'public' and 'culture'.

The second case study, Aboriginal Radio, will present an analysis of the station as an example of an intervention from the margins of a minority culture into the wider public sphere. This study will demonstrate the role of communication in constructing a community and the role of communication in disseminating information about that culture.

To research these aspects of my thesis I have employed the methods of research identified by Isaac and Michael (1981, p. 42) who have outlined

nine basic methods of research. While their book is primarily intended for students in the empirical social sciences their classifications provide a useful framework for describing research procedures. Using the models described by Isaac and Michael (1981, p. 42) I employ the following methods of investigation:

- **Case and Field.** The case study of 6UVS FM/RTR FM will provide a background to the wider theoretical considerations of my research. As Isaac and Michael (1981, p. 48) argue, "because [case studies] are intensive, they bring to light the important variables, processes, and interactions that deserve more extensive attention".

I will employ participant observation of community radio (in particular station RTR FM) drawing upon thirteen years of participation in radio station 6UVS/RTR FM and three years as a participant in radio station 6NR.

- **Historical.** The thesis will examine the historical development of community radio in Australia. The case studies previously described will also encompass historical perspectives.

Chapter 1 introduces the thesis and provides an overview of the dissertation.

In Chapter 2 I present a history of radio in Australia, in particular those events that contribute to the development of the community radio sector in Western Australia.

Chapter 3 examines notions of the public and the public sphere. Drawing from the work of Jurgen Habermas I examine how a public is constructed as well as looking at current debates within the field. Community radio in Australia was formerly known as Public Radio because of the sector's engagement with the public. Through allowing access and through the construction of a listening and participating public community radio claimed the title Public Radio.

In Chapter 4 I examine how an elite have controlled information presented in the public sphere in the name of professionalism or commercial profit. Community radio challenges that elite. I examine the complex theories of Canadian political economist Harold Innis and media theorist Marshall McLuhan. This examination reveals that Innis' theories unpack an involved relationship between technology and culture when compared with the technological determinism of McLuhan. Part of that relationship is the culture of media practitioners themselves. The media culture, according to Stuart Hall (1970), supports the status quo and drawing from a term which was commonly used by writers in the field of media studies in the 1960s, sets up a system of gatekeepers who determine what information is presented in the public sphere.

In Chapter 5 I review the theory of *lifeworld* (drawn from Habermas, 1987) and how the self is constructed. From the self I move on to exam notions of community and how the subject constructed through *lifeworld* negotiates with others to form communities in both time and space. I argue that communication in communities fulfils a role of binding the community in communion and spreading the public opinion of that community through evangelism to the wider public and that this in turn

leads to an inquiry into the nature of the public sphere, current theories and debates in the field.

In Chapter 6 I examine broadcasting and community, beginning with work done by Stuart Hoover on broadcasting by and for the political New Right. I then examine the sectors of commercial, public and community radio broadcasting arguing that of these sectors, community radio provides the best example of a public sphere in Western Australian radio. To support this argument I present case studies of two Western Australian community stations, RTRFM and 6AR. The case studies form Chapters 7 and 8 respectively and reveal different strategies for inserting marginal discourse into the wider public sphere.

The thesis can be seen to move from an historical account of Australian broadcasting which provides a cultural perspective for understanding the current Australian radio mediascape through a theoretical exploration of the ideology of community radio as a democratic and pluralistic medium to an examination of how community radio works in practice. The thesis ties together the historical, cultural and theoretical aspects of the nature of community radio in Western Australia.

Chapter 2

HISTORY OF RADIO IN AUSTRALIA

This chapter will present a brief history of those events in Australian radio that are relevant to the development of community radio in Western Australia. This history is necessarily an incomplete history of radio in Australia, it serves to illustrate the development of radio as a tool for democratic expression in Western Australia and provides a subjective history rather than an objective overview of the medium.

Radio in Australia began as an amateur activity in the nineteen-twenties. This activity was then appropriated by equipment manufacturers to sell their products. Subsequently the government intervened and introduced a system of licensed broadcasting. Even in those early years, however, the elitist and conservative nature of those who controlled the medium was made apparent when Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) (AWA), the company that had formed out of a merger of the local interests of Marconi and Telefunken, refused to supply equipment for trade union stations (Jones, 1995, p. 17). The introduction of a two-tiered broadcasting policy followed earlier unsuccessful attempts to provide a sealed set system where listeners could only listen to those stations to which they paid a fee. Broadcasters with A class licences raised revenue through a licence fee while those licensed as B class stations raised revenue from advertising. This two-tiered system eventually divided radio into government and commercial broadcasters when the conservative United Australia Party formed the Australian Broadcasting Commission in July 1932 to take over

operation of the A class stations from licence holder, the Australian Broadcasting Company. The Australian Broadcasting Company was formed as a commercial coalition of broadcasters operating the A class licences. However, the company found it commercially unviable to operate radio stations with only the income provided by fees. The Commonwealth Government foreshadowed the Commission in 1929 when it bought 4QG from the Queensland State Government and the Postmaster General expressed a desire for all the A class stations to be co-owned and networked by landline.

The Australian Broadcasting Commission was to operate with finance drawn from fees from a system of licensing listeners and from government grants. This arrangement, which clearly distinguished the public broadcaster from its commercial rivals, continued until 1975 when the Labor government abolished licence fees for listeners and increased the ABC's funding from the public purse, a move that was to reduce the ABC's independence and make the organisation more reliant upon the government of the day. At this time broadcasting was predominantly on the Amplitude Modulation (AM) band, although some experimental stations had operated on Frequency Modulation (FM) since the nineteen-forties and there were calls for the opening up of the FM band for radio services.

Ray Allsop had demonstrated stereophonic sound as long ago as 1938, and fruitlessly urged the case for FM as a member of the Control Board from 1953 to 1954. The ABC experimental stations, the first of which went to air in Melbourne in March 1947, were mere repeaters of programming from the ABC's two AM stations, and were scarcely the best showcase for the medium. (Jones, 1995, p. 65)

A ministerial decree in March 1961 closed the four ABC experimental FM stations because of fears that they would interfere with the technology of television, newly introduced to Australia (Jones, 1995, p. 84).

In the nineteen-seventies a third tier of radio broadcasting was introduced; that of the community (non-government, non-commercial) broadcasters. An early example of non-government, non-commercial broadcasting had occurred when the University of New South Wales had set up VL2UV, a station restricted in content provision, to provide educational broadcasting on 1 May 1961 (Thornley, 1995). A different style of non-government, non-commercial broadcasting had been attempted in Australia during the years of anti-Vietnam war protests of the late nineteen-sixties and early nineteen-seventies when small transmitters were set up to broadcast messages of opposition to Australian involvement in the Indo-Chinese conflict on pirate stations such as 3DR and 3PR (Moran, 1995, p.153 - 154).. These pirate stations came into existence to publicise an ideology oppositional to the policy of the Liberal (conservative) government of the day, an ideology that initially received little publicity through the government broadcaster, the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC), or the commercial stations.

Following the election of a Labor (liberal/democratic socialist) government in December 1972, Australia was one of the first countries to legislate to introduce a separate sector of non-government, non-commercial or "public" (now known as "community") broadcasting. In keeping with the expansive community spirit of the times, the Labor government was keen to establish a new national identity. Public radio was identified as playing a critical role in the this process which gave rise to a policy that lead to the decline of the influence of the BBC on

Australian radio. Government policy began to move away from an Eurocentric view of Australian cultural policy towards a new construction of what it meant to be "Australian". The increasing acceptance of Australian accents on radio (Potts, 1989, p. 12) (previously employed primarily for comic effect) was part of an increasing Australian nationalism as exemplified by the opposition to foreign military bases on Australian soil. This nationalist ideology led to an acceptance of "ordinary" Australian voices on radio, thus reducing the need for the cultural "experts" who had control of the airwaves. This shift in Australian culture helped pave the way for community radio with its corresponding privileging of ordinary voices and movement towards radio as a pluralistic and democratic medium (Potts, 1989). Limitations on broadcasts in languages other than English were lifted in 1972. Part of this move towards the construction of a non-British Australian identity came from agitation by lobby groups comprising such diverse membership as ethnic councils, audio and music buffs, academics and radicals who desired recognition of the medium of radio as a public resource and the right of the public to gain access to the airwaves. On 28 June 1972 a radio station, bearing the call sign 5UV, operated by the University of Adelaide began broadcasting, as an educational station on a frequency outside the normal range of stations on the AM band. The Broadcasting Control Board imposed strict restrictions on content similar to those imposed on VL2UV. The frequency and content restrictions ensured the station was located on the broadcasting margins, both on the frequency spectrum and as a broadcaster.

In 1974 the Federal government flagged the possibility of further radio stations in Australia when the Minister for the Media, Senator Douglas McClelland announced the possibility of 200 new AM licences. This statement opened the possibility of public access to the airwaves and a

break with the established two-tiered broadcasting system of commercial/government broadcasters. In March 1974 the report of an independent inquiry into FM broadcasting (known as *The McLean Report*), that had been commissioned by the Federal government recommended the re-establishment of FM radio services in Australia.

In the same month as the McLean Report was released lobby groups for public access to the airwaves were formed with the establishment of the Alternative Radio Association in Melbourne, Victoria and the Sydney Public Broadcasting Association in New South Wales.

Following the endorsement of the recommendations of the report by Cabinet in April 1974 the Department of Media held a national conference on public broadcasting in Sydney on July 3-4. This conference pre-empted another non-government conference on public broadcasting also held in Sydney on July 5-6 that year. The government, through the pre-emption of the non-government conference, was clearly attempting to set the agenda for the future of community broadcasting in Australia. Following the non-government conference the Public Broadcasting Association of Australia (PBAA) - now the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) - was formed.

On 23 September 1974 Cabinet invited The University of Adelaide and the Music Broadcasting Societies of Victoria and New South Wales to establish stations. The already established University of Adelaide station 5UV was moved to a more accessible spot on the AM dial and continued to provide educational talks. The MBS stations were to broadcast "fine music" on the FM band. Australian community broadcasting began by following the Reithian ideal of providing education and high culture, an

ideal from which community radio has not entirely shaken free. Australia's first legal community radio station, 2MBS FM, went to air on 15 December 1974 in Sydney, New South Wales. It was followed shortly afterwards by 3MBS FM in Melbourne, Victoria and 5UV in Adelaide, South Australia. The demand for, and interest in, community broadcasting was made evident when the Australian Broadcasting Control Board received eleven applications for a community licence in Melbourne on 10 April 1975 compared to five applicants for a Melbourne commercial licence on 14 May 1975 (Griffiths, 1976). Seeing the demand for such a public service the government decided to dispense licences to twelve tertiary educational institutions.

Western Australia's first, and Australia's ninth, public/community radio station began broadcasting on Saturday October 16 1976. 6NR (New Radio) began regular transmission from studios at the then West Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT) on 927 AM. Programming included educational programmes from WAIT and Murdoch University, ethnic broadcasting, Christian evangelism, children's stories and local issues. On 1 April 1977 Western Australia's first FM station and second public/community station, initially known as 6UWA FM, began broadcasting from the campus of the University of Western Australia (UWA) on 92.1 FM. The new station was hailed by the local press as a "radio revolution" (Rivalland, 1977). The first day of official broadcasting began with a programme of test music between noon and 2:00 p.m.. The official opening by the Chancellor of UWA was broadcast from 6:45 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.. From 7.00 p.m. until 9.00 p.m. the evening's programmes were drawn from Radio Nederland, the BBC and Radio Canada after which the Non Classical Music (NCM) programme *The Medieval Cowboy* was broadcast until the 11:00 p.m. close. The following week saw locally

produced programmes of "fine" music along with talks programmes imported mainly from the BBC, Radio Canada and Radio Nederland. The same technological enthusiasm and wonder as was shown at the arrival of radio in the twenties greeted the arrival of FM broadcasting. The 6UWA FM journal *FM* for example, described some broadcasting experiments in binaural sound using something called a "dummy head system".

In principle, the dummy head system is quite simple. It merely places microphones to receive sound analogously to sound about to enter the ear, with due regard to the directional frequency response of the ear and the acoustical influences of the skull and pinnae. The job of the headphones is to complete the propagation of sound into the ear. (*FM*, November, 1977, p. 3)

FM radio also provided a new marketing opportunity for radio manufacturers. Advertisements placed in *FM* (Appendix 1) extolled the virtues of the new technology. "The Golden Sound of FM is the sound of radio listening at its very best" (*FM*, November, 1977, p. 2). Such advertisements with such terms as "radio listening at its very best" capitalised on the elitist nature of FM listening and broadcasting as well as marvelling at the new technology.

6UWA FM was to change its name to 6UVS FM eighteen months later when Murdoch University joined UWA as a junior partner to form a company known as Universities Radio Limited to hold the licence. In March 1979, 6NEW, with the brief of serving the local community, was established in Newman in the north west of Western Australia.

The new community stations were licensed as either "restricted commercial" or "public broadcasters". The Control Board was not allowed

to directly licence community broadcasters and so the board licensed 3CR, Melbourne, Victoria in July 1976 and 2CT, Campbelltown, New South Wales in May 1978 as restricted commercial stations, restricted by low power and prohibited from carrying commercial advertising. The restricted commercial licence category was later abolished with the stations moving into the community sector. The initial policy on public broadcasters allowed the government to grant licenses on a three-tiered system:

- Special - music, religion, ethnic, print-handicapped and other special interest programming or community of interest broadcasting,
- Community - for local community broadcasting; and
- Educational.

In Western Australia both metropolitan community stations 6NR and 6UWA FM/6UVS FM broadcast under special licences while the rural 6NEW broadcast under a community licence. No Western Australian stations were ever granted educational licences and the educational category was later abandoned.

Other community stations in Western Australia have followed in the greater Perth metropolitan area with 101FM and Creative community radio (100FM) broadcasting to local communities in Rockingham and Fremantle respectively. Stations with spatially determined communities of interest are 6EBA FM presenting ethnic broadcasts, Sonshine FM broadcasting for the Christian community, Radio Print Handicapped with a brief to serve the print handicapped and 6AR, Aboriginal radio. The example of Radio Print Handicapped illustrates negotiation that occurs around the construction of an audience where an audience of non-English

speakers has used the station's reading of newspapers to develop their own pronunciation skills in Australian English language. In rural Western Australia no community licences have been issued since 6NEW started, however, aspirant broadcasters in York and Albany have been presenting regular test broadcasts as narrowcasters.

These legalised non-government, non-commercial broadcasters were known as public broadcasters until the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* brought a change of name to "community broadcasters" The *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* not only changed the name of the community tier but also expanded broadcasting from the three-tiered model to a six-tiered model that divides radio services into the following sectors.

- national broadcasting services
- commercial broadcasting services
- community broadcasting services
- subscription broadcasting services
- subscription narrowcasting services
- open narrowcasting services

At present no subscription services are being offered in Western Australia. Open narrowcasters include not only the aspirant community broadcasters, but also the Totalisator Agency Board, tourist radio and high schools.

The name change from public broadcasters to community broadcasters introduced by the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* came about because of a perceived need by the government to differentiate between the non-government "public broadcasters" – that claimed the term "public" by allowing public access – and the government "public broadcaster" (the

Australian Broadcasting Corporation) – who claimed the term “public” because it was funded from the public purse and broadcast in “the public interest”. So the term “public” has diverse meanings according to its use by different sectors claiming the term for themselves. Not only is the term public open to contest but there are indeed different publics as the diverse meanings claimed for the term suggest.

Chapter 3

THE PUBLIC

In this chapter I investigate precisely what is meant by the term public, and further, its relevance to broadcasting, and in particular to community broadcasting in Western Australia.

The Public Sphere

Drawing from Habermas (1989) I will define the public sphere to mean a site of informed, rational debate by citizens in a democratic forum where public opinion is formed.

Keane (1995) provides a genealogy of the concept of the public sphere, arguing for three phases in the development of the genealogy.

- 1) During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries the public sphere developed as a form of resistance to despotic rulers.
- 2) The notion of a public sphere in late capitalism resists the "power of organized capitalism, advertising agencies and other professional bodies bent on defining "public opinion" and making it speak in their favour".
- 3) The "Westminster School" (of Garnham *et al* located at the University of Westminster) links the public sphere to the institution of public service broadcasting and argues for such broadcasting as the "best guarantee for its

[public life] survival in the era of state-organized, consumer capitalism” (Keane, 1995, p. 2 - 3).

Habermas' theories of the public sphere, communicative action and crisis of legitimisation are represented in the second phase of Garnham's explication. Habermas' theorisation provides a framework for understanding the term the public sphere which he derived from a case study of the Eighteenth Century French bourgeois public sphere.

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1989) Habermas gives an historical and cultural overview of the public sphere and argues for the genealogy of the public sphere (later explicated by Keane (1995)). Habermas' inquiry into the nature of the public sphere provides the basis for much subsequent work on the concept exemplified by the Westminster School who argue that by drawing out the meanings of the term public and the implications of the public and private spheres, Habermas demonstrates that the public sphere is a site of struggle for access and meaning.

The ideology of the public sphere has a long history as a site of struggle (Habermas 1989, Sennett 1978). During the Middle Ages the public was the crown (Habermas 1989, p. 6). Those of no rank were private. This meaning continues in the use of the term private in the army to describe the soldier of no rank (Habermas 1989, p. 6). The institution of the British public school also reflects this meaning as a school for the elite. Echoes of this interpretation of public continue in current public discursive practices. In Britain and Australia the public service exists in service of the crown, the public service serves the Minister of the Crown, it does not exist to serve the populous. In republics such as the USA where the populous has taken

the role of the monarch the public service is more accountable to the people.

During the Eighteenth Century the boundaries of meaning of the term 'public' moved to encompass the bourgeois. The imagined communities of nations were constructed (Anderson, 1991) as the state extended its control of the margins. The period also saw the arrival of a critical press scrutinising activity in the public sphere. Publications such as the Eighteenth Century newspaper *The Public Advertiser* took the private sphere of communication into the public sphere. Habermas argues that accessible media is necessary in contemporary culture to ensure the airing of private opinion and thereby the formation of public opinion (Habermas, 1989). It is here that community radio serves as a medium for the construction of a public sphere.

The rise of the public sphere in the Eighteenth Century also meant the rise of public opinion through public discussion by private persons. Freedom of communication is important to the formation of public opinion and democracy constructs an illusion of public power without the provision of fully informed public opinion. The role of communication in the public sphere was of great importance in the development of the public sphere in Eighteenth Century France.

The free communication of ideas and opinions is one of the most precious rights of man. Everyone can therefore speak, write and print freely, with the proviso of responsibility for the misuse of this liberty in the cases determined by law. (*Declaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen*. August 26, 1788, cited in Habermas, 1989, p. 70)

As Habermas shows, the rise of the public sphere occurred as the public became less exclusive and more inclusive, bringing in those outside the court. It would follow that those groups that critics have identified as being excluded from the public sphere must be included in any present day public sphere to fulfil the promise of a participative democracy. Such a move follows the inclusive nature of the public sphere just as the Eighteenth Century public sphere shifted the boundaries outside the court, so contemporary public spheres shift the boundaries to include the voices of women, ethnic groups, youths and indigenous people. It is these voices that community radio seeks to provide with access to an inclusive public sphere.

For community radio to fulfil this promise of access the public sphere must move farther afield and seek to bring the margins towards the centre, the public space must be widened. To widen public space is to shrink it. As previous margins are brought closer to the centre the margins are expanded as new margins are developed and so public space grows. Temporal/spatial relationships are at play within this public space to collapse it as it grows larger. As spatial media carry the message over distance they draw the distant margins towards the centre. This in effect collapses distance, while increasing the public sphere by allowing for more informed rational public debate. Rather than lament the limitations of Habermas' theories it would seem to be more useful to see if they can be expanded to include those margins of gender and class. The criticisms of Habermas regarding the exclusion of women and other socio-political groups from his examination of the bourgeois public sphere do not negate the value of his thesis as Habermas has examined just one aspect of the public sphere. The voices of those excluded need to be valorised by the media in the formation of a modern public sphere and the valorisation of

these voices is the primary role of community radio, a role which it must continue to strive towards. That valorisation may not always be achieved, but an effective community sector must seek to provide such valorisation.

Holub describes the attractiveness of Habermas' concept of the public sphere for media practitioners seeking to include marginal voices;

.... its potential as a foundation for a critique of society based on democratic principles. The public sphere is a realm in which individuals gather to participate in open discussions. Potentially everyone has access to it; no one enters into discourse in the public sphere with an advantage over another. These generic qualities of the public sphere are of course subject to particularization based both on historical context and on the topics that are admitted for discussion. (Holub, 1991, p. 3)

Fraser also emphasised the democratic nature of the public sphere: "Something like Habermas' idea of the public sphere is indispensable to critical social theory and to democratic practice" (Fraser, 1992, p. 111).

My examination of public and community broadcasting is deeply influenced by Habermas' discussion of the public sphere. However, it is fair to point out that his view has not escaped criticism. Garnham (1992) provides a summary of such critiques demonstrating

- That he [Habermas] neglects the importance of the contemporaneous development of the plebeian public sphere alongside and in opposition to the bourgeois public sphere

- That he idealises the bourgeois public sphere for instance, the viciously competitive structure of the early print market [was] controlled not by freely discoursing intellectuals in search of public Enlightenment but by booty capitalists in search of quick profit.

- That by excluding the household and the economy from the public sphere, he systematically suppressed the question of democratic accountability within both gender relations and relations of production.

- That his rationalist model of public discourse leaves him unable to theorise a pluralist public sphere and it leads him to neglect the continuing need for compromise between bitterly divisive and irreconcilable political positions.

- That [Habermas] remains too dependant upon Adorno's model of the cultural industries with its elitist cultural tendencies, its exaggeration of the manipulative powers of the controllers of those industries, and its neglect of the possibilities of public-service models of state intervention within the informational sphere.

- That Habermas' model of communicative action, developed as the norm for public discourse, neglects, when faced by distorted communication, all those other forms of communicative action not directed towards consensus.

- That therefore he neglects both the rhetorical and playful aspects of communicative action, which leads to too sharp a distinction between information and entertainment. (Garnham, 1992, pp. 359 - 360)

While the Westminster School is critical of Habermas they do not dismiss him. On the contrary, the criticism is predicated on the notion that

Habermas made a vital contribution to our understanding of the term public sphere and that by criticising him they enhance his position. This is a view I concur with and my discussion of community radio follows both Habermas and the Westminster Schools' critique of his ideas.

By contrast the post-modern perspective is more dismissive of Habermas by arguing that the current mass media isolates the audience and by implication erases the public sphere (Poster, 1995). In short the public sphere ceases to exist as audiences may no longer participate in the public discourse in the same manner as earlier participants at a public meeting or event were. Ien Ang (1985) argues that the media audience are far from passive receivers of the message and that the audience is active in the creation of the meaning of the message (See also Morley 1980, 1986 and Fiske 1987). While the audience may be active in creating their own meaning such practices do not constitute communicative action in the public sphere. The meaning constructed by the audience in this way becomes an opinion according to Habermas (1989). Dialogue transforms private opinion into public opinion and the formation of public opinion constructs a public sphere. According to post-modern theory this is no longer possible.

It should be noted that Habermas has addressed many of the criticisms of his theorisation of the public sphere in his more recent introduction to a 1990 reissue of *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Habermas also engages in dialogue with some of his critics in the essay *Further Reflections on the Public Sphere* (1992). While Habermas provides an idealised account of the role of the citizen in a democracy his theorisation provides a useful

framework for the conceptualisation of a stratagem towards a participatory democratic media.

For the democratic practice of radio, the idea of the public is essential in that it provides a structure within which community broadcasters consider those voices excluded from such a public sphere. As lobby groups organise to raise their voices in the public sphere the voices of those not organised or who appear to be powerless are increasingly excluded. The voices of children, prisoners, ethnic and cultural minorities are excluded as they find themselves outside public discourse. The voices of teen-age joy riders, for instance, are not heard in the public sphere. The powerful discourse of victims rights and the crime prevention/retribution lobby groups ensure that the voices of those who are demonised by the discursive practices of the organised "anti-crime" lobby groups are disregarded. When a media organisation such as 6PR in Perth joins forces with the anti crime lobby the rhetoric becomes overwhelming. By seeking to privilege their discursive practices in the public sphere such groups exclude other voices.

Jay Rosen is an academic working in, and with, the press towards what he terms "public journalism". Drawing from the school of thought which began with Walter Lippman in the 1920s and has been carried forward over the years by most United States schools of journalism, Rosen argues that public journalism works "as an antidote to a certain kind of cynicism, that reduces journalists to tools of the status quo or captives of professional ideology" (Rosen, 1994, p. 377). In other words, public journalism operates in opposition to journalism's "unwitting bias" towards the status quo described by Stuart Hall (1970). Rosen argues that the media are actively involved in the construction of news and not

merely impartial observers (Rosen, 1996, p. 66). He suggests that the media should be more actively involved in encouraging an informed citizenship to become involved in a participatory public sphere. (Rosen, 1996, p. 49). Rosen argues that it is through the fostering of public debate that the media contributes to the public sphere. He describes this as "public politics".

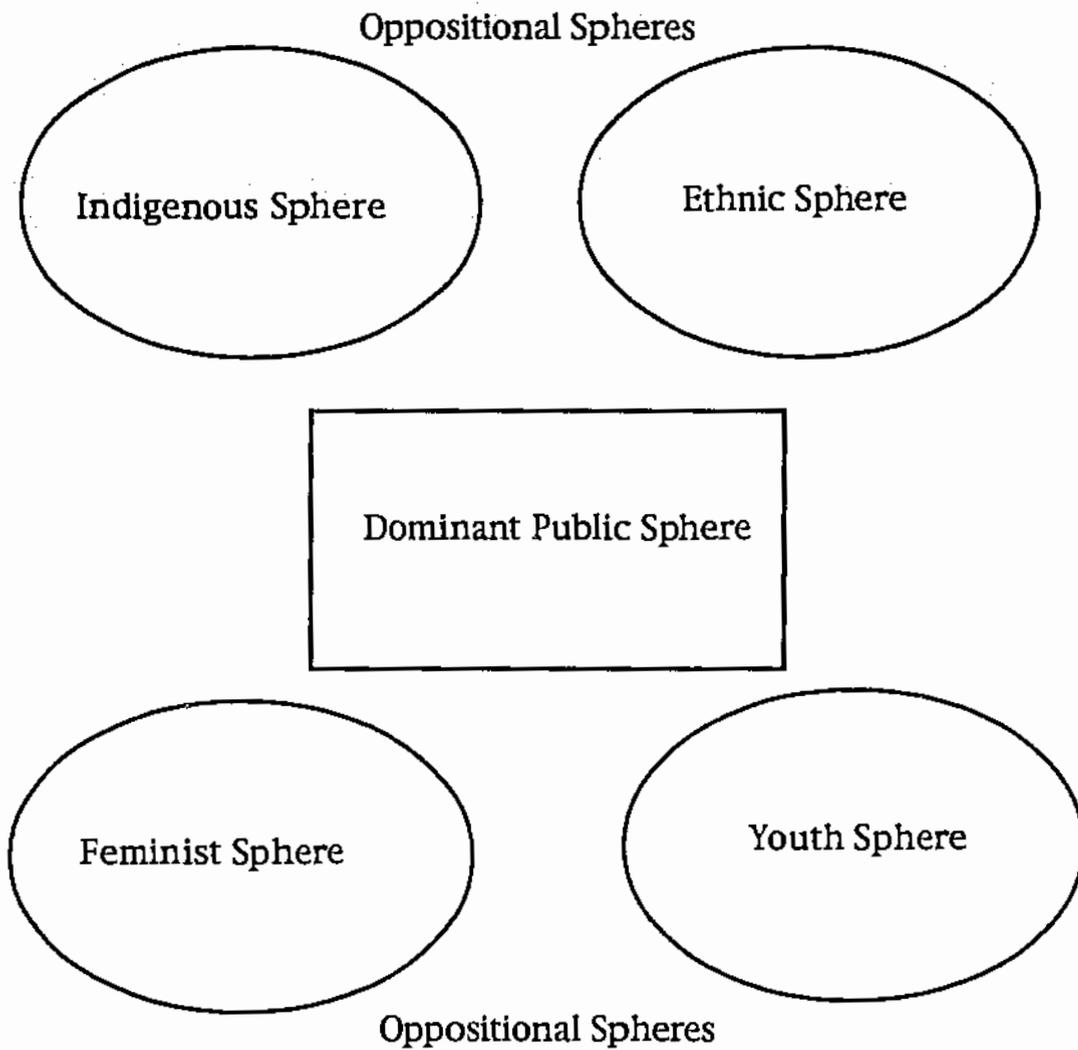
In public politics, the activity that is most visible is discussion and debate. Politics is seen as a continuing conversation, in which different rhetorics compete for influence, new debates arise and progress, emergent facts are given various interpretations, and arguments interact with events. (Rosen, 1992, p. 10)

Some media practitioners point to talkback radio, a form of radio that has become very popular in Australia and the USA, as a move towards a democratisation of the medium. Community stations in the USA pioneered talkback as a means of opening the airwaves to the public. Its appropriation by other stations appears to provide a democratic form of communication, however, in this form it is highly structured giving the host almost total power in shaping the discourse as argued by Higgins and Moss (1982). Higgins and Moss employed textual analysis to demonstrate the conservative nature of talkback radio. Their analysis of talkback radio demonstrated it to be conservative in nature, reinforcing stereotypes of marginalised communities and populist rather than a forum for engaging with issues and reasoned discussion. Rowe (1992) shows the control that the host exerts over the callers to a talkback show and argues that the active positions open to a talk radio listener are to not listen or tune out. "With the limited alternatives open to them, assertive listeners can only 'stay cool' by opting out" (Rowe 1992, p. 26) As Habermas put it, "the world

fashioned by the mass media is a public sphere in appearance only" (1989, p. 171).

Fraser (1990) addresses the question of how issues can be brought into the public sphere using the example of the issue of domestic violence, which she argues is seen to belong to the private sphere of the family. The construction of a distinction between the perceived binary opposites of the private/public spheres allows domestic violence to be constructed within the domain of the private and so ignored by the patriarchal public sphere. Fraser demonstrates how feminist discursive practices have raised the issue of domestic violence in the public sphere. Nuclear testing in the Pacific provides a similar example of the raising of issues through public discourse in Australian public life. Once the concern of the radical left in the 1980s the French tests on Moruroa Atoll in 1995/1996 have made this debate an issue of considerable concern within the wider public sphere.

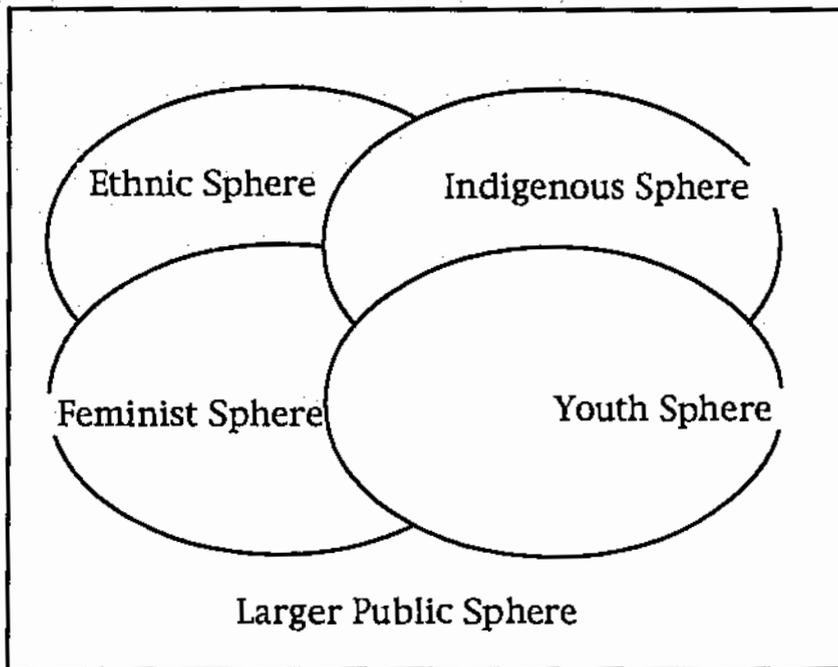
Fraser (1990) is also concerned with the issue of the wider public sphere pointing out that there are a number of public spheres. When she argues that the feminist public sphere has brought the discourse of domestic violence to the dominant public sphere she is suggesting that there is a dominant public sphere and resistant or oppositional public spheres. Fraser's model suggests that there is a certain internal unity amongst the diverse public spheres she postulates in that a person who is within the feminist public sphere will be solely within that sphere.



FRASER'S MODEL OF PUBLIC SPHERES

Figure 1

Calhoun (1990) disagrees with Fraser's model. He sees the discursive practices of resistance or opposition as part of the larger public sphere. Calhoun's model provides for the range of discursive practices found in the public sphere by not constructing an imagined unity within diverse discursive practices.



CALHOUN'S MODEL OF INTERACTING PUBLIC SPHERES

Participatory democratic media occupy that space where the spheres interact

Figure 2

Various discursive practices can influence a public person so that they can have connections with several of Fraser's groups and what she identifies as the dominant sphere and I would argue that Fraser's model is too simplistic. Calhoun's model more readily illustrates the interlocking nature of various discursive practices.

Current debate within the discourse of the public sphere arises around this question of one or multiple public spheres. Fraser's argument for different publics – for example, a feminist public – in opposition to a dominant public applies more precisely to communities. From the model of communication within a community that I developed earlier I would argue that Fraser's conception of competing publics may be seen as the

communion role of communication in action as the imagined unity is a binding within a community of what they believe they have in common and that rather than remaining in isolation communities projection of the discourse into the wider public sphere demonstrates the evangelistic role of communication.

Fraser's conception of publics or "contestation among a plurality of competing publics" (1992, p. 122) presents alternate publics in a style that I would argue is too regimented. It seeks a simple solution to a complex issue. As previously noted *lifeworlds* can form an overlapping matrix. It is difficult to pigeonhole private persons as they form a public sphere. Rather than Fraser's contesting publics I would argue in favour of the notion put forward by Calhoun (1992) and Garnham (1992), of a more pluralistic concept of the public sphere, one in which alternative ideas can contribute to dialogue. These diverse discursive practices then are part of a larger public and contribute rational debate in public sphere. To seek to remove a viewpoint from this larger public sphere as Fraser's model implies is to seek to stifle rational debate. As such it smacks of elitism. The removal implies that the public is not as enlightened as one's own understanding and incapable of being enlightened through rational discourse within the public sphere.

It has been argued by those who favour the idea of multiple public spheres that it may be useful to think of the public not as one homogenous grouping but as "publics". This issue can be resolved by thinking of those publics as communities such as those in the example of community discursive practices put forward by Carey (1992). The media can provide a channel for these inter-related communities to put forward their

discursive practices in the larger public sphere. Such a model would call for tolerance between the various publics.

To think of a multiplicity of public spheres we have to be careful to avoid the same trap that much of sub-cultural theory falls into – constructing an other whose lived experience lies within concrete boundaries and not allowing for slippage within an individual's personal lived experience.

Garnham (1992) attempts to give a temporal and spatial dimension to the public sphere. He argues that there needs to be a global public sphere because of the increase in global media and global issues – such as environmental crises like the depletion of the ozone layer and global warming. Tomlinson (1994) counters with the case for local public spheres as a place to begin tackling global concerns arguing that the issues need to be raised for consideration by publics within their own *lifeworld*.

Keane reconciles the debate between Garnham and Tomlinson by arguing for a three-tiered public sphere,

- 1) The "micro-public sphere". This is the public constructed around community, the coffee-house, town hall meeting or community of interest. As previously shown this sphere can be argued to be the struggle and discussion within a community.
- 2) The "meso-public sphere". This is the public constructed around the nation or state or local region.
- 3) The "macro-public sphere". This public is constructed on a global or larger region such as the Asia-Pacific, Australasia or globally (Keane, 1995, pp. 9-16).

These tiers are not separate tiers but parts of a whole and they combine to form the larger public sphere. By following this model we may view community radio as organised around the micro-public sphere in that it seeks to construct a public around a community of interest or a virtual town hall. However, it also seeks to bring that micro-public sphere to the meso-public sphere by bringing the community to the local region. National public broadcasters such as the ABC (excluding Australia Television [ATV], the international service) serve the meso-public sphere and global media organisations such as News Ltd and the BBC serve the macro-public sphere.

In his examination of the micro-public sphere of the Eighteenth Century Habermas (1989) valorised the medium of print. It was in the coffee houses that citizens could gather to read the news and engage in rational discourse. The print medium and a literate citizenship were essential to Habermas' public sphere. Where then does this leave twentieth century radio as a democratic tool? Broadcast media provides access to information, or at least some information, that takes it past the gatekeeper function, but can broadcast media provide a forum for engaging in rational discourse? I would argue that it can, and in the case of community radio does, provide an informed democratic forum for rational discourse and that the case studies in this thesis provides below.

Habermas (1989) is critical of mass media since the Eighteenth Century and dismisses it as deficient in promoting a rational informed democratic political discourse. By contrast Calhoun suggests that, "... there may be more room than Habermas realised for alternate democratic structures" (Calhoun, 1992, p. 33). Alternative media are necessary to serve those alternate structures. As an example of how the press may work against the

interest of democratic political discourse and rather than valorising the print medium and literacy Harvey Graff (1979) sees literacy as a disempowering tool. The print medium may stifle public discourse by setting the parameters of debate and discouraging discussion. Innis (1972) argues that literacy provided the necessary tool for colonisation; as literate spatially oriented imperial forces met oral temporal biased indigenous peoples the two cultures were bound to conflict due to the inability of either to appreciate or comprehend the bias of the other.

So the press that can serve democratic political discourse can also work against democratic discourse, but does modern broadcast technology provide information and access for a contemporary public sphere? McKenzie Wark argues that the multi-national corporate nature of contemporary broadcasters does not:

The public sphere is dead. Enter the anti public sphere. Privately funded, more in tune to a restricted range of corporate interests.... (Wark, 1995, p. 22)

Wark sees what he calls "the new right media" as a means of bypassing the scrutiny of the public sphere. With corporate dollars and right wing hyperbole behind them these players have used the new diversity in media technologies to reinforce their conservative message. The anti-public sphere has not been completely successful in "commandeering communications" (Wark, 1995, p. 23) in the Australian mediascape. However, the trends described by Wark should sound warning bells about moves towards economic rationalism and corporate sponsorship by the national broadcaster. Community broadcasters who posit themselves as a democratic public medium must also take care to avoid a "restricted range of corporate interests" as community broadcasting's traditional funding

sources become increasingly difficult to access. While corporate funding will become increasingly important to their financial survival, it is the restricted range and corporate alliance with the new right which community radio should avoid. While corporate funding will be sought, community radio must take care to remain independent. Universities have been part of that traditional funding source and as the economic rationalist praxis cuts funding to universities that traditional funding source can no longer support community radio to the same extent. Community radio was greatly encouraged during the Whitlam era when public monies were readily available. In the eighties and nineties economic rationalism has meant that all areas of community activity have been subjected to intense scrutiny which has created a crisis for some community broadcasters. This has had the effect of community radio generally seeking to reposition itself within the spectrum of Australian broadcasting..

The challenges to rational discussion in the public sphere are part of an attack on the Enlightenment project and its ideals of democratic participation by citizens and the toppling of elites. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), who's writings underpin a major part of Enlightenment philosophy, saw Enlightenment as an emergence for humanity from immaturity and a willingness to engage with the subjective use of one's own intellect in a communal forum of rational, informed discussion.

Enlightenment is man's [sic] emergence from his self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is man's inability to use one's own understanding without the guidance of another. This immaturity is self-incurred if its cause is not lack of understanding, but lack of resolution and courage to use it without the

guidance of another. The motto of Enlightenment is therefore: *Sapere aude!*
"Have courage to use your own understanding!" (Kant, 1970, p. 54)

Those who hold privileged positions within the public sphere assume the right to speak on behalf of the margins. Classic models of broadcasting such as the BBC and ABC have assumed such a position. Radio as a one-way means of communication (talkback notwithstanding which will be discussed later in this thesis) has tended to speak to the public rather than with the public. Such monopolies of knowledge concerned Kant during the Enlightenment when he put forward his concept of tutelage. "Tutelage is man's inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another" (Kant, 1957, p. 3). For Kant freedom of communication meant freedom from tutelage.

Certainly one may say 'Freedom to speak or write can be taken from us by a superior power, but never the freedom to think!'. But how much, and how correctly, would we think if we did not think as it were in common with others, with whom we mutually communicate! (Kant, 1949, p. 303)

Kant felt it necessary for a multiplicity of voices to be heard in public communication in order to achieve Enlightenment and freedom from tutelage. He promoted the right to communicate freely as an integral condition for an informed public sphere and hence an active and participatory democratic process.

Reflecting on Kant's writing, historian Peter Gay states;

His words implied that man [sic] was mature enough to find his own way without paternal authority; they urged man to understand his own nature and

the natural world by the methods of science. In short, they were a declaration of freedom. Kant and his fellow thinkers wanted men to shake off the hand of authority in politics and religion and think for themselves. (Gay, 1966, p. 11)

It is this shaking off of the authority of "experts" and empowerment to think for oneself that community radio seeks to foster.

The public sphere was an invention of the Enlightenment project. However, as I have shown, concepts of the public sphere have changed over time and these changes relate to changes in communication technology and practice. Community radio in Western Australia has contributed to the formation of a new public, one of a participatory, pluralistic nature. As the anti-public sphere, using the rhetoric of "free speech", seeks to attack that pluralism to which community broadcasters have contributed, the need for the advancing of information and a wide range of opinion needs to be reinforced. Pluralism is encouraged by community broadcasters through their challenge to elites who would control the flows and content of information. As community radio has allowed access to the public sphere for marginalised voices such as the environmental programme *Understory* or the gay and lesbian programme *Sheer Queer*, both broadcast on RTR FM. It has initiated a participatory, inclusive public sphere.

Chapter 4

RADIO, SPACE AND TIME.

This chapter examines how elites have controlled information and knowledge to construct, what Harold Innis (1972) has called, monopolies of knowledge. Drawing primarily upon the work of Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan and Stuart Hall I will demonstrate how information flows generally have been controlled and in particular how the radio "professionals" have dominated the medium to support the status quo. It is this elite professionalism that community radio confronts through the presentation of other voices. In doing so community radio approaches the medium in a more democratic style, providing a wider range of information and so transforming the construction of the public.

Innis

At first glance the link between Habermas, the public sphere and the theories of political economist Harold Innis are not readily apparent. However as Heyer and Crowley point out in their introduction to Innis' *Bias of Communication*, Innis' vision "constitutes a philosophical anthropology that has roots that can be traced back to eighteenth and nineteenth century social thought in the primitive/civilised dichotomy of Rousseau, Marx-Engels, Morgan, Maine, and a host of others" (1991, p. xvii).

Because of Innis' background in economics his work allows the media theorist using his ideas to reclaim what Marxist theory would term the study of the base. The Cultural Studies school has valorised the superstructure as it examines lived experience rather than the socio-political and economic underpinning's of such experience, relegating political economic theory to the periphery of much contemporary cultural theory; Harold Innis allows the study of media in a more holistic way.

Links between Innis theorisation of the oral tradition and Habermas' public sphere can also be seen in "the fact that it [Innis' work] emphasises dialogue and inhibits the emergence of monopolies of knowledge leading to overarching political authority, territorial expansion and the inequitable distribution of power and wealth" (Heyer and Crowley, 1991, p. xvii). Innis argues for "a consideration of the role of the oral tradition as a basis for a revival of effective discussion" (Innis, 1951, p. 32).

Habermas explores the spatial/temporal dimension of the public sphere explaining how communication on a spatial plane was crucial to the rise of the public sphere. His description of communication intended to carry business news being used to spread the public sphere spatially can be linked to Anderson's (1991) notion of "print capitalism" and Innis' (1972) positioning of communications as central to history.

Just as Habermas' public sphere relied on rational discussion amongst literate citizens Innis "saw in the relative balance of oral and literate modes a strengthening of democracy" (Heyer and Crowley, 1991, p. xxiii). I would also argue that the shift in culture from a temporal bias to a spatial bias was necessary for the rise of the public sphere. It was the spatially biased media of the press that allowed the spatially oriented communities

of interest to develop rather than the earlier temporally oriented communities. These communities of interest were held together by the journals and newspapers becoming what Marvin (1988) has termed textual communities. These textual or spatial communities were the communities that discussed the issues and formed public opinion. So it was a combination of spatial media and discussion (from an oral tradition) that allowed the rise of a public sphere and the concept of public opinion as argued by Habermas.

Innis (1951) has also demonstrated that the intervention of media of communication radically alters human understanding of time and space as changes in communication from an oral to print culture bring with them paradigm shifts in discursive practices. Changes in communication practices have been accompanied by changes in socio-political paradigms.

Before The Enlightenment knowledge in the European tradition was mediated by the priests and the nobility who controlled knowledge and the spread of knowledge. All knowledge was believed to come from God and all knowledge was dedicated to the glory of God. Truth could be measured against divine laws and revelations. Any knowledge that did not agree with the received truth of God was believed false. Knowledge was passed on through an oral tradition. Literacy was not widespread and it was through mnemonics that the oral tradition survived. Songs were part of the memory aids employed to spread knowledge. Truth was written and was not open to disagreement. The word was Logos – Truth, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Innis described this control of knowledge by elites as "monopolies of knowledge" (Innis, 1951). Modern monopolies of knowledge are found, not in a priestly class, but in a "professional" class

who act as gatekeepers and decide what holds news values. Community radio challenges those contemporary monopolies of knowledge in the media sphere.

Innis' theories of Space/Time and Centre/Margin are applicable to wide ranging issues in the field of post-colonial communication discursive practice. The various papers presented in *Continuum 7:1* (1993) reveal Innis' work to be multi-layered. These concepts of Space/Time and Centre/Margin are not merely simple binaries but signifiers of complex webs of dependency, ideology and discursive practice. These webs of interaction are supported by the ideologies constructed through the inherent bias of communication technologies. Innis (1951) argues that the introduction of the printing press encouraged the construction of empires as information could be sent from the centre of an empire to the margins without alteration compacting space between centres and margins. The introduction of radio technology in the nineteen-twenties compacted space between urban centres and rural margins. Leigh Edmonds (1994) has shown how the introduction of radio station 6WF in Western Australia compacted space between the city centre of Perth from where the station broadcast and the rural areas to which it broadcast.

Innis was concerned with the larger picture of communications. His vision took in not only what has become known as post-colonial theory but also communication in history. The importance of communication in the discourse of power can be demonstrated in the destruction of communications, for example railways, in times of war or the use of radio as a tool for colonisation in South East Asia by invading Japanese armies during the Second World War. This theory of the centrality of communications in history also relates to Innis' theory of margins and

centres. Both of Innis' arguments explore the spread of political power and support and complement Gramsci's (1971) theory of hegemony by exploring how power has been normalised in the centres through communication flows.

The history of communications is the basis of Innis' theories on time and space.

Perhaps the most frequently cited and ambitious of Innis' formulations regarding the history of communication and empire, are those pertaining to time and space. His contentions in this area are sweeping. Just as each civilisation has a dominant form of communication, it also has a resulting bias in cultural orientation toward either time or space. (Heyer, 1993, p. 100)

Through the shift from permanence in media of communication (cuneiform, Aboriginal cave art) to obsolescence in media as technologies become bygone products and temporal gives way to spatial we are witnessing an increasing dominance of space-biased media.

Unlike tradition-oriented, time-binding media, those biased toward space tend to be present and future directed, facilitating expansionist empires that subjugate marginal groups. Such empires are characterised by administration over great distances, complex political authority, the growth of secular institutions, and the creation of abstract science and technical knowledge. These features entailed *the loss of a sense of place, community, and gave rise to a whole new series of monopolies of knowledge.* [emphasis added] (Heyer, 1993, p. 101)

It is those "monopolies of knowledge" and the "loss of a sense of place, community" that participatory community media resists. Space-biased cultures have dominated time-biased cultures as Innis argues (Innis, 1951). The importance of communications in the establishment and maintenance of the discursive practices of power has been taken up and furthered by Benedict Anderson (1991) who demonstrates the effects of the arrival of space-biased culture on the time-biased Siamese culture. He describes how the "convention of modern maps was wholly foreign to them (the Siamese)" (Anderson, 1991, p. 172). Anderson argues that space-biased cultural hegemony commenced, "... where three fundamental conceptions, all of great antiquity, lost their axiomatic grip on men's minds" (Anderson, 1991, p. 36).

Anderson lists the three concepts as:

- The privileging of a particular script-language as offering privileged access to truth as the language itself was part of truth.
- The belief that society was naturally organised around monarchs who ruled by divine dispensation.
- A conception of temporality in which cosmology and history were indistinguishable (Anderson 1991, p. 36).

The arrival of the spatially biased communication technologies in Australia displaced the temporal discursive practices of traditional oral Aboriginal culture resulting in the disorientation of some Aborigines in the dominant Australian culture, a disorientation that illustrates the clash between time and space-biased cultures. Recent moves from Aboriginal people to rediscover and celebrate their traditional time-biased culture are evidence that resistance to the hegemony of dominant culture is active within an Innis oriented theoretical discourse.

In today's world, space-biased media in the form of modern electronic communications, have assumed unparalleled influence. In the guise of giving greater access to, and democratising information, they can entrench modes of communication that in some ways resemble what took place in previous epochs. It is the rich and powerful nations able to exploit this technology to its limits who, in the process of making it available to others, extend their information empires. (Heyer, 1993, p. 101)

As the *MacBride Report (International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, 1980)* to UNESCO on global communications argues, there is an imbalance in communication flows from developed countries, those countries where the media empires are centred, to developing countries and those countries on the margins of broadcast production. A fear of domination through communication technology causes concern for many governments in Asia and developing countries. Under a rhetoric of post-colonial nation building the hidden agenda is power. As space-biased media spread a USA cultural hegemony, some Asian governments respond to this "foreign devil" by banning certain media or attempting to restrict the receiving of foreign media to an elite. Similarly in Australia access is governed by legislation and wealth. Such satellite broadcasting on a multi-national basis does not allow for access to the airwaves by the public. While the policy for satellite broadcasting in Australia does include public access that access is largely controlled by the owners of the means of production, Optus and Foxtel. The Liberal/National Party coalition has committed money to the community broadcasting sector's use of satellite but the closure of Public Radio News (PRN) in October, 1996 demonstrates that such commitments are not

sufficient to ensure public access and so on both a global and national scale the monopolies of knowledge by the gatekeepers are enforced.

Harold Innis shows how the dominance of space-biased culture was created by communication technologies and "education" within a post-Enlightenment culture in which the ideology of the supremacy of European discursive practices was naturalised and so considered superior. "Natural science became effective as a means of emphasising the superiority of western civilization" (Innis 1993, p. 132). It must be remembered that colonialists saw their domination of other cultures as being for the benefit of the colonised, just as – to use a contemporary example – development media does. Development media spreads the discourse of science and democracy, concepts that stem from the internalisation of spatial media such as the printing press and broadcast media including radio, and thus contributes to the degradation of temporal culture (Innis 1993). The colonial discourse remains one of "civilising the savages". (Hall, 1992). Political colonists saw themselves as bringing order and enlightenment to the world. Missionaries, who worked in collaboration with the political colonists – on occasion political and religious colonists were the same people – saw themselves as bringing eternal salvation and truth to the heathen. This was a process of colonising the "other". Innis' example of natural science being used as tool of domination illustrates this point.

The superiority of the ideology of natural science has been naturalised into European discursive practices. Cartesian thought and rationality have dominated European ideology since the Enlightenment. It is significant that the sciences themselves are now questioning those naturalised discursive practices. For example, some writers from within the discourse of science see parallels between the scientific discourse of chaos theory and

other myths. Briggs and Peat (1990) examine the discourse of chaos theory in the light of the Chinese myth of the Yellow Emperor: adding a dose of *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, they demonstrate a way that chaos theory adds a new dimension to scientific discourse by moving away from notions of rationality and empirical truth. Whilst references to such texts would be hard to find in any empirical scientific treatise, chaos theory has challenged scientific notions of rationality and in doing so has enabled the physical scientist to enter the area of post-colonial discourse by inquiring on a macro rather than micro scale and bringing to the discourse of science some theorisation of centres and margins.

Centres and margins are an ever widening series of ripples (to use a spatial metaphor). Within a centre there are more margins and centres just as there are centres and margins within the margins. Sub cultural theory has been useful in unpacking some of the relationships between margins and centres. The examinations of sub cultures by Cultural Studies theorists such as Hebdige (1979) have helped in a discussion of the nature of dominance and resistance within cultural sites. Community radio provides an example of resistance to the cultural centre from the marginalised sub cultures as it presents a site of resistance to the dominant media paradigm that supports the status quo and legitimises "common sense" notions of power (Mickler, 1992).

Attallah (1993) examines the cultural policy of Innis' own country, Canada, and provides an example of resistance to the cultural centre from the cultural margins. According to Attallah the policy of bi-lingualism, rather than being a policy that has brought a new era of cultural equality to Canadian French speakers, has served to further marginalise the minority group. "After years of having their language despised, Quebeckers

suddenly found a premium attached to it from which they were excluded" (Attallah 1993, p. 212). In this instance the dominant space-biased culture is excluding a marginalised culture and constructing it as a "cultural community" on the basis of language as a marker of difference. The same forces are in action within the dominant Australian culture that seeks to include Aborigines as a cultural community within the wider grouping of cultural communities in a multi-cultural society. This policy effectively undermines the Aboriginal claims as the dispossessed inhabitants of the country who have become displaced by the hegemony of the European space-biased colonialism. By constructing a myth of "we are all Australians" the dominant culture continues to marginalise Aboriginal Australians. Australia, with its strong colonial links, has been dominated by space-biased culture. As Innis (1951) has shown it was the spatially biased technology of communication, in particular the rise of the printing press in Europe and a new broad based literacy, that permitted and furthered the rise of the colonising powers. In more recent times radio has been used as a colonising tool, not only in the obvious cases of the use of radio in Japanese armies of occupation in South East Asia as previously noted, or in the styles of BBC and Voice of America short wave radio, but also in the way that radio constructs an imagined audience along the boundaries of nation state. This use of radio will be further considered in the chapter on radio and the community.

McLuhan

The work of Harold Innis was very influential for the better known Canadian theorist Marshall McLuhan. Onufrijchuk (1993, p. 51), in a discussion of the relationship between the theories of McLuhan and Innis, describes McLuhan developing a "celebrity *persona*". Referring to

McLuhan's "social meta-communication" Onufrijchuk states, "Of course, the fact remains, that only traces of the celebrity *persona* have survived, oddly *litera scripta manet*, 'the written word remains'" (Onufrijchuk, 1993, p. 51). Onufrijchuk's argument demonstrates how the print medium has become the temporal medium preserving knowledge over time, while electronic media such as radio have developed a spatial bias spreading their message over distance rather than time. The contradictory nature of community radio means that the medium can be used to preserve the oral traditions passed on over time. While radio has spread communication spatially, compacting centres and margins (Edmonds 1994) and so demonstrated a spatial bias it also has the ability to preserve oral culture as shown by Aboriginal radio station 6AR who broadcast traditional Nyungah stories.

Even media commentator turned media personality Marshall McLuhan, who played a centre stage role in the new broadcast media is remembered for the written work rather than the oral media. The spatially biased literate media that replaced the time biased oral media has flipped to become the time biased authoritative media as opposed to the spatially biased electronic oral media. While literacy allowed the transmission of messages through space replacing the mnemonic tradition of earlier oral cultural practices, books are now the storage mechanism for the past in addition to their role of allowing messages to be spatially transmitted. Electronic media however have largely superseded the print media in spatial communication. Radio brings the listener an immediacy in news whilst newspapers are a source of background information. Eisenstein (1991) has researched the importance of literacy in history arguing that technologies of communication have changed discursive practices many times throughout history so that it is impossible for us, living in a literate.

era, to conceive of the cultural space occupied by oral people (Eisenstein, 1991). Eisenstein argues,

One cannot treat printing as just one among many elements in a complex causal nexus for the communications shift transformed the nature of the causal nexus itself. It is of special historical significance because it produced fundamental alterations in prevailing patterns of continuity and change. (Eisenstein, 1979, p. 702)

Of course historical discourse has predominantly been reliant upon literary sources. New technologies in communication are becoming less permanent. Stone was superseded by parchment, parchment by paper made from wood. Paper manuscripts have been superseded by word processors and with them first drafts of literary works have disappeared. All of these technologies are less permanent than their predecessors. The information stored on the media is victim to rampaging modernism that seeks to place a built in obsolescence on knowledge and cultural artefacts and the fetishisation of new technology promoted by the large budgets of multi-national media organisations.

When McLuhan (1964, pp. 317-328) described radio in the folksy metaphor of a "tribal drum" he argued for the potential of radio as a tool for reinforcing the values of like minded people whom he saw as contemporary "tribes". McLuhan drew on the example of the extensive use made of radio by Hitler in uniting the fascist element of Germany prior to and during World War II, seeing this as the reinforcing of tribalism by radio. This concept of tribalism is similar to the notion of diverse public spheres. The tribal drum theory, however, draws too much upon a conception of unity amongst an audience and does not allow for a

person being multi-tribal. It also constructs too much unity within a tribe and does not allow for oppositional readings of the message by the receiver. The radio listener does not necessarily passively accept all that is presented. A person may listen to a particular programme because they like the music but reject the political views of the announcer. There is not necessarily a unity as the word "tribe" would suggest.

McLuhan cites a poem by Berthold Brecht;

You little box, held to me when escaping
So that your valves should not break,
Carried from house to ship from ship to train,
So that my enemies might go on talking to me
Near my bed, to my pain
The last thing at night, the first thing in the morning,
Of their victories and of my cares,
Promise me not to go silent all of a sudden. (McLuhan, 1964, p. 318)

In this poem Brecht suggests an oppositional use of radio. He is not blindly following the beating of some "tribal drum" but acting positively as a listener to serve his own needs from the broadcast.

The concept of radio as "tribal drum" implies a return to an idealised, romanticised oral culture. Such a use of radio in literate culture is impossible. There is no going back and it is impractical to conceive of a tribal oral culture from the perspective of a literate culture. Radio constructs different power structures to those in existence in tribal oral cultures that emphasised the need for mnemonics to pass the "truth" of the oral tradition from one generation to the next (Goody and Watt, 1968).

Radio sets up no such claims for temporal truth. The radio word is spoken and gone. It is the printing press and the book that have taken over temporal claims from the spoken word. Don't believe what you hear unless you can source it to a written text is the motto of the diligent "truth" seeking researcher. The spoken word is considered in our literate society to be less likely to be accurate than the written word. While radio is immediate it is less believed as a "truthful" medium than the written word (Baird, 1992).

The idea of a tribal drum model of communication gives a false notion of broadcasting in a contemporary global experience. The message conveyed by the medium comes from an elite with access to the means of production of broadcasting, an elite who are privileged to communicate to a mass audience which is deprived of access to the means of production. The tribal drum metaphor ignores this inequity in communication.

Gatekeeping

The problem of equity in communication is taken up by Stuart Hall's (1970) discussion of the role of media in constructing public and private spheres in contemporary society. In the execution of its role the media demonstrates what Hall calls an "unwitting bias" (Hall 1970, p. 211) through its choice of accredited witnesses in the commentary or discussion of public events. The voices presented are legitimised and the media enters a circular process by seeking the legitimised voices who are, in effect, gatekeepers.

The concept of the gatekeeper function in journalism verifies Hall's notion of unwitting bias. In the construction of news by journalists, sub

editors and editors a set of news values determines what is included and excluded. Galtung and Ruge (1973) identified the following criteria in the construction of news values;

- Frequency
- Amplitude
- Unambiguity
- Familiarity
- Correspondence
- Surprise
- Continuity
- Composition.

John Hartley (1982) describes these news values by using the metaphorical description of the "shared rules, conventions and styles" of a football game. Hartley describes what happens if a new player wishes to enter the game.

If he [sic] leaps about, gesticulating wildly, his frantic antics might be noticed as a distraction and an amusement, but they won't get him on. To succeed he needs, first, to be known and recognised as a bona-fide player. Second he (....) must go through an established routine to catch the referee's eye. And finally some other player has to be displaced from the field to make room for him. Only then will he make his mark and, if he's lucky, gain the attention of the spectators.

Events don't get into the news simply by happening, no-matter how frantically. Events need to be known and recognised, coming from a known and trusted – and preferably a 'representative' – source. (Hartley, 1982, p. 75)

According to Hartley where the rules, both formal and informal, of the game have been mapped out by the players already on the field those players can control who enters the game. For new players there can be four choices;

- To play and train by the existing rules and conventions,
- To change the rules so they can join the game and bring a fresh approach to the game,
- To ignore the existing game completely and try to attract the spectators to a new game or series of games,
- To encourage the spectators to become active players and set up their own games (Hartley, 1982, p. 75-76).

Community radio follows the fourth of Hartley's choices by seeking to encourage the radio audience not just to sit and let the existing players control the rules of the game and who the players are but rather to allow the audience to become players, set up new games and challenge the existing rules as to who can play and how they play.

An example of this is found in Eric Michaels (1990) work with Aboriginal communities where Michaels describes a closer relationship between sender and receiver, or to use Hartley's terms player and spectator, showing that the two can overlap in community broadcasting. (See Appendix 2 for Michaels' diagram of his communication model.) In much the same way Egan (cited in Ginsburg 1993, p. 572 - see Appendix 3) maps a communication model that bypasses colonial centres and links Aboriginal margins in Tanami Network. Such a model shows how community broadcasting becomes a participatory democratic medium rather than a

neo-colonial model of monopolies of knowledge by the gatekeepers at the centre.

The major concern of Michaels' work is the problem of representation versus self-representation in the public sphere.

The Yuendumu TV station, despite a considerable initial flurry of interest (spurred by its illegal 'pirate' status) has been effectively insulated from further interest. None of its productions have been broadcast to the rest of Australia. The only distribution is via tape copies through Aboriginal networks. This is not mere disinterest; the tapes are judged by national broadcasters to be of "insufficient technical quality" for national attention. The national broadcasters prefer to send in their crews to make TV about the Aborigines making TV. But the conduct of European producers who appropriate Warlpiri media for "higher quality" productions has led to a ban on such activity in the community. Thus, Australia's first Public Television, and its counterparts in at least half a dozen other Aboriginal communities, remains essentially unknown and its output has no audience beyond the local one. (Michaels 1990, p. 28)

Michaels' use of inverted commas around the words "higher quality" draws attention to the way that such terms legitimise the privileging of certain voices and the marginalisation of other voices in mainstream media and so exclude such marginal discursive practices from access to the public sphere. It is here that community radio becomes an instrument to construct a new model of a participatory public by bypassing those restrictive practices that privilege the status quo.

Chapter 5

THE COMMUNITY AND THE PUBLIC

This chapter will review concepts of community and how such concepts fit into the public sphere with reference to the shift in terminology from "public radio" to "community radio" in Australia. It will investigate the relationship between community and the public, explore the role of communication in communities and also examine Habermas' concept of *lifeworld* as a term for lived experience.

The name change of the sector from public radio to community radio which occurred as a result of *The Broadcasting Act* (1992) makes this exegesis of the terms community and public necessary in an examination of the role of community broadcasting. A community could be argued to be a micro-public sphere. I argue that a community is a complex construction and serves as a site of private (self) construction as well as public construction. In addition to seeking links between the theoretical positions examined I will review the construction of public opinion from dialogue in the public sphere. Personal opinion examined through an informed rational discourse becomes public opinion but personal opinion is also formed from discursive practice. The discursive practices that construct the subjective are examined through the concept of *lifeworld* and system.

Lifeworld

In the second volume of *The Theory of Communicative Action* (1987) Habermas presents in detail his thesis on the relation between *lifeworld* and *system*. *Lifeworld* is the part of human culture that relates to the lived experience. *System* is the part of human culture that relates to the larger worldview. *System* then is the social structure on a wide scale, while *lifeworld* relates to the particular way that an individual makes sense of the world. In radio, *system* incorporates the policy and legal framework that radio operates in while choices of station or programmes listened to are part of the listener's *lifeworld*.

System relates to the larger culture within which a *lifeworld* is constructed. The *Broadcasting Services Act* (1992) and other relevant laws, such as defamation law, as well as government policy are part of the *system* that radio operates within. Of course the *system* is larger than just these examples and incorporates the practice of the media practitioners and owners as well.

Ihde (1990) has argued that the *lifeworld* is constructed through interaction with technology. Beniger (1991) states that technology is "any intentional extension of a natural process" (p. 250). Beniger also argues that technology is part of societal control. He defines control as "any purposive influence on behaviour, *however slight*" [emphasis in original] (Beniger, 1991, p. 250). In other words technology influences those discursive practices that make up the *lifeworld*. Following this argument a contemporary *lifeworld* is partially constructed through radio. Jody Berland argues that "Like any text, any discursive apparatus, cultural technologies work to set the terms, possibilities and effects of their

negotiation" (Berland, 1992, p. 41). Radio then sets the terms possibilities and effects of its own negotiation with the discursive practices that construct the listener's *lifeworld*.

All *lifeworlds* are a site of struggle – not only a struggle between *lifeworld* and *system* but also a constant struggle of internal negotiation as all *lifeworlds* are under construction related to lived experience. On the internet World Wide Web the reader often comes across web pages marked "Under Construction". *Lifeworlds*, if able to be viewed on web software would display similar signs. Community of interest programmes can help to explore and give meaning to the *lifeworld*.

Community

Community broadcasters define a community as being either spatially oriented, as in small broadcasters with licences to broadcast to geographically limited areas, or as a community of interest as in the case of specialist programmes. The notion of *lifeworld* provides a conceptual understanding of this sense of community of interest. A community of interest is a collection of individuals who have an overlap in their *lifeworld*. This community derives from shared constructions of the self that occur within a *lifeworld*. A *lifeworld* will be constructed and negotiated by others as well as by the self. No two *lifeworlds* are going to be the same. It is in the area of overlap that community occurs. A person constructed as a Rockabilly (an urban sub-culture constructed around a strong appreciation for rockabilly music and the associated lifestyle) may or may not construct themselves in the same way as the external construction and so the act of construction becomes a discursive practice, a negotiation between the self and the other. Rockabilly may be a

convenient label for the person to show to others while his/her own construction may include a more specialised meaning of the word negotiated through their personal *lifeworld*. A community radio programme presented from the *lifeworld* of rockabilly may or not be of interest to that person even though they may be seen as part that particular community of interest.

The meaning of the term "community" can be a site of struggle as Lewis and Booth (1989, p. 90) note. In fact Hillery (1955) has identified ninety-four different definitions of community. In Lewis and Booth's definitions community radio orientates towards either a local community or towards a "community of interest". These definitions of community have either a temporal or spatial bias (Innis, 1951). The definitions of community as constructed by community broadcasters relates to a sense of connection: "If the concept of community evokes nothing else, it evokes images of connection" (Whitt and Slack, 1994, p. 6).

Community broadcasting connects people who share either a local community or community of interest; in short a *lifeworld*. While Habermas is decidedly sociological in his worldview his concept has theological undertones. According to Carey (1992), communication can be seen to fulfil either of two functions: the transmission of meaning and information or the fulfilment of ritualistic behaviour. Carey consequently defines communication within a framework, like much of Western culture, whose origins arise from religious beliefs (Carey, 1992, p.15). To extend Carey's definitions and also drawing from Christian terminology, I would define communication as either traversing the axis of time, fulfilling the function of communion, or the axis of space fulfilling an evangelical function. Communion binds a community along the temporal

axis by reinforcing shared or common values, while evangelistic communication seeks to take the views of the community to a wider public.

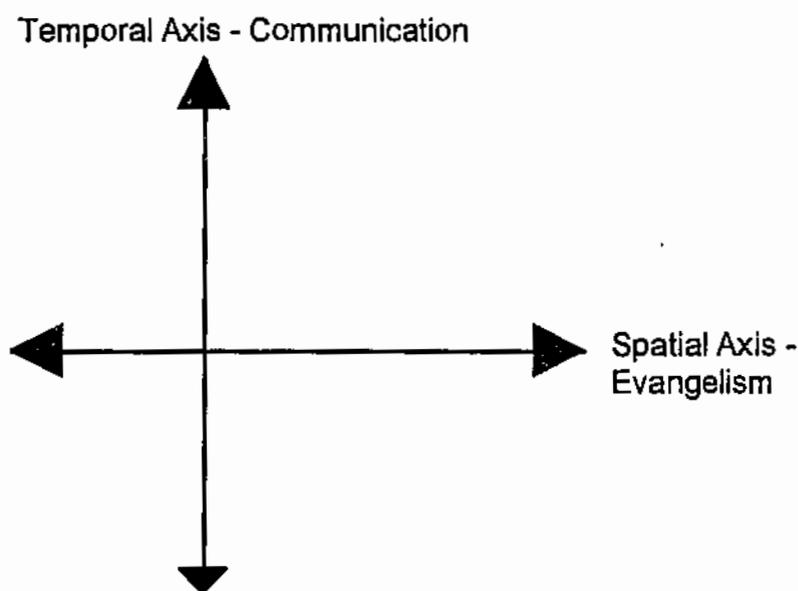


Figure 3

As Hollanders and Stappers have argued, "... participants in community communication – both senders and receivers – are members of the same social system, the geographical community and/or the community of interest" (Hollanders and Stappers 1992, p. 16). By presenting information for public benefit and musical styles for the sake of the music, rather than for the purpose of attracting a demographic that can be commodified, the community radio audience is constructed as an audience with connections. In the case of specialist music presentation the common appreciation of the genre creates a connection between the listeners to form an audience as a community. Jody Berland describes what it is like to discover this presentation of music for its own sake rather than as a promotional sales tool or as a bait to hook a demographic:

There I was one evening, sitting in the kitchen, reading Anthony Giddens of all things and listening to CKLN. Giddens was playing some fancy tricks with the terms "mob" and "mass" culture and I had just listened to about half an hour of uninterrupted music when I suddenly realised that what I was hearing was a totally different form of cultural/technological communication. I was being constituted as a member of a listening public in a way I hadn't experienced before (though similar stations in Australia first introduced me to such possibilities); most notably because the form of broadcasting had nothing to do with the usual injunction to recognize/desire/purchase the record whose commodity form corresponded to what I was hearing. I didn't always know whose they were, for one thing; and the different relationship between me and the music corresponded to a different relationship between pieces of music, which "made sense" of them in a different way. I forgot to be annoyed by the absence of immediate author-information. I wasn't listening to advertisements; I was listening to radio. (Berland 1993, p. 210)

Gay Hawkins (1993) has disparagingly described leftist accounts of community as being concerned with struggles around the meaning of culture. Hawkins argues that the construction of meaning for the term community must be examined within the context of government policy and practice. Certainly within Australian radio the government has sought to set parameters on the construction of the term community which are set out in more detail in the section of this thesis that details the history of community radio. From the origins of community radio the government has sought to intervene in the definition and direction of community broadcasting. By controlling the number and type of licences, the naming of community radio and through funding policies the government places boundaries on the construction of meaning for the

community in community radio. Funding is provided for COMRADSAT – the community radio satellite – and for Aboriginal broadcasting. The satellite helps to construct a discourse on Australia as an imagined community (Anderson, 1991) which is spatially bound while the funding of Aboriginal radio through ATSIC – The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission – ensures some control over Aboriginal radio – this aspect of control will be taken up further in the section on 6AR.

Such examples of control from the *system* contrast with the *lifeworld* of members of a community as lived experience constructs communities which do not fit into the dominant construction of the imagined community of nation. As I have argued a community is bound by what the members of the community have in common. However, when considering the meaning of community as a group of people with shared interests we must be careful to avoid seeing that community as a unified site. As Hebdige (1979) has pointed out a community of interest can comprise members from different class backgrounds and the community itself can be a site of political struggle. Within the community itself there are struggles and debates and so the community itself becomes the first stage of discussion within the public sphere.

Community and public then can be seen to be terms which are important to assist in understanding the role of community radio and how its audiences are constructed.

Chapter 6

BROADCASTING AND THE COMMUNITY

In this chapter I will discuss the different models of radio broadcasting currently operating in Western Australia. Each model claims to speak to or for a community so I use these models to analyse the relationship between radio and community. I then go on to discuss how each type of radio defines itself in relationship to its community. I conclude with a discussion of community radio per se showing how it differs from other forms of radio arguing that it is the only form operating effectively in the public sphere. I argue that all sectors of radio construct an audience. As John Hartley says, "Being an audience is an act among others for individuals; a learnt, specialist, critical, discursive practice" (Hartley 1990, p. 181). This construction as a discursive practice is a site of negotiation between the broadcaster and the listener. The following examples provide illustrations of that negotiation.

Christian Broadcasting

This examination of those negotiations begins with a form of broadcasting from a particular community of interest and examines how the broadcasts themselves help construct that community. Stewart M. Hoover (1991) provides a case study of a specific form of broadcasting to a particular culture, an analysis of American fundamental Christian evangelists on television - televangelists as they have been named in the USA. This study presents a model for understanding the communion and

evangelistic roles of communication within a community. The usefulness of this study as a model for the study of community broadcasting is that it examines broadcasting that exists for purposes other than commercial and national purposes. Both televangelism and community radio are small scale and their audiences are also relatively small. Moreover both examples construct a bounded community. Like the televangelism experience, the audience for community radio programmes may not mirror the imagined creation. Like televangelism, community radio "connects disparate individuals and communities of like minded believers" (Hoover, 1991, p. 21) and in so doing validates the community by presenting their minority discursive practice within a wider public sphere. This validation binds the community over time and space through communion and evangelism.

Hoover provides a brief history of Christian fundamentalism and Christian religious broadcasting in the USA, describing the recent crises for preachers such as Jim Bakker, Oral Roberts and Jimmy Swaggart (Hoover, 1991). For the evangelists and the evangelistic community the medium is definitely not the message, but is seen as part of the world opposed to the spiritual nature of the message and this is viewed with some distrust, but at the same time is accepted as a means towards evangelism. There is, according to Hoover, a distrust of worldly or secular "entertainments" in media. There is also a

...mystique of the technology and its power to convince. It can reach many people directly in their homes and their hotel rooms where the sin and pain are actually taking place, and bring the message of the gospel there. In addition, the power of television to influence people directly is thought to make it an ideal tool for salvation. (Hoover, 1991, p. 60)

The belief amongst the televangelists and their audiences in the power of the media to convince and convert draws upon the hypodermic model of media studies that contends that the media has the power to inject ideologies into a passive audience. As such it can be seen as propaganda media. Certainly radio can do such propaganda effectively as the often cited case of Hitler's use of radio to propagandise suggests. The new right call back hosts of Australian commercial radio also seek to propagandise in such a manner. Certainly the medium tends to re-enforce such views rather than create them, however we should not throw the baby out with the bath water. The role of radio in re-enforcing existing views can be seen as the communion role and I have also argued for the evangelistic role of radio. The evangelistic role certainly does seek to inject beliefs into the hearer, however this is in a more complex manner than can be expressed in a simple hypodermic model. The evangelism does not occur in a vacuum but plays on a wide range of cultural positions in order to fulfil this function.

Drawing from the earlier work of Katz and Lazarsfield, Hoover (1991) states that the power of the televangelists lies in their ability to provide those viewers sympathetically inclined to the message of fundamentalism with a sense of community:

(Televangelism) connects disparate individuals and communities of like minded believers with the message that institutions have been part of the problem, while the solution is individual faith and action. ...televangelism connects evangelically minded members of mainstream churches with others throughout the country, giving a sense of solidarity. (Hoover, 1991, p. 21)

Hoover also identifies a second social significance for televangelism. Television provides the ministries with a public validation; it takes fewer big donors to ensure air time, and thus validation, for a televangelist than supporters to confer validity on a political candidate (Hoover, 1991, p. 22-23). Hoover is talking about perceived validation and this theory would further explain the greater degree of political influence granted the moral majority in the USA compared to that given to the Festival of Light in Australia.

In Western Australia the Christian community broadcaster, on air since 26th January 1988, is known as Sonshine FM. A perusal of the Sonshine FM faq (frequently asked questions) page on the internet (Sonshine FM 1996) reveals that Sonshine sees its role as primarily evangelistic, "Christian radio is one of the most exciting opportunities for the Church to reach out to the community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ", however the communion role is still important. "We are constantly trying to balance our objectives of reaching the non-believers, while providing ministry, in its many forms to Christians.

Sonshine FM exhibit a belief in the power of the medium to persuade and also attributes a two way communication flow to the medium in describing themselves as a station "that is listening" (Sonshine FM, 1996).

Christian radio is a pervasive medium. It reaches people where they are, when they are alone, when they are in need. Christian radio is personal and non-threatening. Its message is heard and accepted. Sonshine FM is Perth's Christian radio station. A station that is listening and caring when people are wondering "where to turn". (Sonshine FM, 1996)

Sonshine FM claims to be supported by,

Anglican, Apostolic, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Brethren, Churches of Christ, Foursquare Gospel Church, Lutheran, Nazarene, Orthodox, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Reformed, Salvation Army, Uniting, Independent Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches, and Perth Charismatic Ministers Fraternal. (Sonshine, 1996)

From such diverse Christian denominations which are often exclusive in their attitudes to each other Sonshine constructs a Christian community of interest. This community of interest is seen by the station to share common values. "Any news stories that would appear to be promoting values and lifestyles inconsistent with the Christian faith are not covered" (Sonshine, 1996). This example shows how an imagined audience is perceived to hold values in common which the gatekeepers at the station can determine.

Sonshine FM provides an example of communion for a like minded community of interest which is constructed by the broadcasters and the audience and also of evangelism bringing the Christian message to the wider audience and so bringing the opinions of the community to the attention of a wider public in an attempt to promote the community opinion in the formation of public opinion.

Commercial Broadcasting

Commercial radio exists for one purpose only, to make a profit. In order to make a profit commercial radio needs a product to sell on the market. The product is the audience. Commercial radio places great store in the

importance of audience demographics. It is a demographic rather than a community that constitutes an audience for commercial radio so a commercial station seeks a demographic to market to advertising agencies.

Given the brief of commercial radio to raise revenue for the shareholders commercial radio does not seek to provide any access or information for the public as a matter of course, but only a facade of information aimed at attracting the demographic that the station seeks to market.

Commercial radio, which has evolved in Australia from the original policy of awarding B class licences funded by advertising, has been empowered to make money for a minority through the use of a public resource. The crown, through the powers of the government legislators, assumes the right to enact laws and policies that have ensured that the airwaves have been effectively privatised. In the same manner as land was passed over to private ownership leading to the rise of capitalism, so the handing over of the public airwaves to private leases has enabled a form of broadcast capitalism that exploits the audience as a product to market rather than a public to inform or to allow access to a forum for discussion. As Australian radio enters the new technological era of digital transmission with the promise of an enormous increase in the number of stations broadcasting there is no promise of increase in public access or informed discussion to enable the formation of public opinion in an informed and empowered public sphere. As the programme director for 96FM, Perth's highest rating commercial radio station at the time, told Niall Lucy,

If we were on air and catering for small minorities, we wouldn't be able to exist. It's as simple as that.

.... Success or failure for us depends upon what McNair Anderson print in their ratings book four times a year.

....We don't dictate to the marketplace, we reflect it. That's our role as a radio station. We're not an educational institution anyone who thinks we are is kidding themselves. We're here to reflect the public and give them what they want. If we don't give them what they want, what the hell are we doing here in the first place.

.... I basically run a dictatorship because I have control of everything that goes to air. (Lucy 1985, p. 5) (See Appendix 4)

Commercial radio stations programme according to demographics, for example a 'Hits and Memories' programme format that constructs an imagined youth, or an 'Adult Orientated Rock' format that programmes easy to listen to "wallpaper" music. These formats are adopted to attract an audience that can be packaged as a demographic to sell to advertisers. Programming for a demographic means programming becomes superficial as Harold Innis describes,

Superficiality became essential to meet the various demands of larger numbers of people and was developed as an art by those compelled to meet the demands. The radio accentuated the importance of the ephemeral and of the superficial. In the cinema and the broadcast it became necessary to search for entertainment and amusement. (Innis, 1951, p. 82)

The difference between the audiences constructed by commercial and community radio stations is that the listener to the commercial radio

station is unlikely to construct their *lifeworld* as a listener to 'Adult Orientated Rock'. The listener to a specialist music programme, such as *Rock Rattle 'n' Roll* on community radio station RTR FM is much more likely to construct their *lifeworld* in accordance with the community constructed by the programme, in this case as a "rockabilly". Similarly listeners to other community radio programmes are more likely to construct their *lifeworld* within a musical sub-culture such as Rasta, heavy metal or punk. Community radio also provides programmes for *lifeworlds* or communities of interest constructed around such examples as environmental, sexual, religious or political activism.

Commercial radio makes no attempt to provide a voice to the margins (Lucy, 1992) because, as noted previously, it exists solely to make a profit selling advertising. Current government policy of offering new licences to the highest bidder removes any pretence of public service from the commercial radio sector. Commercial radio may seem to move towards providing access through talkback radio, for example Perth radio station 6PR's *Nightline*, a programme on which presenter Graham Mabury, a Baptist minister talks about serving the community and constructs the audience as a "Nightline family". However, as Rowe (1992) points out, technological and discursive control remains with the "host" who controls who gets on air and when they are cut off. By virtue of the host's greater experience he (they are usually male) is more able to present himself in a more 'professional' manner, that is a manner that has been normalised as the expected style for radio and so act to disempower the caller and undermine the caller's credibility. It is in such cases that the true community nature of such programmes is seen to be lacking as the broadcasters, rather than actively seeking to provide access and a voice to the marginalised, seek to attract a demographic that the company can

market to advertisers. For Rowe the only control that the listener can wield is the power to not tune in.

As multi-national mass media increasingly consolidate under a few large media empires that dominate control of broadcast media they "widen the range of reception while narrowing the range of distribution" (Carey, 1992, p. 136). Gerbner, Mowlana and Nordenstreng (1993) argue that this trend is occurring on a global scale. This trend imposes a return to a time of monopoly of knowledge (Innis, 1951; Anderson, 1991) when elites such as the crown or priestly class controlled communication media and so controlled knowledge and culture. In the nineties Rupert Murdoch, Ted Turner and Kerry Packer become the priests who control information flows. Marshall Berman sees these global communication empires as part of the process of modernity and multi-national capitalism. "The scale of communications becomes worldwide, and technologically sophisticated mass media emerge. Capital is concentrated increasingly in a few hands" (Berman, 1982, p. 91).

Although commercial radio is increasingly moving towards national and multi-national ownership rather than local ownership the medium talks about localism and may posit itself as "community orientated". Raymond Williams (cited in Brantlinger, 1990) has argued that this 'community orientation' is an illusion to serve the media capitalist's interests.

Among 'the institutions of cynicism,' Williams counted the capitalist mass media, or those forms of communications that, instead of tending towards authentic community or a 'common life' in which the interests of all individuals would matter, tended instead to produce only illusions of community. These illusions bound 'masses' of people together through advertising and the forms

of cheap entertainment, for the profit of those who controlled the media and other forms of big business. (Brantlinger, 1990, p. 111)

Jody Berland put it another way,

.... the community that which speaks and is spoken through [radio] is also constituted by it, and is formed by its structures, selections and strategies. It is for this reason that radio comprises an ideal instrument for collective self-construction, for the enactment of a community's oral and musical history. (Berland, 1993a, pp. 106-107)

Talk back on commercial radio is often a meeting place for right wing views (Mickler, 1992). There may be an illusion of community being constructed by the broadcaster and audience but there is no connection, no common temporal axis created and the listener remains an isolated individual with no real connection, the only connection being a virtual connection between the listener and the ethereal voice of the presenter. The talk back audience is, however, isolated through the construction of the audience as individual listeners rather than a community of interest. In radio the 'common sense' of the broadcaster is to address the audience in the singular. The phrase "all of you out there in radio land" is used as a cliché to represent a dated approach to broadcasting. The introduction of transistor technology has increased the portability of radio and encouraged the use of radio as a private medium, a tendency that has led to the Walkman style of completely private listening, as opposed to earlier cultural practices wide-spread before the use of television when families gathered to listen to the radio which was a solid piece of furniture located in the family hearth.

Similarly the voice on the car radio speaks to the commuter isolated within a vehicle stuck in a traffic jam or hurtling down the freeway totally disconnected from other drivers and the natural environment. The driver in such a situation is much more willing to abuse another driver than they would be outside their isolated vehicle in the same way as an isolated radio talk back caller is more likely to abuse and argue for simple solutions than a person engaged in informed rational public debate in a setting where other people also engage in informed rational debate gather. "The solitary commuters in the snarling traffic on the freeway had a new means of communication, the mobile phone. Talkback was made for them" (Jones, 1995, p. 123). The radio announcer is trained to address this isolated audience in the singular. Rather than "all of you" the audience is addressed in the singular "you". The community constructed thus consists of a large audience that comprises isolated individuals that "receive but are unable to make direct response or participate otherwise in vigorous discussion" (Carey, 1992, p. 136). The control of the talkback programme remains with the host. Mickler has shown how Perth talk back host Howard Sattler, of radio station 6PR, maintains strict control on the character of the discussion by,

- framing the terms of the debate, in the opening of a program; in the opening of a segment; in his introductions to speakers before and after commercial and news breaks and, similarly in his 'closing off' and summations of speakers and debates;
- selecting and ordering callers;
- continual interrupting of callers who oppose his views while giving more time, keeping silent and/or giving verbal endorsement to callers who

support his opening framing of the issue or topic. This verbal endorsement often includes providing additional information such as examples, significant details or historical background to callers with whom he is in agreement. Sattler's personal attitudes are contained not only in the content of his commentary, but also his tone of voice. (Mickler, 1992, p. 19)

National (Public) Broadcasting

Funding for public broadcasting comes from the public purse and is thereby required to provide a 'public service'. So public broadcasting recognises the airwaves as a public resource and seeks to provide information thus contributing towards the creation of an informed public, the first pre-requisite for a democratic public sphere. What public broadcasting has not provided since the time of the ABC experimental station 3ZZ (which as noted previously was closed by government intervention) is access to the airwaves to allow public discussion. While there is talkback on the ABC, it entails the same problem of control as talk back on commercial radio. Control over the discussion is held by those who have control over the means of production. For democratic access the public must directly control that means of production.

Current parallels to Harold Innis (1972) term "monopolies of knowledge" may be drawn in attempts to restrict information in the media. These restrictions are not confined to constraints imposed by governments but can also include restrictions such as self censorship imposed by media practice. In order to gain some insight into that media practice within the ABC we need to examine the history of the organisation.

For the public (government) broadcasters the idea that media should serve the public interest often means an approach geared towards the notion propagated by the BBC, under the direction of Lord Reith in the nineteen-twenties, that the public do not themselves know what is good for them. In a post-colonial world the ideology of the BBC remains important in public broadcasting.

That the man [sic] in the street should have anything vital to contribute to broadcasting was an idea slow to gain acceptance. That he should actually use broadcasting to express his own opinions in his own unvarnished words was regarded as almost the end of all good social order. (Bridson, 1971)

Lord Reith established the British Broadcasting Commission to provide educational and (high) cultural broadcasting. Government broadcasting in British colonies followed the Reithian model. The Australian Broadcasting Commission like the British Broadcasting Corporation was based upon Reithian ideology to provide cultural broadcasting of a British nature (Inglis, 1983, p. 11-12). Originally the Australian Broadcasting Company was set up, according to a Postmaster Generals Department report, to "do all in its power to cultivate a public desire for transmission of educational items, musical items of merit and, generally, for all items and subjects which tend to elevate the mind" (Jones, 1995, p. 25). When the Australian Broadcasting Commission took over the control of the A class licences from the Australian Broadcasting Company in 1932 it was charged "to follow the British system as closely as Australian conditions will permit" (Inglis, 1983, p. 19). In 1945 the incoming Chairman of the ABC, Richard Boyer saw the role of the organisation as being "a positive factor in building an informed, critical and *cultured* [emphasis added] democracy" (Jones, 1995, p. 53).

For many years the ABC used male British announcers where possible as the BBC English accent was considered to be of higher cultural value than the Australian accent (Potts, 1989) and the male voice was considered to be more authoritative. The disembodied voice from the radio was like the disembodied voice of God (Miller, 1993) and as God was male so was the radio voice. The Australian voices used emulated the Oxbridge accents of the BBC. The ABC continues with a principally elitist view of culture. While the voices may now present an educated Australian accent, the ABC does not accurately reflect the diversity of Australian culture. For example, while ABC radio presents both male and female voices it excludes the voices of Australia's ethnic diversity. While it could be argued that there is improvement in this area, listening to the main presenters on Perth station 6WF we hear only Anglo-Celtic voices. Kalinga Seneviratne informed the "Seminar on Alternative Media in Asia and the Pacific" held in Singapore in 1993 of his experiences in attempting to present a programme for the ABC. While the ABC international service, Radio Australia accepted his programme on non-Christian religions in Australia for broadcast, it was not considered suitable for broadcast within Australia because of Seneviratne's accent. To present a multi-cultural view of Australia the government set up the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) retaining more direct control than was available over the ABC (Dugdale, 1979). As a result of that control the voices on SBS remain politically conservative in that they avoid voices of dissent and thus are supportive of the status quo (Seneviratne, 1993). The ABC youth network JJJ does employ one announcer with an Australian/Asian accent. However, on ABC Radio 1 and Radio 2 the voice almost overwhelmingly remains Anglo-Celtic. Change, when it has come, has often been initiated by those who emerge from a background in

community broadcasting that has encouraged them to take a wider view of Australian culture and how it can be represented on air. In general public radio in Australia has voices from the centres representing the margins rather than voices from the margins speaking for themselves. Even in the JJJ example the presenter, as part of the ABC, does not really speak for herself and her position may be construed as a form of "tokenism".

The increasing trend towards network programming across the nation on the ABC constructs an audience on a national basis and constructs notions of community on a spatial basis. A listener in Paraburdoo, Paddington or Perth is presumed to form an audience in common, an imagined community bounded by an imagined common interest. This construction of an imagined national community often comes at the cost of the local communities sacrificed to the construction of one national community. At the time of the introduction of the ABC's youth network, JJJ, to Perth, the Sydney based network promised a window for local programming to allay the fears of local musicians that the national network would make the audience for original music unfamiliar with local artists thus reducing exposure that could result in better gigs or recording opportunities and that Sydney based programming would result in an inevitable increase in the Sydney domination of the Australian music industry. This window for local programming never took place and JJJ has moved towards a policy of featuring predominantly those musicians signed to a recording deal with the major multinational recording and communications conglomerates. For musicians located outside the recording centres of Sydney and Melbourne this results in very little exposure on JJJ. The networked programming then increases the cultural domination of the Sydney centre over the regional margins. In the Radio National network

some programming originates from regional stations but is still constructed for an imagined audience of the nation. Presenter Lucky Oceans, for example, claims that his programme *The Planet* which is broadcast from Perth could be broadcast from anywhere in Australia. In fact Lucky Oceans deliberately does not identify the programme as located in Perth while broadcasting (Personal conversation, 1996). Such networking privileges the spatial community of interest over the temporal community of place.

The ABC's links to high culture are represented by the Corporation's maintenance of a symphony orchestra in each state although the future of these orchestras is uncertain since the 1997 *Mansfield Report* into the ABC. The introduction of the youth network JJJ provides the ABC with an antidote to the "Aunty" image introducing a youthful audience to the ABC which it hopes to train to become listeners to other ABC programmes. However JJJ seeks to avoid rocking the status quo. Former manager of JJJ Barry Chapman, now working for commercial network MMM, whose curriculum vitae includes working for a multi-national mainstream record company and its publishing company (*X-Press*, October 13, 1994, p. 23), was engaged to run the station after JJJ upset some listeners by repeatedly playing a song containing the word "fuck". Chapman expressed the ideology of JJJ in an interview published in Perth based entertainment magazine *X-Press*:

What about a demo show? Well, it sounds like shit radio ... We don't want to run an hour of radio that sounds substandard. People would turn it off. (*X-Press*, October 13, 1994, p. 23)

Those musicians the multi-national major record companies do not endorse are dismissed as less than worthy as artists by such a policy. Art that is not produced as "product" – as it is referred to by major record companies – is not considered suitable for display in the public arena of the ABC. The interview continues, "Does Triple J listen and act on comments and criticisms from the public? We monitor our calls that come in, so we know what the public is saying about what we do. We read the press, we know what people are saying about us" (*X-Press* October 13, 1994, p. 23). So the ABC listens but Chapman avoids the question of whether they act upon public opinion. Although funded by the public purse the ABC still reflects the Reithian ideals of educating and entertaining a public who may not always know what is good for them. The public broadcaster as schoolteacher knows what you should hear.

Despite their role in the construction of an imagined national identity broadcasters funded from the public purse often bear the threat of government intervention. This may be direct intervention as in the case of Indonesia where the government exercises control over content or more subtle control as happens in Singapore (Birch, 1992). In Australia the government exercises some control in the running of the public broadcaster the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) (Seneviratne, 1993, p. 68) but exercises less direct control over the ABC. The ABC however is not above direct government intervention such as the events that occurred in the case of the closure of access station 3ZZ (Dugdale, 1979). The nature of public broadcasting in Australia is now changing due to recent budget cuts of seventy-seven million dollars. The result is a reduction in staff levels of twenty per cent nation-wide and the axing of some radio programmes. Lack of funding for local broadcasting at the ABC will increase the dominance of the Sydney broadcasting centre to the detriment of the local

broadcasters and will lead to a greater dominance of the imagined national community over the local community. Changes in the role and nature of public broadcasters are not limited to Australia, but in this era of multi-national communications and macro-public sphere on a global scale, such changes are being debated globally with cuts in public funding with consequent changes in the public broadcasting system being felt by many public broadcasters including; CBC (Canada), BBC (United Kingdom), PBS (USA), TVNZ (New Zealand) and Deutsche Welle (Germany). According to the ABC's science broadcaster Robin Williams lack of funding for the ABC has resulted in a lack of the necessary resources to provide a truly informed public as journalists are unable to research material relevant to the Australian meso-public sphere.

I will always remember the picture of 'our (radio) [brackets in original] man' in Washington, preparing for his day as a reporter in the news capital of the world. He reached his desk at 11am and put a brown paper bag of sandwiches and fruit in front of him. Over the next ten or so hours he stared at CNN and monitored the several computerised cable services, occasionally jumping up to dub off some portion of the 'feed', to turn it into a news item and dispatch it via satellite to the ever-demanding maw of the HQ in Sydney. He had innumerable feeds every day as AM, *The World Today*, PM, *The News*, *The News Network*, *Correspondents Report* and Radio Australia demanded their morsels like quivering hatchlings with wide-open beaks in a crowded Ultimo bird nest.

"I never leave the office here" he said mournfully. "And these sources" he nodded at CNN and the cable sources "are the same as you get in the newsroom in Sydney." (Williams, 1996, pp. 42-43)

Williams laments the decline in funding and what he sees as the subsequent decline in broadcasting standards, yet he remains confident that the public needs the "professional" gatekeeper to sift information and provide interpretation. He is disparaging of "amateur" broadcasting even though community broadcasters must function on a budget that makes the public broadcaster look extremely wealthy in comparison. Williams worries about the future of broadcasting when budget cuts mean that new talent is not fostered by the ABC, yet it is the very amateur broadcasters that he dismisses who provide the training and future professionals for both the public and commercial sectors. Williams argues for the public broadcaster as a place for specialist talks for a wider audience or in other words as a place for information for the meso-public sphere.

Current debate revolves around the question of whether public broadcasters should concentrate on the margins of broadcasting and present specialist programmes or seek to encompass a wider picture bringing together both mainstream and marginal audiences (Williams, 1996). Other debate concerns the elitist nature of public broadcasting and whether the wider public benefits from elitist or marginal programming that is being funded from the public purse. Economic rationalists argue that public funding is a subsidy to a cultural elite while ABC supporters see the broadcaster providing a significant contribution to wider public education and a more pluralistic culture. Supporters of public broadcasters fear that loss of such institutions will mean a loss of domestic culture as programming is imported from the cheaper production centres of the USA, rather than encouraging local productions. As long as public broadcasters do not allow wider public access to the means of production in broadcasting they will continue to be elitist. Wider access to the means of production and challenges to monopolies of knowledge will threaten

the discursive practices of power within a culture but it is not within the public broadcasting model that the dominant culture is challenged in a meaningful way. As long as control of the means of production remains within the hands of a group of 'experts' or 'specialists' the status quo is maintained and dominant discursive practices are not questioned.

Stuart Hall was critical of British broadcasting in the seventies. His criticisms can also be applied to Australian government and commercial broadcasters in the nineties.

... radio must find ways of making *both* the foreground event *and* the background context core aspects of its working definition of the news

This becomes a critical issue when the coverage is of groups and events which consistently challenge the built-in definitions and values enshrined in the political culture of broadcasters and audiences alike. This position redefines the concept of 'public service', in relation to radio, in a way which runs diametrically counter to the philosophy of rationalization which infected *Broadcasting in the Seventies* (BBC policy document). (Hall 1970, p. 215)

Community Broadcasting

Radio has been part of the culture of developed countries since the nineteen-twenties. Radio activists have sought to use the medium as a subversive tool for introducing alternative and pluralistic voices to the wider public sphere. For example,

... I have often thought if we could just place microphones in restaurants or clubrooms or any of the places where people gather and exchange concerns, the results could be quite invigorating.

... These ... situations would yield more interesting material than the opinions of headline topics currently solicited from listeners. This too is technically possible. What prevents it is the arrogance of broadcasters. (Schafer 1993, p. 297)

Such critical thinking on the role of radio has been around since the introduction of radio when there were calls for the medium to be democratic and educational as well as recreational and entertaining:

.... Radio is one sided when it should be two. It is purely an apparatus for distribution, for mere sharing out. So here is a positive suggestion: change this apparatus over from distribution to communication. The radio would be the finest possible communication apparatus in public life, a vast network of pipes. That is to say, it would be if it knew how to receive as well as transmit, how to let the listener speak as well as hear, how to bring him into a relationship instead of isolating him. On this principle the radio should step out of the supply business and organise its listeners as suppliers. (Brecht, 1964, p. 52)

Such visions of the potential of radio as a democratic and pluralistic tool should not be dismissed as mere technological utopianism. Brecht's vision recognises a democratic role for radio requires a paradigmatic shift in the dominant discursive practice of broadcasting. Similarly, in 1935 A. Lloyd James, Professor of Phonetics at the School of Oriental Studies, London who served as Honorary Secretary of The BBC Advisory

Committee on Spoken English called for the rise of a range of voices in the public sphere through the medium of radio.

And if ... (radio) educates us up to the point of view that a man [sic] is no less of a chump because he does not happen to use our particular accent, it will have gone a long way towards eradicating that social snobbery which is our national prerogative. (Lloyd James, 1935, p. 5)

Lloyd James argued the arrival of radio began a new era in history. Pointing to the introduction of the printing press to European society as a pivotal point in the development of western culture, James saw the introduction of what he termed the "speaking press" as a similar point for the future of cultural development. This view bears similarity to the view of history expressed by Harold Innis (1951) who placed developments in communication technology at the centre of civilisation. Innis examined both the margins and centres in the light of media technologies.

It is from the margins of community broadcasting that the media centres are challenged as Barry Hill suggests:

The ethos here is one which insists that not only can listeners speak back to the station, if they don't like what is being said – why, they can come right in and make a program for themselves. We are friends, speaking with each other. (Hill, 1986, p. 6)

Albert Moran (1995) has argued for two types of community radio in Australia: the traditional or professional model.

The traditional station emphasises not only access, but also participation and democratic management. Community groups and subcultures are given considerable access to the airwaves. Programs are presented in blocks addressed to particular groups of listeners. The stations have often helped motivate the emergence of new community programming groups. The stations are politically and/or aesthetically progressive. Audiences and volunteers are perceived as anti-commercial for cultural or ideological reasons. There is limited reliance on sponsorship announcements and, there is instead a concern to increase finances through subscriptions and fund drives. This type of station usually generates little sponsorship revenue.

By contrast, the professional model is closer to the commercial radio sector, Strip programming—programs that begin and end at the same time five or seven days a week—increasingly occupies breakfast, morning and afternoon time zones. The stations are tending to use personality announcers and play lists. Programming blocks are also appearing in the evening and on some weekends. There is a wide range of programme types offered where the station can afford it, and programs are often interspersed with a commercial news feed with some local items inserted. Professional stations have also included sport and even racing. Many stations feature a strong religious component. Access is provided not only to disadvantaged groups such as youth and Aboriginal groups, but also to others such as sporting and country and western groups who are already well catered for by other sectors. These stations have frequently attracted significant sponsorship and these sponsor items have often been presented like advertisements on commercial radio. The sound, content and presentation of professional stations are often similar to those of local commercial radio stations. ...

These two models represent very different views of community radio and many stations find their practices located between the two. (Moran, 1995, p.154)

In Western Australia RTR FM provides an example of a station located towards Moran's traditional model while 6NR provides an example of a station located towards Moran's professional model.

Given the diversity in the sector, how then do we define community radio? One definition is "non-government, non-commercial broadcasting" (Kleinstubber and Sonnenburg 1990, p. 90). This is a definition by exclusion. That is it defines what community radio is not, however, AMARC, the World Association Of Community Broadcasters, defines community broadcasting in an inclusive rather than exclusive manner.

AMARC defines a community radio station as a station that responds to the need of the community which it serves and that contributes to its development in a progressive manner promoting social change. It promotes the democratisation of communication by facilitating community participation in the radio station. This participation may vary according to the social context in which the radio operates. (AMARC, c.1994)

The community in community radio is therefore constructed by the broadcaster and the audience together rather than in separation. An example can be found in the case of *Rock Rattle 'n' Roll* – a programme I am involved in that features rock 'n' roll, rock-a-billy and rhythm 'n' blues. The audience and presenter work together to construct the listening community. The presenter, whilst broadcasting, has a constructed

audience in mind that is interested in and has more than a passing knowledge of the musical genres being presented. Similarly, the audience constructs a community of like-minded enthusiasts of the musical styles by imagining themselves to be part of a community of interest spread throughout the Perth metropolitan area. The construction of community occurs as part of the dialogic nature of community broadcasting. Rather than constructing an audience of isolated individuals the pluralistic and participatory ideals of community construct the audience and broadcaster as us rather than some unknowable demographical other. This construction is formed as community radio engages with the public as a participatory medium which shifts the boundaries between broadcaster and audience. Community media must seek to engage with the needs of the community by remaining in touch with the community through participatory broadcasting, for "Public art which refuses to discover and engage with community needs robs those it professes to serve" (Thompson 1992, p. 29).

Despite the participatory nature of community radio in seeking to involve the public in broadcasting community broadcasting cannot operate without some constraints. The community broadcasting sector in Australia experiences intervention in the form of media law. Community broadcasters are bound by law to observe the statutes of defamation and other media regulations. Before the changes in broadcasting law in 1992 community broadcasters were more restricted in content than the ABC. Whilst the ABC was exempt from laws prohibiting the use of the words "fuck" and "cunt" the community broadcasting sector was not. The issue of the broadcast of material containing such expletives came to a head with the arrival of the ABC's youth network JJJ which could play uncensored versions of songs that community stations were prevented

from airing. The *Broadcasting Services Act* of 1992, claiming that radio was now a mature medium (a medium that had become internalised in Australian culture and so required less direct statutory control), did away with these divisions and opened community stations to allow more freedom of expression under self regulation. The decision on the broadcasting of expletives and decisions about the suitability and context of such material was made subject to self regulation by bodies representing the sectors of community, public and commercial broadcasters.

The primary concern for community radio is financing the sector. Radio is a comparatively cheap broadcast medium to operate and community radio relies primarily upon volunteer labour it does need to generate income for the survival of stations. "Financing public [community] radio has been a constant problem, almost a dominating problem. ... It has been a problem which has distracted personnel from issues of programming and taken a great deal of energy from everyone involved in Public Radio" (Whitford, 1992, p. 54).

Government funding to the sector has been minimal and generally restricted to areas such as Aboriginal broadcasting. The closure of the Public Radio News (PRN) network in October 1996 reflects the financial restrictions under which the sector works, PRN provided news bulletins and the current affairs programme *Undercurrents*, that focused on alternative and community issues, to community broadcasters for twelve years. One of the major funding sources for PRN was money made available for training by the Labor government through the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET). That source of funding was no longer available under the coalition government. In order to provide wide ranging information to the public the sector urgently needs to find funding for such endeavours. Many stations can not afford to

replace faulty equipment, let alone embrace new technologies. Some stations in the sector charge community organisations for access. Working on a user pays system those stations require the producers of programmes to meet the cost of production. This form of funding is known as access funding. Other funding sources include sponsorship (a limited form of advertising), membership fees for those accessing the airwaves, contributions from listeners, institutional support and, in the case of a few broadcasters such as Aboriginal radio, government. One problem that community broadcasters have with funding is the perception of broadcasting in the wider community and the internalisation of radio in Australian culture. Community radio does not fit the format for arts funding with broadcasting not being perceived as "art" by bodies such as The Australia Council or the West Australian Department for The Arts. The dominance of the medium by commercial broadcasters has helped to construct radio as something listened to for entertainment rather than as a participatory artistic expression.

Another area of concern for community radio is the movement away from the sector of experienced broadcasters. Community radio is treated as an unpaid training area by the other sectors. Between 1982 and 1986 over 342 community radio volunteers became employed in either commercial or public broadcasting (Moran, 1995, p. 156). This does not necessarily reflect a preference by those people for the other sectors but reflects a need to generate an income.

The Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) represents community radio on a national scale as its policy body and as such represents the sector to government. The CBAA holds yearly conferences, though no conferences have ever been held in Western

Australia which demonstrates the further marginalisation of Western Australian community broadcasters.

The West Australian Community Broadcasting Association (WACBA) represents community broadcasters at a state level. WACBA sees its role as the promotion and expansion of community broadcasting in Western Australia. There are three levels of membership. Every operating community radio station in Western Australia is a full member of WACBA. Associate members are drawn from bodies which have an interest in community broadcasting, but are not themselves community broadcasters, for example, the State Government communications adviser. Aspirant community broadcasters are classified as aspirant members.

In order to avoid being merely an indulgence for the bourgeoisie or a supporter of the media culture which promotes the status quo but rather to further a democratic, participatory, informed and communicative public sphere, community radio needs to maintain its grass roots of broad based community and activist support. This will ensure that the sector attracts a wide range of informed views and will help subvert the gatekeeper function of the dominant media. Community radio seeks to inform the public through the provision of alternative views, it should ensure that it remains local rather than network orientated and must remain open to the views of citizens. If it sounds like a babble of diverse, and at times unsettling, raised voices rather than the smooth hegemonic voice of the status quo on mainstream radio, it begins to approach the coffee shop public sphere idealised by Habermas (1989). Just as *lifeworlds* and communities are fluid, so too community radio must be fluid in seeking to identify and engage with community needs

It must be remembered that the community sector of radio was not the product of any particular political ideology (Thornley, 1995), but of a demand from the public sphere. That sphere encompassed all political ideologies, from the right to left and also groups as diverse as evangelical Christians and urban sub-cultures. While politicians have sort to control the sector and its directions, community radio has been successful in establishing itself in Australia.

The major contribution of community radio to an informed participatory public sphere is through allowing access to the airwaves and by placing control of the means of production into the hands of those who are involved in the medium. As Bruce Girard observes,

[Community radio's] most distinguishing characteristic is its commitment to community participation at all levels. While listeners of commercial radio are able to participate in the programming in limited ways – via open line telephone shows or by requesting a favourite song, for example – community radio listeners are the producers, managers, directors, evaluators and even the owners of the stations. (Girard, 1992, p. 2)

The radio sectors examined here can be seen to have different relationships to community. Commercial radio provides entertainment in order to maximise audiences which are packaged as demographics and sold to make a profit for the corporate shareholders. There is no commitment to inform or to pluralism and participation. Public radio seeks to provide a public service. There is a commitment to inform. The audience is seen as a public rather than as a demographic. There is some commitment to pluralism, although there is a residual conservatism within the ABC. There is no public participation in production but a

reliance upon gatekeepers to filter information. Community radio seeks to break down the boundaries between broadcaster and audience. The ideology is pluralistic and participatory and community radio throws out notions of the gatekeeper.

Chapter 7

6UWA/UVS/RTR FM

Moving now to an examination of the practice of community radio in Western Australia, I will investigate the case of 6UWA FM/6UVS FM/RTR FM arguing that it provides an example of the high cultural domination of voices leading to the discontinuation of a major source of funding for community radio. This case study provides an example of community radio as a means of resistance to dominant discursive practices and provides an illustration of community involvement with the media which reveals an alternative to mainstream broadcasting's example of control of the means of production in broadcasting. In addition the eclectic programming on the station provides examples of the communion and evangelism roles of communication for a community of interest.

The station's history can be divided into five distinct stages. The first stage occurred between April 1977 and 1981. Under the management of former BBC presenter Nicholas Partridge the station's brief, as determined by the station's licence, was to provide educational talks and fine music. The station's magazine – with the loftier title 'journal' – included high cultural content such as articles on composers and short stories as well as technical and programming information. Three evenings a week some "low" audience air time was allocated to NCM programming. Despite the station's commitment to fine music and educational talks, most talks on the station were imported from international public broadcasters with the first local music programme presented being *Medieval Cowboy*, an NCM

programme. NCM programmes were not differentiated according to genre but constructed as an "other" to the station's "serious" music. As such it was presented as NCM1, NCM2, and NCM3. This style of presentation would be likely to alienate the casual listener as the contents of the programmes could only be found in the station's journal rather than displaying a consistency in programming. Such programming, despite being less highbrow than the fine music programming, still constructed itself in an intellectual manner as shown in this example from the first issue of the station journal *FM*.

We do not see that non-classical music must be differentiated from 'serious' music. Our aim is to demonstrate the vitality of this music in all its forms, the changing conceptions which it embodies and the inevitable strong social links between musical works and their social environment. We are also concerned with fusions and interactions in music and have adopted a conscious policy of presenting the junction lines rather than retreating into established categories which we believe is snobbish and intolerant. (*FM*, April, 1977, p. 23)

Originally set up to provide "educational talks and fine music" the station became a site of struggle between NCM volunteers and station management over monopolies of knowledge and the privileging of voices outside the mainstream as community groups and urban sub-cultures. In some cases these voices were oppositional to the central/dominant discursive practices broadcast on the station. In 1980 the clash between high and low cultures came to head with a large number of the volunteers withdrawing from the station. This action was precipitated by concern over management style, lack of community broadcasting access to the station and volunteer demands for a representative on the board. Pieta

O'Shaugnessy recalls that Partridge came "from an environment where the resources were much greater than they would ever be in public [community] broadcasting and it was not the norm to rely so heavily on volunteers and people working in the environment who were perhaps not so professional" (Rivalland, 1977).

O'Shaugnessy who had been an activist involved in agitation for the introduction of community broadcasting in Western Australia was appointed manager of 6UVS FM in 1981. Her appointment marks the second era in the station's history when a change of programming style saw an increase in local talks and the introduction of a breakfast programme featuring NCM and talks. The introduction of sponsorship announcements to the station supplemented station funding and there was a move to promote the station to the wider public through publicity and advertising. Programming changed to allow for wider communities of interest with specialist shows presented regularly and in a block format so that members of the communities knew that if they tuned in regularly at a particular time they would find the programme they were interested in.

Sponsorship was increased during the third era of the station's history under the direction of manager Bill McGinnis. Many volunteers, particularly in the NCM field, were critical of sponsorship and concerned that such promotion would lead towards a more populist style resulting in the station programmed according to demographics in order to attract a wider audience for the benefit of sponsors. However, the station did retain programming for communities of interest rather than programming according to demographics and marketed the station to potential sponsors as a station of excellence pointing to the many awards for excellence in

broadcasting presented to 6UVS both locally and internationally. Rather than fitting programmes to sponsors, the station tried to fit sponsors to programmes pointing out to potential sponsors that audiences for specialist programming were attentive and loyal and that specialist programming attracted foreground rather than background listening.

The next period in the history of the station occurred between the years of 1986 and 1990 under the management of Anne Tonks and later Alan Fry. During that time, despite the fact that 6UVS had won more broadcasting awards than any other community station in Australia, rumblings could increasingly be heard from some of the people within UWA about the amount of money the university was spending on urban subcultures and dissenting voices heard on the station. The radio station was subject to several reviews which were mainly concerned with the financial cost of running the station (Rivalland, 1977). In 1988 *X-Press* magazine reported Vice Chancellor Robert Smith's proposal that funding for 6UVS FM be withdrawn. "Mr Smith (sic) said he made the recommendation while 'looking at the 1989 fiscal climate' " (*X-Press*, 1988, p. 3). Despite the claim that the proposal was purely financial, Professor Smith stated that " 'The activities of 6UVS FM are peripheral to the pursuit and achievement of the university's academic role' " (*X-Press*, 1988, p. 3).

Despite the station being successfully used as a promotional tool for the University and for educational events such as the UWA Summer School the UWA Senate closed the station and handed the licence back to the Australian Broadcasting Association at the same time as the university opened the Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, named after the prominent West Australian business man who donated a large part of the funds necessary for the establishment of the gallery. It is ironic that the business

man, Lawrence Wilson has, like many of his high flying contemporaries from the West Australian business world, fallen from his privileged social and business position and faced court charges of theft - perhaps a warning to universities to avoid becoming too closely aligned to private capital - and that UWA was itself criticised by the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal for acting illegally in handing back the licence. The Senate of the University of Western Australia's withdrawal of operating funds for 6UVS FM forced the Board of Management to close the station. The withdrawal of funds from the station and the opening of the art gallery were not directly related, but the coincidental timing of the two events appears to demonstrate that UWA had a commitment to 'high' culture rather the contrary voices heard on 6UVS FM. Those who held privileged positions within the public sphere assumed the right to speak on behalf of the margins and when those marginalised voices began to speak for themselves, challenging the status quo, the actions of those in the position of privilege ensured a return to the status quo.

On 26 November 1990, following the decision that evening by the UWA Senate to hand back the licence, the first FM radio station in Western Australia ceased broadcasting. In a joint statement the next day the Vice-Chancellor of UWA, Professor Fay Gayle, and the Vice-Chancellor of Murdoch University, Professor Peter Boyce, announced the closure of 6UVS FM "due to budgetary constraints and limited substantial corporate sponsorship and financial support" (Appendix 5).

The decision to close 6UVS FM followed a period of upheaval at the station. UWA had decided that it would substantially reduce the amount of funding it provided to the station. The board of Universities Radio Limited had been unaware of the true extent of the financial situation of

the station until a review was carried out by the University of Western Australia. When the true extent of the financial situation was revealed to the board they felt "quite shocked" (Personal interview, Irma Whitford, 1995). However, dissatisfaction with station management amongst the volunteers at the station had led to a number of volunteers signing a letter addressed to both the board of management and the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal expressing discontent with the station management prior to the closure. In November 1990, not long before the station closure, management considered the removal of all spoken word and specialist programmes and the playing of taped music only. Had this eventuated it would have effectively removed all community participation in the station.

Following the closure of the station several courses of action were suggested by the former volunteers. On the night of the station closure a large number of volunteers were meeting at the station because of concerns for its future direction and so were on the spot when the news broke. Some suggested barricading themselves into the station and refusing to cease broadcasting. More moderate voices suggested not alienating the university Senates and seeking to find a way to return the station to air.

UWA's assumption to speak on behalf of the marginal voices rather than privileging the marginal voices themselves and the claiming of privilege by an elite of "expert" educators demonstrates Kant's concept of tutelage as discussed earlier in Chapter 3 (pp. 49-50). The resurrection of 6UVS FM as RTR FM in 1991 suggests a resistance to tutelage and the monopolies of knowledge upon which tutelage is based. The commitment to pluralistic expression led to a co-operative effort by some of the volunteers and

listeners involved with the radio station and the larger community towards getting the station back on air. That effort involved extensive lobbying of UWA, Murdoch University and the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT) as well as public discussion in other media on the need for a community station such as 6UVS FM. Volunteers from professions such as law and accountancy joined with other community members to investigate the possibilities of the station re-emerging. Such action demonstrates a public sphere where public opinion was formed through public discourse and lead to action for the public benefit. The station eventually re-emerged as RTR FM (Arts Radio) with control of the station organised in a participatory and co-operative structure.

A new era in the station's history emerged when a company, Arts Radio Ltd (ARL), was established with all participants in the station's broadcasting as members and a board of directors elected from and by the members. Listeners were invited to become "subscribers" thus participating in the funding of the station and helping ensure the stations independence from any financial interest which may seek to control it in the future. The precarious financial position of the station provided UWA with an excuse to close the station, however, the new company demonstrated that a successful station can be run on a much tighter budget. Rather than being financially dependent upon (primarily) UWA, the new station was now a tenant of UWA. While the station has suffered from financial crises without the institutional financial support it had, it has survived and demonstrated the ability of the communities, to which it broadcasts, to support the station. In its new participatory and democratic style the station has sought to severe its links with an elitist conception of a public sphere which excludes some voices. By taking

responsibility for the operation of the station those participating in the station claimed control of the means of production.

This fifth era in the station's history developed under the guidance of Station Manager Kath Letch and an elected Board of Director's chaired by Tony Wilson. Both had been NCM presenters on 6UVS FM and Tony Wilson had been co-ordinator of the original NCM presenters struggling for air time on 6UWA FM. The appointment of these two by the membership of ARL represented a triumph for the voices marginalised under the station's original structure. Where RTR FM suffers in comparison with 6UWA/6UVS FM is in the area of funding and resources which were much greater before the links with UWA were severed. Murdoch University continues to broadcast on the station, not as a partner in the company holding the licence, but as a client purchasing air time in order to broadcast productions from Murdoch University's radio students. Funding is the major problem for RTR FM with the financial input of UWA removed and that of Murdoch University substantially reduced. Rather than obtaining income from UWA, the station now pays rent, at full commercial value, to the university. The station supports itself through a small amount of sponsorship, film nights, concerts and dances. An example of its fund raising events is the very successful annual alternative rock concerts "In The Pines" - which feature local musicians who donate their time, and community financial support in the form of donations and "subscriptions". During the on air subscription drive, known as Radiothon, in October 1997 pledges from the community to the value of seventy four thousand dollars were raised. Unfortunately such community donations are not tax deductible which discourages some potential donors - neither State nor Federal government recognises community radio as a project which should attract tax deductible status.

Funding will remain the station's primary concern and the greatest threat to the future of community radio.

Despite the funding problems, RTR FM has successfully managed to attract an audience. In April 1997 the station drew a cumulative audience figure exceeding 175 000 (Morgan-Gallup Research) which represents an audience share of around 7.5% for Perth radio. RTR FM is Perth's fastest growing station in audience numbers with an increase of 38.5% over the two months prior to April 1997 (Morgan-Gallup Research).

As previously mentioned the board of ARL is elected. All those involved with the station are members of ARL and membership entitles them to vote for the board of directors. The board elects a chair and appoints a station manager. The internal structures of the station are organised on democratic principles rather than being imposed by the institutions as was previously the case at 6UVS FM when UWA and Murdoch University appointed the board. A board appointed from what is primarily the academic community is there to look after the interests of the academic institution, while a board appointed by those involved in the radio station is there to look after the interests of those involved in the radio station. The appointment of a board from members of an academic institution, rather than from the broadcasters further demonstrated the tutelage nature of the earlier station structure, where an elite presumed to speak on behalf of others. It must, of course, be remembered that the Australian system of legislation, common law and government policy – encompassed in such legislation as the Broadcasting Act, defamation laws and the Companies Act – provides a framework within which all broadcasters have to work, but the democratic nature of the station ensures that, within that framework, there is more power available to the producers of radio programmes than under the previous 6UVS FM structure where an

elite, represented by the board, imposed an ideology of broadcasting on the station.

The history of 6UWA/6UVS FM, and subsequent emergence of RTR FM, demonstrates a struggle between high and low cultures, between notions of broadcasting in the public interest and broadcasting for a participatory public. It shows how communities of interest have been constructed and how they have become involved in the station to ensure that the station continues to serve those communities.

Chapter 8

6AR

This chapter presents a case study of an indigenous broadcasting station in Western Australia, 6AR (Aboriginal Radio). I argue that this station presents an example of how a medium that has been used by mainstream right wing talk back hosts to marginalise Aboriginal people (Mickler, 1992) has been appropriated for use in a contradictory manner by those marginalised voices. This contradictory use employs both the evangelism and communion roles of communication.

When the Europeans invaded Australia they introduced many new things to the Aboriginal people; along with leprosy, tuberculosis, gonorrhoea, syphilis, alcohol, tobacco, guns and Christianity they brought literate culture and new technologies of communication. Aboriginal radio provides an example of how introduced technologies have been adapted by an indigenous culture for their own needs.

Traditional communication in Aboriginal culture is in the oral tradition and uses not only story telling, myth, mnemonic devices, song and dance but also pictures which can be made on rock surfaces or on such media as message sticks, boomerangs, and woomeras. The culture cannot therefore be described as totally oral. Goody and Watt (1968) have described such cultures as proto-literate. There is a vast gulf between such a proto-literate culture, primarily steeped in an oral tradition and the European literate culture. Harold Innis (1972) has described how the literate culture of the empires came into conflict with the oral cultures it encountered. After a

mere 200 years, a drop in the ocean when compared to the forty thousand years (recent discoveries have indicated an even longer time frame) of culture in Australia, the literate culture dominates and marginalises the oral traditions of the indigenous population.

Radio provides an oral medium for communication. While Edmonds (1994) has demonstrated the spatial bias of radio in transmitting over distance, Aboriginal radio also provides an example of a temporal use of the medium as it transmits the oral stories of Australia's indigenous people. Moran (1995) argues that the oral medium of radio is conducive to Aboriginal communication.

Aboriginal Australians have strongly pressed the view that the electronic media, especially radio, is vital for their people given their widespread lack of literacy. (Moran, 1995, p.153)

Helen Molnar (1995, p. 168) points out the advent of community radio in Australia in the mid seventies coincided with a strong call for politics of self-determination rather than assimilation for Aborigines. This coincidence meant that the new radio sector was available for the voices of Aboriginal Australians.

Aboriginal issues are addressed by the public broadcasters. Both the ABC and SBS have an Aboriginal Employment and Training Programme. SBS employs three staff in its Aboriginal TV unit. The ABC has a much larger unit under a non-Aboriginal executive producer. While the directors are Aboriginal the majority of the crew are non-Aboriginal (Molnar, 1995, p.167). The interest in Aboriginal broadcasting reflects a growing concern

within Australian the public broadcasters to construct a multi-cultural view of Australian society.

Indigenous broadcasting is organised on macro, meso and micro levels. The macro level is represented by The World Association for Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC). The representative to AMARC for indigenous broadcasters is Australia's Tiga Bayles from Queensland. On the meso level indigenous broadcasting is represented nationally by the National Indigenous Media Association (NIMA) and on the micro scale it is represented in Perth, Western Australia by 6AR.

ATSIC provided the funds for the establishment NIMA in 1992. Jim Remedio from NIMA told the *Telling Both Stories* conference held at Edith Cowan University in 1996 that part of the vision of NIMA is:

- to continue the struggle begun by the people who came before us in the fight against racism, discrimination and exclusion. (Hartley and McKee, 1996, p. 107)

The stated goal of NIMA to fight against exclusion reflects a desire by the Aboriginal broadcasters the organisation represents to present the views and opinions of Aboriginal people in the wider public sphere.

Aboriginal broadcasting as a temporal medium seeks to preserve Aboriginal culture from the influences of global media programming. Joe Edgar told the *Telling Both Stories* conference;

What with the state and influence of the ever-impending tide of multi-media, the multi-nationals and commercialism creeping ever so rapidly into the most remote parts of the Kimberley, certain important aspects of our culture have been and continue to be lost forever.

...

Can our culture or our language or our morals and ethics survive? Are our leaders aware of this very loud invasion that is staring us in the face? Are we in a position to, if not to stem the tide, at least to come to a compromise and still maintain our culture and identity in this very multi-racial community which is Australia? Those are some of the questions that we as media, indigenous media are faced with today. (Hartley and McKee, 1996, p. 112)

The preservation of indigenous culture from the influence of global media programming presents an example of the communion role of communication. Edgar draws attention to both the communion and evangelism roles of Aboriginal media in communication:

Placing some sort of focus or emphasis on the positive aspects of cultural programming and awareness, as we know, only helps further to strengthen and revitalise our already diverse culture. At the same time it assists in fostering better understanding between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. (Hartley and McKee, 1996, p. 112)

The strengthening and revitalising of the culture represents the communion role of such media while the fostering of better understanding between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians

represents the evangelism role of such media as it seeks to promote an informed rational debate on Aboriginal culture in the public sphere.

The meso sphere of Aboriginal broadcasting on community radio in Perth, Western Australia began in 1978. 6NR presented a 30 minute programme, "Aboriginal Voices". The programme, hosted by Nyungah musician Vi Chitty, presented a mixture of gospel music, country music and talks. A year later Ken Colbung presented a programme on 6NR called "Wanjoo Bambaroo". The two programmes joined forces in 1991 to form Aboriginal Radio.

From this beginning the West Australian Aboriginal Radio Association (WAARA) was formed in 1985. This was followed by the West Australian Aboriginal Media Association (WAAMA) which began operations in 1986. The following year WAAMA became an incorporated body, establishing programmes on community stations 6NR, 6UVS FM and 100 FM in the metropolitan area and ABC regional radio in the country. Former 6UVS FM producer Clare McNamara was appointed to facilitate a training programme. In 1985 6AR began regular broadcasts on 1170 AM.

While 6AR positions itself as a voice for the Aboriginal community it draws criticism from Aboriginal people for its stance on some issues (personal interviews, 1996). The criticism is levelled at the non-Aboriginal management of the station. The manager, Graeme Edwin, is a Maori person with extensive experience in commercial radio, managing 6IX and 6PM before moving to 6AR. News Editor Harvey Deegan was previously a journalist with Southern Cross Broadcasting, owner of stations 6IX and 6PR which has been criticised as a racist media outlet (Mickler, 1992). On the other hand the experience of these people can be seen to provide a

degree of expertise in the training of indigenous people to empower them to take control of the media. Graeme Edwin sees 6AR as a means of training Aboriginal people to take a place in mainstream media and so effect a change in media culture and consequently, through a positive attitude to Aboriginal stories in the media, a change in the meso-public sphere through empowering more informed discourse in the public sphere (personal interview, 1996).

Aboriginal radio broadcasts primarily to the Aboriginal community of Perth with an estimated seventy per cent of the community listening to the station (Graeme Edwin, personal interview, 1996). The communion role of the station is demonstrated in the comment by one of the broadcasters, "It lets our community know about local, historical, economical and political issues and events" (6AR Update, July, 1996). The evangelistic role is demonstrated in other comments,

"It's a way for Aboriginal people to educate non-Aboriginal people about our culture."

"We can also help to change people's viewpoints and therefore promote reconciliation."

"It tells the White community that we're not useless and it gives us pride."

Having an Aboriginal radio station such as ours really helps the wider community to see Aboriginal issues from an Aboriginal Perspective". (6AR Update, July, 1996)

The evangelism and communion roles of communication are also illustrated in the objectives of the West Australian Aboriginal Media Association (Appendix 6). For example the following objective represents the evangelistic role;

(g) To promote knowledge, and understanding by the Australian community of Aboriginal culture and tradition and of the special difficulties experienced by Aboriginal people as a minority within that community.

The following objectives represent the communion role of communication.

(a) To help and encourage its members to keep and renew their traditional culture.

(c) To encourage the development of an informed and educated Aboriginal community by providing a media and informational service to Aboriginal people within and about Western Australia.

(e) To arrest social disintegration within Aboriginal society by the communication of programmes in Aboriginal languages where possible, with emphasis upon Aboriginal culture and music. (WAAMA, c1996)

Despite objective (e) 6AR does not broadcast in Nyungah, the indigenous language of the people of the Perth area. According to Graeme Edwin (personal interview, 1996), there are not enough fluent speakers of Nyungah to make such a programme feasible nor to translate a programme into the language. There is, however, no quantitative evidence to back up this assertion. Most speakers would not be prepared to discuss their language proficiency in Nyungah with a Wadjilla (non Aboriginal person) (personal conversations, 1996). The role of a programme broadcast in Nyungah would be to help promote the continuity of the language and the associated culture. It could be

anticipated that the audience for an introductory course in the language could be larger than the current number of Nyungah speakers. However, the primary role of broadcasting in language would be one of communion through an emphasis on a common language for members of the Nyungah speaking community and by ignoring such programming in favour of English language programming, which potentially can reach a wider audience, the station could be seen to be concentrating more on the evangelistic role of communication.

Funding for 6AR mainly comes from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). The company which holds the licence to operate the station is WAAMA. The board of directors for WAAMA is elected by the members of WAAMA. Membership of this association is open to all members of the Aboriginal community. Station management is appointed by the board of directors. The organisation, therefore, can be seen to be organised on democratic principles.

Aboriginal radio presents a history of the appropriation of introduced technology being appropriated by indigenous people to help strengthen their community through the communion role of communication and to spread their message to the wider public through the evangelism role of communication.

Chapter 9

CONCLUSION

Yes, wireless is a fine thing; but still, the greatest pleasure it gives is switching it off. – Arnold Schoenberg, from a letter to Alban Berg, 1931. (Schoenberg, 1993, p. 280)

In this thesis I have argued that community radio must challenge monopolies of knowledge by allowing the voices that are excluded by other media to be forwarded. Trade unions, environmentalists, non-Christian religions, indigenous people, ethnic communities and urban sub-cultures all

community radio. I have shown these voices provide a balance to the hegemonic forces which Stuart Hall (1970) identifies in other media. They are part of what Foucault called "the battle 'for truth' or at least 'around truth'" (Foucault, 1980, p. 132).

The two case studies in this thesis reveal different practices in seeking to promote such active and participatory communication. RTR FM allows a range of public access to the airwaves and seeks to broadcast to wide ranging communities of interest, whilst 6AR is much more restricted in access and seeks to broadcast primarily to the Aboriginal community of Perth. 6AR seeks to facilitate change in the meso-public sphere by presenting information about Aboriginal people and issues and by helping train Aboriginal people to enter the gatekeeping role and so changing what is being presented in the meso-public sphere. Both stations challenge the status quo and present a wider range of voices such as the gay and

green communities, or Aboriginal voices representing themselves, in the public sphere.

In the case of RTR FM, I found that the internal structure of the station, where the licence is owned by those involved in the station, does present a different notion of the public sphere than the structures of 6UWS/6UWA, where universities held the licence and allowed public access. Where the public actually hold the licence the public sphere created can be seen to be much more democratic and egalitarian.

Community radio, as this thesis argues, provides access to the meso-public sphere from the margins, however, the voices presented do occupy a site of both privilege and marginality. While the marginality of those voices in relation to mainstream media has been demonstrated in this thesis it must be remembered that they do also occupy a place of privilege in that they are provided with a point of entry to the public sphere. For marginal voices in developing countries the need to physically survive on a day to day basis can be of such overpowering precedence that any notion of accessing community media can not be entertained. Comparatively, those West Australians who access community radio are in a position of privilege. The Australian media system and development of the community broadcasting system allows access for those minority voices through the policy of making licences available for community radio.

I have argued that in order to engage with community needs community broadcasters must seek to explore the margins of public discursive practices, provide temporal bias in their broadcasting and privilege the voices of the unprivileged. Community radio must ensure that it remains truly public in terms of its engagement in the public sphere.

Such community engagement will ensure that community radio continues to play a role in the democratic political process. In the case studies of RTR FM and 6AR I found that the internal policies of the stations were democratic. Of course such a small sample can not lead to the extrapolation that all stations in the sector have democratic internal processes, but the two stations studied here provide a good model for other community stations to follow.

The most pressing need for community stations is to develop strategies to ensure financial independence. Such strategies need to be wide ranging in order to ensure that the sector can survive any financial crisis. Neither of the two stations studied here charged access fees. To do so would appear to be oppositional to the principles of a democratic, participatory medium as access would be limited to those who could bear the financial cost. Such programming costs must be met in a more equitable manner with no consideration towards the popularity or wealth of a voice. Funding remains the major problem for the future and continued successful performance of community radio.

The role of community radio in training for radio generally is vital to the medium. This area needs to be fully developed and it is in this area that a potential for finance may lie. A levy from other sectors to pay for the use of community radio as a training facility is one possibility. Educational institutions could also be a source of income as media studies students can gain practical experience in radio through such stations. As a training sector community radio also ensures that new players in the media game are given the opportunity to explore opportunities to change the rules.

I have shown that community radio provides a viable alternative to other radio sectors in the Australian mediascape as a participatory medium allowing disenfranchised voices access to the public sphere.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Advertisement in *FM* 1:8, November, 1977, p. 2.



THE GOLDEN SOUND OF FM RADIO

The Golden Sound of FM is the sound of radio listening at its very best. The Fine Music heard on the FM broadcast band is amazingly free of noise. And, even more important, FM broadcasts have the true high-fidelity characteristics that make them so appealing to every enthusiastic listener of Fine Music.

FM broadcasts can be enjoyed in many ways with the wide selection of receivers from National Panasonic. There are clock radios to awaken you to FM in the morning, and there is a wide variety of portable radios which offer FM in combination with one or more other bands. FM is a great opportunity for great listening enjoyment. The Golden Sound.



RF-1110B
FM/MW/SW 4-band
30 W output
AC battery
Fine tuning

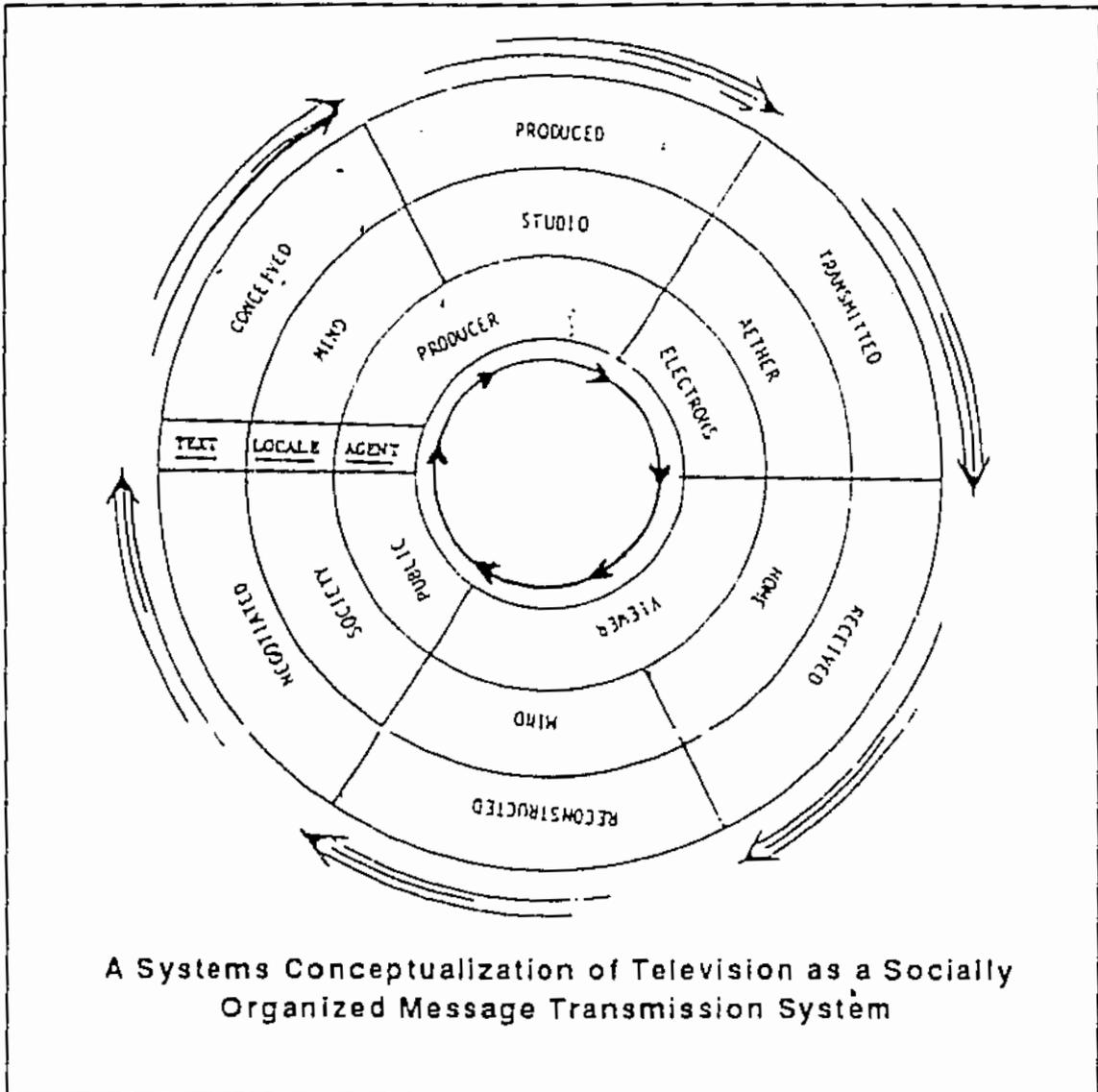
RF-1150B
FM/MW/Marine-SW 3W, 6-band
AC battery 2-hour timer
Separate bass/treble controls
Gyro antenna BFO switch
Fine tuning

RC-6030B
FM/MW
24-hour timer
Music program

National
Just slightly ahead of our time

APPENDIX 2

Eric Michaels' Model of Community Communication
(Michaels, 1990. p. 13).



APPENDIX 3

Egan's Model Of Community Communication (Ginsburg 1993, p. 572).

THE MEANING OF JEANNIE NUNGARRAYI EGAN'S PAINTINGS

FIRST PAINTING

In this model information can travel easily to government centres but it is more expensive and indirect to contact your family in other communities.



Launama (with its yapa) (whiteford) and yapa (Walpa) (at the end)

Launama (at the end)

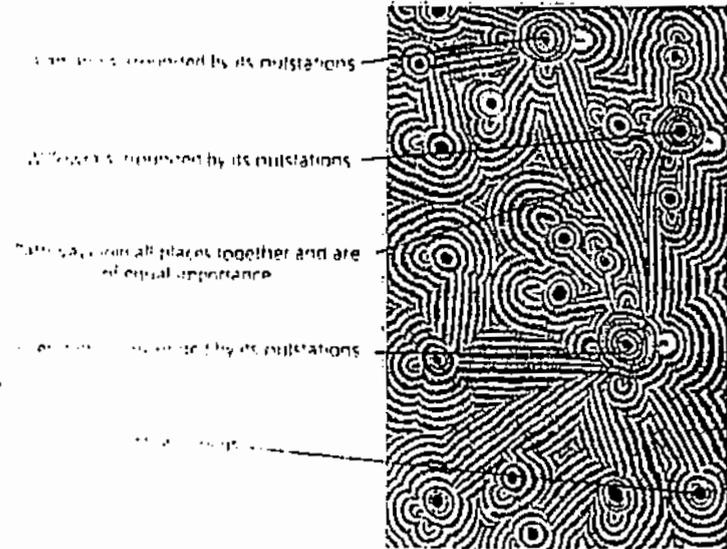
Main communication routes (roads, telephones)

Kardiya (with its yapa), Alpa Springs, Kithonei

Willwya and its outstations yapa and kardiya inhabitants

Yuenriyu and its outstations yapa and kardiya inhabitants

SECOND PAINTING - This model is a true network. It is just as easy for information to be shared between families and communities as it is between communities and Government centres



Launama (with its outstations)

Willwya (with its outstations)

Both yapa (with all places together and are of equal importance)

Yuenriyu (with its outstations)

Main routes

der stereö stereö

Continued from 135

You don't see us all over television or billboards or garbage cans. You see a lot of people wear our windcheaters, T-shirts, and all that sort of stuff, sure.

THE INDEPENDENT RELEASE

We don't go out actively chasing it. If someone doesn't want to bring it into the radio station, obviously they don't want it exposed.

We also have a problem about playing something about is not released here. If we play something, it normally creates a demand for it—then we end up getting into all sorts of hassles. It's something that's generally not very well known, but we have to leave seven weeks between a record's released overseas and when it's played in Australia.

It's an agreement with the record companies that's held with FARB (Federation of Australian Radio Broadcasters)—that we won't play a record until seven weeks after it's been

released overseas, so that they've got time to get all the parts out here and manufacture it—so the import business doesn't do the majors out of a job.

But I don't care what it's released on, to be quite honest. It doesn't matter whether it came from one of the independents or one of the majors. Admittedly, the majority comes from the major record companies, but that's because they control the majority of product.

There's certainly plenty of independent record companies around, with lots of product.

But a lot of it's pretty suspect. A lot of it should never have even made it to vinyl. You don't have to be a very astute marketing person to decide whether something's gonna sell or not—sell in sufficient numbers to justify it being produced.

I don't believe in producing things that lose money. That just doesn't make any sense.

THE ASSERTION OF POWER

We don't claim to have any influence over the singles list at all. We control the album charts—won't make any secret about that. By the same token we play a lot of music that doesn't sell.

At any given time we're playing a large percentage of music that will never sell, in terms of being a Top 30 Hit Album or whatever.

LOCAL MUSIC—II

Y'know, going to pubs to listen to bands... There are very few bands around that attract people to listen to them, musically. It's more a social situation. The guys go where the girls are. They're out to get pissed and score, let's be honest.

The bands that do exceedingly well in this town are, unfortunately, cover bands. I wish they weren't. I really do. But the bands taking big pieces out of the market are cover bands, because they play familiar music. That one's a vicious circle...

But we picked up the Eurogliders and really belted the arse off them when they were pulling screw all people to a gig, and gradually built it up till they were pulling 150. Really exciting.

The one good thing that came out of the West album was that the Eurogliders ended up signing with PolyGram and going east. Last time I saw the Gliders on stage, they'd just improved, y'know, 300%. So that's one band where you can say, 'Hey, we had something to do with helping those guys along.'

I'd like to think The World Famous Orasettes are gonna do some things as well. They certainly have the talent and songwriting ability. Perfect Strangers is another band with a lot of potential.

THE DREAM

I'd love in a lot of ways for this to be a kick-arse rock 'n' roll station, 24 hours a day. There's nothing more I'd like to see in Australia than a really tough radio station. I'd love to run it...

THE END

The realities are, we programme for the marketplace. If the marketplace doesn't like it, we're all unemployed.

And I'm not really into poetry.

Niall Lucy

APPENDIX 5

Memorandum from Public Relations Unit, Office of the Vice-Chancellor,
University of Western Australia, 1990.

Memorandum

Public Relations Unit, Office of the Vice-Chancellor

In a joint statement issued today, the Vice-Chancellor of The University of Western Australia, Professor Fay Gale, and the Vice-Chancellor of Murdoch University, Professor Peter Boyce, regretfully announced the closure of Radio Station 6UVS FM, due to budgetary constraints and limited substantial corporate sponsorship and financial support.

During the thirteen years that it has been in operation, 6UVS FM has relied heavily upon funding from both universities and from public sponsorship. Such funding, however, has not been sufficient to inhibit the gradual financial drain experienced by the joint licence holders.

At a time when heavy financial restraints are having to be exercised throughout the higher education sector, The University of Western Australia, which is the senior partner in the consortium; is not able to maintain the level of funding to the station which would enable it to fulfill its promise of performance to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal.

In taking this drastic step, both universities acknowledge and recognise the unique place 6UVS FM has in radio broadcasting in this state. When its first program went to air in 1977, the station established itself as the first FM broadcaster in Western Australia, several years ahead of ABC FM and 96 FM. During these thirteen years, the station through its dedicated staff, has filled a special place in radio as an educational and community orientated station. It is unfortunate that the station's demise is indicative of the times being experienced by all sectors of business throughout Australia.

For further information, please contact Mr. Martin Griffith, Vice-Principal, Finance and Resources on 380 2030.

APPENDIX 6

The objects of the West Australian Aboriginal Media Association.

Objects

6. The objects of the Association are:-

To assist with the direct relief from poverty, sickness, suffering, destitution, misfortune, distress and helplessness to all Aborigines in the district of (area) of Western Australia without discrimination and to include, but without limiting the generality of the above, the following:

- (a) To help and encourage its members to keep and renew their traditional culture.
- (b) To receive and spend grants of money from the Government of the Commonwealth or of the State or from other sources.
- (c) To encourage the development of an informed and educated Aboriginal Community by providing a media and informational service to Aboriginal people within and about Western Australia.
- (d) To provide an educational media service in the areas of Health, Law, Social Security, Education and other items of public interest, and in so doing attempt to overcome the problems of low literacy levels existent within the Aboriginal communities in and about Western Australia.
- (e) To arrest social disintegration within Aboriginal society by the communication of programmes in Aboriginal languages where possible, with emphasis upon Aboriginal culture and music.
- (f) By the dissemination of information as regards employment opportunities and work programmes to assist in alleviating significant economic problems that exist with Aboriginal communities.
- (g) To promote knowledge, and understanding by the Australian community of Aboriginal culture and tradition and of the special difficulties experienced by Aboriginal people as a minority within that community.
- (h) To engage in, research and develop into areas of application of the media to and for the benefit of Aboriginal people.
- (i) To ensure access by Aboriginal people to existing and forthcoming communications facilities in order that they may benefit in accordance with its objects.
- (j) To record and preserve Aboriginal oral history and music.
- (k) To employ and train Aboriginal people in all areas of the media.
- (l) For the purpose of carrying out its objects to raise, borrow, invest, donate, expend and lend funds, acquire, and dispose of any form of property, employ staff, enter into contracts and establish companies

APPENDIX 7

The following interviewees provided responses for this thesis. All interviews were conducted in 1995.

Ms Irma Whitford

Mr Kim LeSouef

Mr Andrew Brine

Mr Glen Stasiuk

Ms Olwyn Williams

Mr Graham Edwin

and other respondents who preferred to remain anonymous.