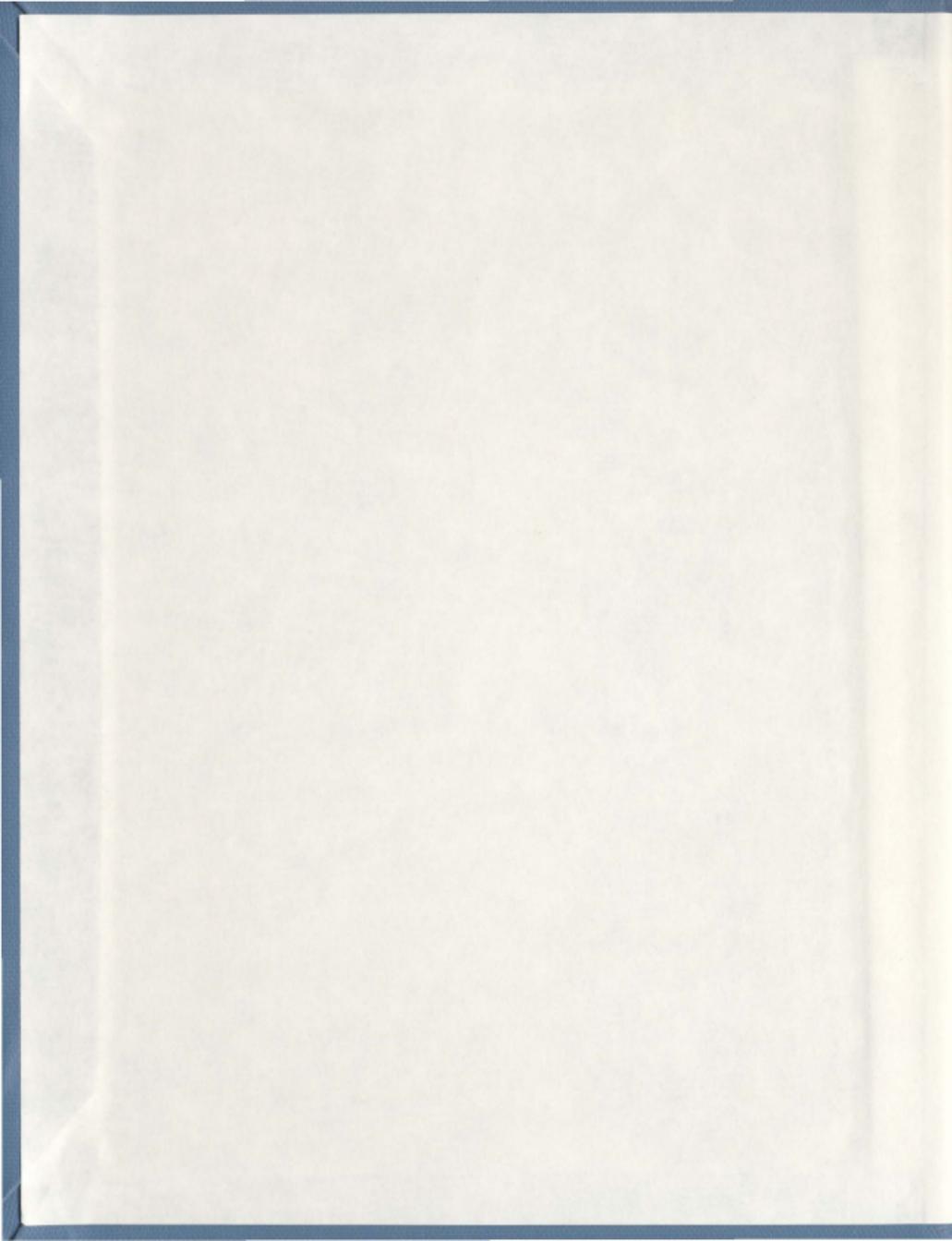CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY THROUGH

COMMUNITY RADIO:

COMMUNITY BUILDING IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND

NORTHERN IRELAND

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CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY THROUGH COMMUNITY RADIO:

Community Building in Newfoundland and Northern Ireland

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Abstract

      This research examines the social and cultural impacts of community radio projects in rural Newfoundland (Norris Point and Tilting) and in West Belfast, Northern Ireland. The study considers the following questions: How do people construct community identity through community radio? To what extent does it provide 'a voice for the voiceless'?

      The research found that, particularly in conjunction with community festivals, community radio stations can provide a hopeful, fun, and unique space for community engagement. Community radios can also be used to revitalise areas economically. Through their potential for teamwork across different constituencies, they can provide new possibilities for literacy and media education, technical skills development, tourism initiatives, and the promotion of local knowledge, language, and culture. The research also highlights barriers to participation and challenges faced by these non-profit, small-scale community radio stations.

      In order to function effectively, that is, to fulfil its community building initiatives, community radio requires active participation, lest it be simply more noise on the dial.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to study

> [T]hat's probably what community radio is about, giving people access, no matter what gender you are, what age you are, what religious background you have, what political background you have, what nationality you are… it's about giving people a voice. And giving people a voice who live at the local level, who your radio station's going to serve (Emma, personal communication)

When I first began to explore the idea of a research project on community radio in Newfoundland, one of the frequent questions I would get from people was: why radio? Do people even listen to radio anymore? Here's how I came to study this topic, and how community media, and radio in particular, is still a relevant means for local activism and social change.

I began volunteering at CHMR-FM, Memorial University's campus and community radio station, when I was a teenager in 1994, and I stayed for over ten years. Looking back, it was one of the first moments in which I felt to be a member of a community. Coming into contact with others to discuss music and politics, learn technical skills, organise for and promote causes we believed in, all while accessing a university community for the first time was an amazing learning experience. Meeting and interacting with the many volunteers, staff, and visitors to the station over the years has been immeasurably enriching – full of conflicts and friendships and working relationships and dreams of social change – and radio has been an interest ever since.

As I continue to meet and speak with others who have been involved in community media projects over the years, my curiosity has grown. How do other stations operate? What kinds of shows are broadcast? Who listens to their radio station? What communities do they serve? A lot of buzz about community radio pays lip service to the importance of "giving a voice to the voiceless"; what does this really mean? Can community radio really accomplish this? What sorts of spaces exist for women and feminism in community radio, and are community identities reflected and represented in on-air programming and station participation? As audio equipment and computer

technology become more affordable, have the possibilities for creating media that represents our communities changed? Is community radio still relevant in this age of the Internet?

For this project I conducted 14 qualitative interviews with volunteers and staff of community radio stations and individuals involved in community development organisations in rural Newfoundland and West Belfast, Northern Ireland. This thesis details the results of those interviews – the radio stations identified here aim to provide spaces in which we can share our stories, music, language, and cultural heritage, and I examine the roles that local radio can play in shaping communities, and the possibilities for community building via radio.

The remainder of this chapter will introduce you to my research locations, attempt to answer the question 'what is community radio?' and describe how it is important to many people worldwide, comment on feminist voice in community radio, and provide a description of the chapters to follow.

1.2 Background to study

I travelled to Belfast, Northern Ireland, in 2007 to visit my father's family and spend time with my grandmother, whom I don't see often enough. My father grew up in Andersonstown, West Belfast, and though he has been away many years, he has always encouraged my brother and me to maintain connections with the area and our family abroad. My interviews in Belfast were a somewhat serendipitous occurrence – I'd hoped to learn more about the local community radio stations in the West Belfast area I'd researched prior to arriving, and managed to secure introductions to both Féile FM and Raidió Fáilte. My interviews there primarily focused on those two stations and related organisations: Féile FM, a community radio station located in the Conway Mill Community Centre; its parent organisation, Féile an Phobail; Raidió Fáilte, an Irish-language community radio station situated in the Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich Arts

Centre; and Fáilte Feirste Thiar, an organisation promoting West Belfast Tourism, located next door to the Cultúrlann on the Falls Road.

Equipped with new examples of how community radio can operate and inspired by my discussions with community radio activists in Belfast, I was curious as to how radio had been used similarly in this province to encourage civic participation.

Encouraged by these experiences, I set out to explore community radio in rural Newfoundland. Participatory community media has been facilitated in Newfoundland and Labrador at least since the 1960s, and much has been written on the interactive television broadcasts of the MUN Extension Service on Fogo Island, globally known as the Fogo Process. Did this kind of community building through media still exist on the island?

In 2008, I moved to the Bonne Bay area, which also comprises Gros Morne National Park [GMNP]. Though initially arriving for work unrelated to this thesis, I had heard rumours of a community radio station operating there; From Spring 2008 to Winter 2010 I interviewed those involved in community-oriented projects in and around Bonne Bay. This included people involved with the Voice of Bonne Bay radio station (VOBB FM); the Trails, Tales and Tunes festival; the Community-University Research for Recovery Alliance at Memorial University (CURRA); the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre (formerly the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital); and Ryakuga Grassroots Communications, a non-profit community media organisation. In addition to the VOBB radio events, I was invited to participate in other radio projects around the province: the Féile Tilting festival in September 2009 and 2010 in Tilting, Fogo Island, and the Cape Shore Radio event in St. Brides, March 2010. Since relocating to the west coast (sometimes referred to as the best coast) of Newfoundland, I have become a volunteer member of VOBB and have participated in community radio projects in many rural communities across the island.

Northern Ireland has a long history of using radio as a means of participatory communication by and for particular communities. Some of these stations were pirate radio stations, which arose in the presence of censorship of state and commercial media during periods of violence (The Troubles), lack of access to resources such as Irish-

language radio broadcasts, and as a means of skills development and training in areas such as writing for media and technical production. In recent years, stations that previously operated either illegally or with temporary licenses have become licensed, 'legitimate' community stations. Newfoundland and Labrador, with its vast geography, has also relied on radio as a means of essential communication, particularly in rural communities. Community-driven radio and television in Newfoundland and Labrador has been used to foster development of educational skills, to celebrate language and culture, and to create unique spaces for dialogue (Ryakuga, n.d.). In examining how these two locales use radio technology, I discovered that they both adhered to similar principles of the importance of community and saw an inherent value in using radio stations for grassroots organising and to strengthen community ties. This was apparent in how stations in both rural Newfoundland and in Belfast offered training in radio skills such as writing for radio, technical production, and speaking on-air. These stations also believed in sharing their history, culture and language through the airwaves, and had several time slots dedicated to this. For example, Féile FM in Belfast has a Community Speaks program, whereby for an hour each week a different community group would be interviewed on the air. Community on-air involvement in the Fogo Island (Newfoundland) temporary radio station, Féile Tilting, was kickstarted in 2009 by the broadcast of an interview from the 1970s of a Tilting resident who had since passed away. Following this, broadcasts of tucked-away old cassette recordings of community residents continued throughout the event, brought in by listeners, as did live interviews with community elders. These forays into the history and culture of a region or population's history are often very popular with listeners and a wonderful way to commemorate and celebrate heritage.

In Both West Belfast and rural Newfoundland, community radio projects are being used today to actively encourage community participation and celebrate local culture and history. The following section details how this research explores this further.

1.3 Purpose of study

The purpose of this study was to highlight much of the community work done by volunteers in community radio, to showcase their stories, and examine the possibilities for community building through community radio. During the preliminary stages of this research, I sought out connections between community identity, community building, and community radio – how was community radio being used in parts of Newfoundland and Northern Ireland to give people hope, to provide residents with new opportunities for learning, to provide a space to share stories, music, language, and heritage, and to bring people together?

1.4 Research questions

Upon beginning this research, I had a number of directions I wanted the project to go in. Ultimately, through qualitative interviews, I hoped to uncover participants' perspectives on community radio and constructing community through participation in their radio station. What does the word "community" mean to them? How do they define or conceptualise the communities they live and work in, and what is their vision of "community radio?" Whose voices are heard on their community radio station, and who listens? Do they feel responsible to the community for the content their community radio station provides? How do they address this – by recruiting and encouraging participation from a variety of backgrounds, by promoting local activities, by playing music their listeners would like to hear, by conducting talk shows and interviews on relevant subjects of local interest? Do producers of community radio recognise the power inherent in media production and presentation, and do they feel they are reflecting issues relevant to their communities and themselves? How is community media work, and community volunteer work, challenging for them? What are the barriers inherent in encouraging

participation and soliciting funding and sustainable infrastructure for their community radio station? Are they worried about the ever-changing pressures of technology – do they feel that radio is an outdated medium, are they working with Internet technologies or in spite of them?

1.5 Significance of study

This thesis discusses themes that emerged from my interviews with individuals involved in community radio projects. The significant themes that arose include: issues of access to meaningful employment; access to education and skills development; access to technology and communications media (i.e. Internet, libraries/CAP sites in NL/literacy programs); and hearing reflections of, and participating in the creation of, one's own location, stories, language and cultural history. Community radio can be a powerful and transformative experience for both listeners and participants, and can foster sharing and camaraderie.

Many additional benefits of community radio are identified, including:

- Community radio can be a bridge between communities
- Community radio and the internet can be cooperative technologies
- Community radio is beneficial to community health
- Community radio offers unique learning experiences for students and youth
- Community radio can connect community members to each other
- Community radio provides opportunities to share and celebrate our culture
- Community radio helps us disseminate information
- Community radio is a mirror in which we can see ourselves represented (McKee, 2011)

Many of these themes, as well as challenges for producers of community radio, are explored in the analysis chapter.

1.6 Limitations of study

This thesis is not intended to be a comprehensive overview of community media in either Newfoundland or West Belfast. The communities I interviewed were ones I had access to; unfortunately this meant eventually eliminating the prospect of studying stations in Labrador – such as the Okalakatiget Society in Nain – or examining the several other such community radio projects in Newfoundland, such as the recently established Rafale FM (a project of L'Association francophone de Terre-Neuve, in conjunction with CJRM, a French-language station in Labrador City), and Burnt Islands' Coastal Community Radio on the southern shore. There are and were many other community radio projects in Belfast – such as Shankill Radio – and throughout Northern Ireland that I was unable to connect with in any detail in my short time there. Further research could be done on the rich tradition of community media in both regions, but is beyond the scope of this project.

What is community radio and how does it differ from commercial and government-supported media? The following section offers definitions for community radio and regulatory requirements in Canada and the UK.

1.7 Definitions of Community Radio

In both Northern Ireland (as part of the United Kingdom) and Canada, there are regulatory bodies governing the use of telecommunications media. In Canada, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has various policies directing the community radio sector. The CRTC has defined several areas they consider to be of key importance to community radio:

- Community media programming should be locally focused and different from that of commercial (i.e. private sector radio) and state-supported or public media (the CBC). "Their not-for-profit nature and community

access policies should assist them in contributing to the achievement of this objective" (CRTC, 2000, Section 12).

- "…the broadcasting system should reflect the multicultural and multiracial nature of Canadian society and the place of Aboriginal Peoples" (CRTC, 2000, Section 16). Community broadcasting should aim to be representative of and of interest to the communities served, particularly language minority populations (CRTC, 2000, Section 12).
- "The programming broadcast by community stations should be varied and provide a wide variety of music and spoken word" (CRTC, 2000, Section 12).

In the United Kingdom, the Office of Communications (Ofcom) is the telecommunications regulatory body, governing the radio sector in Northern Ireland. Community radio, according to *The Community Radio Order 2004*, should have the following characteristics:

- Community radio is a local service benefiting particular communities or members of the general public.
- It is not-for-profit, and any monies generated are reinvested into the local community or used to improve or to continue operating the community radio station.
- "It is a characteristic of every community radio service that members of the community it is intended to serve are given opportunities to participate in the operation and management of the service" (Section 3).
- "…in respect of the provision of that service, the person providing the service makes himself accountable to the community that the service is intended to serve" (Section 3).

Further to the above, *The Community Radio (Amendment) Order 2010* states:

The community radio services to which this Order applies are, or are to be, provided primarily for the good of members of the public or of a particular community, rather than for commercial reasons. The Secretary of State considers that the provision of those services confers, or would confer, significant benefits on the public or on the communities for which they are provided (p. 1).

In both Canada and the UK, stations licensed as "community stations" can be licensed to be on air full time (24-hours, 7 days a week) or temporarily (i.e. for a week or a month, sometimes in conjunction with another community event, such as a festival). According to Bruce Girard (1992), community radio is "an alternative to commercial and

State radio…. Its 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" (p. 2).

A pirate radio station is a radio station operating without federal/governmental licensing or approval. As such, these stations are often considered illegal. Despite a lack of or a desire to avoid governmental regulation, pirate radio stations can exist as participatory community radio stations in the sense that they may value many of the same principles as outlined in the licensing requirements above, concerning themselves with community well-being and development, being an alternative to other media broadcasts, and providing local access to the radio airwaves.

In his essay *Who Gets to Speak?: Access and the Electronic Mass Media in Development Communications*, Alan Wong (2001) argues that community radio stations provide space for local perspectives and languages via community participation in ways that commercial or government-sponsored radio stations do not or cannot (p. 15).

Ofcom's *Community Radio Order 2004* defines 'community' as: "(a) the persons who live or work or undergo education or training in a particular area or locality, or (b) persons who (whether or not they fall into paragraph (a)) have one or more interests or characteristics in common" (2004, Heading Interpretation, Section 2). Further to this, I would argue that despite governmental regulations, pirate radio stations – stations broadcasting illegally without official licensing or recognition from regulatory bodies – can also be community stations particularly when they espouse notions of media accessibility and local, public access to the airwaves via their own internal policies or structures.

Feminist theories of community can be valuable in terms of understanding and interpreting meanings of social spaces, participation, and identity. As such, feminist writings on community can be helpful in identifying aspects of community media that can be relevant to feminist researchers and activists. In the book *Feminism and*

Community, Penny A. Weiss and Marilyn Friedman (1995) offer their definition of a feminist community:

> We label a community as feminist when women rather than men establish the community or the roles and projects of women within it, and when it is dedicated to overcoming specifically gender-based obstacles to women's survival and flourishing – as understood first and foremost by the women in the community. Traditional communities and feminist communities, however, are neither totally dissimilar nor radically disconnected. Both can be the sites of genuine friendship, social support, and collaborative political activism among women. Women working within a traditional community can evolve together toward activities that unselfconsciously refashion the gender practices of those communities in substantially feminist directions (p. xii).

Further discussions on feminist theories related to this project can be found in both Chapter 3 (literature review: theoretical framework) and Chapter 4 (methodology).

1.8 Chapter Outlines

This thesis has six chapters: this introduction (Chapter 1); a review of literature relating to community media and my sites of study (Chapter 2), which provides an overview of key writings and research on community radio and grassroots organising in Canada, the UK and Ireland, with a focus on Northern Ireland/Ireland and Newfoundland; a literature review & theoretical framework (Chapter 3), which offers an exploration of cultural studies and feminist approaches to community and participation as they apply to this research; a methodology section (Chapter 4) with details of my research methods in soliciting participants, conducting interviews, data analysis and grounded theory, my writing and reflection process, and ethical concerns; my analysis chapter (Chapter 5), which features narratives and observation from my research sites, along with key findings in how community radio benefits communities through cultural celebration, encouraging participation and dialogue, in providing alternative forms of education, and detailing challenges faced by community radio stations; and a concluding chapter

(Chapter 6), which summarises the main points in this work and offers suggestions for future areas of study. Hopefully this research project can offer insight and encourage further information sharing between community media activists and further our understanding of the inherent power in being able to access and create radio for oneself and one's community.

Chapter 2: Literature Review from the Sites

2.1 Introduction

In this section, I examine community radio history as it pertains to my research locations in Newfoundland and Labrador (Canada) as well as in Belfast and Northern Ireland (and as it relates to relevant organisations and regulations in the United Kingdom and Ireland).

In a panel discussion entitled Radio that Reflects Community at the 2009 Radio Without Boundaries conference in Toronto, moderator Anna Friz succinctly describes how the two words that make up the term 'community radio' connect, and how we perceive them:

> Since we're talking about community and radio today, I wanted to sort of set this up briefly, by saying that the idea of 'community' often refers to people who hold something in common, that is, a shared geography or a fellowship of self-defined interests, opinions, practices, language, and culture. In terms of terrestrial broadcast, the community can be defined as all those who can potentially listen to the transmitted signal, and in digital models of diffusion, geography might be the less meaningful marker, belonging where there might be other kinds of focussed models. Radio on the other hand is also something that we both talk about as the perception of electromagnetic spectrum, as well as the actual set that you listen to, the programming that you listen to, a spot on the dial and so on. And so from the outset, these two terms 'community' and 'radio' have historical, political, and ideological dimensions that add quite a bit of preconception to these ideas. So if we want to think about possibilities for community radio or to assess where we're at, I believe it's necessary to reassess what 'radio' and 'community' might in fact mean (New Adventures in Sound Art, 2009).

I asked the question "what is community radio?" to many of my interview participants, and while everyone had different answers, common themes kept emerging, particularly related to access: access to meaningful education and employment; training for youth, especially in developing skills such as learning teamwork, writing,

presentation, audio production, and broadcast technology skills; sharing community stories, news, history, language, music, and culture; improving community health; and developing, strengthening, and celebrating community and identity. Many believed that community radio can be a powerful and transformative experience for both listeners and participants, and can foster sharing and camaraderie. These notions of community radio – and its historical, political, and ideological dimensions, to echo Friz' words above – are also reflected in many of the writings described in this chapter.

2.2 Community Radio in Newfoundland and Labrador & Canada: Presenting and Celebrating our Heritage

In Community Newspapers and Community Identity (2001), a cross-Canada study of the importance of local newspapers, Ivan Emke writes that community publications can "act as a glue for [rural] communities, in the process promoting social cohesion and identity" (p. 1). On the island of Newfoundland, grassroots communications such as community radio and community TV have been historically used as a forum for dialogue, as in the Fogo Process. Recognised internationally as a conceptual model for the role participatory communications can play in community development, the Fogo Process was a series of short films produced on Fogo Island in the late 1960s by the National Film Board of Canada and Memorial University's Extension Service. These films involved interviews with local people and scenes of life on the island. Once produced, the communities in which they were filmed had a chance to watch themselves on screen, and discussions were facilitated around issues important to the community. The Fogo Island films became an important factor in consensus-building on the island, and acted as a means to encourage collaborative action on developments to benefit the communities. This participatory style of using media to encourage dialogue was replicated in many arenas, including screenings for government officials at the time, providing a compelling connection from a rural, isolated part of the province to decision-makers in cabinet during

a period in which communications between rural and urban decision-makers were scarce and mass resettlement of the province was underway (Williamson, 1990, pp. 492-494).

Both Jeff Webb[1] and Philip Hiscock[2] have explored the use of radio in constructing a Newfoundland nationalist identity by examining Joseph Smallwood's popular The Barrelman programme. The Doyle News Bulletin was another popular show in the province in the 1930s that featured a mix of community announcements and advertising (Webb, 1997, p. 9).[3]

St. John's VOWR is one of Canada's longest-running community-focussed radio stations, started by the Reverend Dr. J.G. Joyce of Wesley United Church in 1924. Still popular today, its history and legacy in the St. John's area has been the focus of several articles and publications, including Hector Swain's *VOWR: The Unfolding Dream*.[4] Of particular interest to my research, Judith Klassen's thoughtful article entitled "I Am VOWR" weaves observational narrative into her analysis of the station's programming. "By embracing its volunteers and listeners, VOWR remains true to its mandate, 'We Serve.'… Challenging the traditional categorization of radio as exclusively public, commercial, or community, VOWR uses recordings and the spoken word to blur commonly understood boundaries between station and audience" (222).

I also found insight in the literature on aboriginal community radio stations – which have a long and inspiring history in Canada – when examining the connections between media and access to information, presentation/representation, agency, and voice. Valerie Alia writes in *Un/Covering the North: News, Media, and Aboriginal People* (1999): "There is a frustrating contradiction in northern communications: At the same time that northern leaders and community members have benefited from extensive access

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[1] Webb, J. A. (1997). *Constructing community and consumers: Radio broadcasting during the depression.* Presentation paper. Canadian Historical Association.
[2] Hiscock, P. (1994). *The Barrelman radio programme, 1937-1943: The mediation and use of folklore in Newfoundland.* PhD Dissertation. Memorial University of Newfoundland.
[3] See also Webb, J. (1998). *Mass media: Newfoundland and Labrador heritage.* Retrieved from http://www.heritage.nf.ca/society/massmedia.html
[4] Swain, H. (1999). *VOWR: The unfolding dream.* St. John's, NL: Creative.

to technological breakthroughs in mass media, those outside the North [Northern Canada] appear to have received little benefit from information generated in the North through these technologies" (pp. 8-9). Further, she comments: "This lack of coverage [of Northern stories in national media such as The Globe and Mail] underscores an urgent problem that I think has more to do with power than technology" (p. 9). Fran Williams, from the Okalakatiget Society in Nain, Labrador, has said:

> In northern Labrador the language has almost been made extinct because we've only been taught in English through the educational system. It is only recently that the Inuktitut language is being brought back into the schools. One of the objectives of the Okalakatiget Society, our communications network, and of Onikatet, the Inuit radio station and television programs, is to help retain this lifestyle by researching and airing stories from the older generation. These stories show us how our foremothers and forefathers hunted and survived here. They are broadcast half in Inuktitut and half in English, which we feel is a good beginning (White, 1992, p. 177).

The editors of *Islands of Resistance: Pirate Radio in Canada* (2010) highlight and celebrate the initiatives of indigenous activists producing pirate and unlicensed radio in Canada (pp. 9-10). Two essays in this book also focus on radio stations in aboriginal communities. Neskie Manuel's radio station, Secwepemc Radio, intentionally decided to operate as an unlicensed radio station as an act of resistance against the legislative process to become a 'legitimate' broadcaster. He writes: "Secwepemc Radio… did not get a license from the CRTC when starting because of our position that as aboriginal people we did not give up our right to make use of the electromagnetic spectrum to carry on our traditions, language, and culture. Operating this radio station is an expression of who we are as a people; it is the modern version of the campfire where people would share stories" (p. 71).

Pirate radio stations, or stations broadcasting outside of (or in spite of) government regulations, sprang up in both the UK and Canada as soon as the radio transmitter became relatively easy to assemble at home. Recent works on pirate radio stations such as the *Islands of Resistance* anthology and *Death of a Pirate: British Radio*

and the Making of the Information Age (2011) provide snapshots into this sometimes obscure and difficult-to-research history.

The editors of *Islands of Resistance* eloquently describe their vision of what pirate radio can be:

> [N]ot all radio pirates would consider themselves to be radical resisters or movement activists. Radio pirates take over the airwaves illegally for various reasons. Some do so to maintain language and culture, or as a statement of indigenous sovereignty. Others wish to create community or to protest domination. In some cases, the objective is to give direct voice to the voiceless by strengthening to self-defined identity of a singularly-minded group or of a group that is more inclusive of the complexity of different geographical, ethnic and gendered realities. For some, the primary motivation is to create art or to devise a space of self-representation in relation to music, politics, the spoken word, sound art or radio drama. For others, their dedication to autonomous radio goes beyond content and becomes a participatory experiment in lateral organization and facilitates access to the skills and tools needed for cultural production. Finally, some go on-air as pirates to exercise the individual freedom to use radio in experimental and unconventional ways… In all cases, as pirates they exhibit the underlying philosophy that the airwaves should be freely available (p. 8).

The book features some thoughtful essays from radio activists, and I refer in particular to Sheila Nopper's essay "Freedom Soundz" in my discussion of voice and agency in Chapter 4 of this thesis. She describes her transition from campus/community radio to pirate radio, and notes that pirate radio offers her a kind of freedom on the airwaves that can potentially be undermined in a campus/community setting. Using examples of past staff and policy changes at both CIUT (University of Toronto's campus station) and CKLN (Ryerson University's campus station), she illustrates the detrimental effect a hierarchal management structure and emphasis on demographics and advertising can have on volunteers' voices. She writes of her transition to Tree Frog Radio, a low-power pirate radio station broadcasting on a rural island off the coast of British Columbia: "[R]adical voices on license community-oriented radio stations continue to face what seems to be an escalating threat of being silenced as political priorities shift with each new station management shuffle. Given the options, it seems pretty obvious to

me that the benefits associated with cooperatively operating a pirate radio station far exceed anything a licensed station can offer" (p. 67).

2.3 Community Radio in Northern Ireland: Traditions of Grassroots Organising and Resistance

There were many texts that were useful in locating Belfast in a cultural and political context, particularly in terms of West Belfast communities and grassroots organising. One in particular is Begoña Aretxaga's *Shattering Silence: Women, Nationalism, and Political Subjectivity in Northern Ireland* (1997). In her second chapter, Catholic West Belfast: A Sense of Place she provides a useful description for geographic and neighbourhood distinctions in Northern Ireland, noting that implicit knowledge of local geography and political affiliations are frequently identity markers for residents. She writes:

> [P]lace is inextricably linked to the formation and re-creation of ethnic identities in Northern Ireland, which in turn are inseparable from the avatars of plantation settlements, land surveys, and forced displacements that characterized British colonization in Ireland, particularly the north east. Place is thus in Northern Ireland both the product of relations of power and the material through which such relations are culturally articulated, challenged, and reproduced. From the vantage point of West Belfast, place is also a way of being-in-the-world, a space at once material and symbolic in and through which people construct personal histories and deploy historical action (p. 24).

Fr. Des Wilson, a Catholic priest living and working in West Belfast since 1966, wrote a memoir called *The Way I See It* (2005). As a community activist, he helped establish the Conway Mill, the community education centre that is also home to Féile FM. His writing gives a first-hand account of grassroots organising in West Belfast at a time when the civil rights movement in Northern Ireland was just beginning.

My research on Northern Ireland led me to some interesting writings on radio from both Ireland and the UK. Legislation supporting community radio is a relatively

recent phenomenon in Northern Ireland and the UK, beginning with a pilot project in 2002 and resulting in Ofcom's *Community Radio Order of 2004*. Many of the community radio stations currently operating have forged connections to community media organisations beyond the six counties of Northern Ireland. They work with many UK, Irish, and European groups, such as the Community Media Council for Northern Ireland, UK's Community Media Association, the Community Radio Forum of Ireland (CRAOL), and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC). Rosemary Day's book, *Bicycle Highway: Celebrating Community Radio in Ireland* (2007) – a collection of essays written by community radio producers in the Republic of Ireland – was very useful in terms of referencing community radio history on the island as well as methodology in terms of participation, voice, Irish-language rights, and celebrating cultural heritage.

Community radio stations in Northern Ireland have in their history a precedent of temporary unlicensed broadcasts – pirate radio stations, sometimes also known in this usage as clandestine radio stations[5] – particularly during the early years of the Troubles, when neighbourhoods were barricaded and clashes with the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC, the former police force of Northern Ireland) were not uncommon. The equipment for these pirate radio units was often portable, sometimes set up in the trunk of a vehicle, as described by one of my interview participants in West Belfast. A radio station could be used to describe movements of groups of people (of mobs, the police, and the British Army), which routes and neighbourhood areas were safe to travel in, to inform residents of sources of food and supplies behind barricades, and to provide a space for personal connection.

I found several interesting references to unsanctioned radio stations in my literature searches. In her autobiography, opinionated Irish journalist Nell McCafferty

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[5] 'Clandestine radio' is a term that was developed to refer to wartime broadcasting during WWII, and has since been adopted to sometimes refer to pirate stations, particularly those of a political nature, operating in societies in conflict. See Soley, L.C., & Nichols, J.C. (1987). *Clandestine radio broadcasting: A study of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary electronic communication.* New York: Praeger Publishers.

(2005) refers to Radio Free Derry, a nationalist pirate radio station that began operating in January 1969, in the months before a period of violence and rioting that is now known as the Battle of the Bogside. Despite the violence at the time, McCafferty describes Radio Free Derry as a bit of a raucous affair:

> An awful lot of program time was devoted to playing record requests from one Bogside citizen to another. Those requests provided a source of gossip that my mother and her friends mined to the full. There was the meek young fellow whose equally meek girlfriend went off to be a nun, but changed her mind, came out of the convent in a big, stiff skirt, a beehive and stilettos – 'like the Queen of Sheba,' said Annie – and tottered up to his door to announce herself to his parents. The parents, a pious pair, had opposed their son marrying an ex-nun, but now weren't they after turning up on Radio Free Derry requesting a song for the young couple's fifth wedding anniversary. My mother thought a request from a Nora McGuinness to all her brothers and sisters over in the Waterside was 'wild sad'. Mrs. McGuinness was a fine tall handsome woman living in the Brandywell who had to change her religion when she married a Catholic…. She only ever sees her relatives once a year, around Christmas, when she goes over there to visit. There was nothing to stop them coming over here, but ye know how it is… (p. 151).

Though her description is lively, I've observed similar gossip, stories, and tales occurring in my experiences with contemporary community radio stations in rural, close-knit communities. As community radio can encourage dialogue, it can also give people something to talk about.

In a short video clip from 1969 available on YouTube, Eamonn McCann, then involved with the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association and one of the instigators behind Radio Free Derry, speaks to a journalist:

> Journalist [J]: "I understand Radio Free Derry is going on again tonight."
> Eamonn McCann [E]: "Yes, well, I've tested the apparatus and we'll be on the air from 12 midnight tonight again on a regular basis."
> J: "Any special announcements coming up?"
> E: "Well, we've nothing special certainly at the moment, the local news bulletins and we'll liaise between the defense committee and the people in general, help them coordinate any activities inside the area. Also there'll be a bit of entertainment on it of course."
> J: "What's the range of your radio?"
> E: "[--- up to 30 ---]"

J: "Why have you been off the air recently?"

E: "One or two little technical problems and also difficulty of shifting the transmitter from place to place after each broadcast. Now that we're behind the barricades, we're quite safe here, and we'll operate from a fixed spot."

J: "I see that you've some volunteers from outside the area, and at least one of your barricades. Have you many volunteers?"

E: "There's some people here from outside the area in response to a call from the defense committee. It should be remembered that almost all of the work that goes on in the area is by the residents of the area."[6]

Another example of a pirate radio station – a contemporary one this time, from 1998 – that emerged from a period of violence in Northern Ireland is Radio Equality, run by residents of the largely Nationalist Garvaghy Road in Portadown. *Garvaghy: A Community Under Siege* (1999) is a book anonymously authored by "Garvaghy Residents," featuring narratives and essays about the history and experience of living in the neighbourhood during the July marching season of the Portadown Orange Lodge to Drumcree Church, in which the 12th of July parade would routinely march down the Garvaghy Road despite opposition from local residents. Several residents of the area were killed during that period in the mid-1990s. *Garvaghy* describes the radio station thus:

> Radio Equality was set up on the Friday before the first Sunday demonstrations of Orangeism, with the intention of broadcasting 15-minute long information bulletins every two hours or so during the siege of the nationalist part of Portadown. It was intended to ease people's fears, dismiss unfounded rumours and speculation and to have an effective way of alerting people in the event that the British security forces caved in to the threat of Orange violence….
>
> Well, so much for intentions! It wasn't long before the handful of reluctant radio greenhorns… set about turning an emergency broadcast station into a full-time radio station with live and recorded interviews, DJs, agony aunts, public announcements, front line news, fax line, phone line, 'Love Line' – and any other line we could spin. Indeed, it all got so out of line that we had to move to a bigger studio; and of course then celebrities all wanted in on the act. We had Monica McWilliams, Gerard Rice, international observers, Martin McGuinness, Brendy

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[6] YouTube (n.d.). *YouTube – Eamonn McCann – Radio Free Derry*. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZzMeAMEWfs

[Brendan McKenna, Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition spokesperson], Gerry Adams, and even councillor Joe Duffy took the opportunity to do a bit of electioneering!

Then we had an Assembly member interviewing 'auld' IRA men and another man trying to get statements from a few younger ones. There were the lads bantering and wee Maria singing her head off and yer man who wouldn't sing in the barracks, but sang 'Around the Northway'. We had the Women's Writers' Group reading their poetry – and explaining the need for expressive language; and there was politics and sociology and religion and psychology; and the United Irishmen and local history, local place names, and 'What the Papers (don't) Say'. (pp. 89-90).

Politics aside, these descriptions above of Radio Equality's "emergency broadcast station turned full-time radio station" are not unlike some of the radio broadcasts from VOBB, Féile Tilting, Féile FM, and Raidió Fáilte that I describe in Chapter 4.

Garvaghy also features two chapters of transcripts from Radio Equality broadcasts of roundtable discussions between local women, in which they describe the effects of local violence and trauma on their children, grassroots community organising, and the importance of education for local youth. These transcripts are further referenced in Chapter 4.

"From the Bogside to Namibia: The Place of Community Broadcasting in Post-Conflict Cultural Reconstruction" (2008) is an article by Paul Moore comparing his experiences working in community-minded public radio in Northern Ireland (BBC Radio Foyle) with his time at Katatura Community Radio (KCR) in Namibia. Interestingly, he takes the position that the radio stations he describes, and perhaps community radio in general, fail to adequately represent the communities they serve as they strive towards professionalism and convention in broadcasting. He contends that a further radicalisation of radio is required – a shift away from the preconceived 'radio industry' notions of perpetual programming, outwardly directed information-presentation, and 'music box' radio – in order to have truly representative and interactive community-focussed radio. He outlines the following elements in a potential framework for the establishment of truly representative community radio:

- Develop new visions for programming schedules, resisting the existing conventions of 30-60 minute timeslots as an unnecessary "tyranny of time" (p. 56)
- Create spaces for radio programmes, events, and stories that "question [the] consensus" and "take sides in debates, challenge accepted notions of balance and produce programmes which actively intervene to the extent that they will speak the unspeakable when necessary" (pp. 56-57)
- Value stories, oral histories, and local knowledge: "orality is the key factor in cultural memory" (p. 55). "[T]he community radio station can decide to organise itself as a means for the local population to 'voice' itself, to broadcast its own ethnography" (p. 57)
- Community radio should be a site of resistance. Its very existence offers an alternative to existing mainstream media. "[I]f it is to fulfil its raison d'être as a space where the under-represented or the mis-represented are empowered" (p. 57), then it should explore the margins of possibility when it comes to broadcasting and offer different ways of doing radio: "against accepted practice, against commercialism and against global (and national) media hegemony" (p. 57).

Moore also contests that the term 'community' is necessarily unifying in practice. He writes that the intersections of difference within communities can encourage divisions rather than commonalities:

> Although people may indeed live in the same locality, they are likely to be divided rather than united by factors such as employment, nationality, gender and class. Further, within these differences, groups will construct imagined communities and imagined definitions of the place in which they live and work. The spaces we inhabit, therefore, area as much mental constructions as they are physical constructions and this problematises the idea of community as a focus for a broadcasting strategy…. the community is a dynamic matrix of interlocking (and often competing) collections of individuals who define themselves in a range of cultural, economic and social ways, many of which may be completely imagined and unrelated to the 'reality' of their existences. This is particularly true in places such as Namibia and Northern Ireland, where people are trying to define their place in political, cultural, and social settings which are themselves in crisis and, hence, fluid (p. 48).

As Moore highlights the importance of difference between individuals within communities, he identifies a fundamental problem with community radio as the "voice

for the voiceless". I discuss some of the connections of voice and marginality in the following chapter, particularly as it relates to feminist research.

Pirate radio was a trend that was extremely popular in the UK in the years of popular radio in the 1960s, and Adrian Johns' *Death of a Pirate* (2011) is a historical narrative of the pirate radio boats stationed off the coast of the United Kingdom. Their popularity is often credited with revolutionising the airwaves by bringing pop music to the UK's teenagers in the 1960s. The central narrative focuses on the shooting death of Reginald Calvert, owner of Radio City, by Oliver Smedley of Radio Atlanta/Radio Caroline in 1966.

Johns argues that these early pirate radio ships were more akin to unlicensed commercial radio programming in principle (pp. 10-11) as it challenged a publicly-owned broadcasting service (the BBC), rather than the pirate radio community/activist ethos as offered above by the *Islands of Resistance* editors. Death of a Pirate was primarily useful as an occasional reference for early history of the BBC and pirate radio ships in the UK.

Today, there is a bit of a romantic fascination with the pirate radio ships of the 1960s and the era of the new sound and culture of rock n' roll and pop music in the UK and Europe. 2009 saw the release of the comedy *Pirate Radio* (a.k.a. *The Boat that Rocked*, 2009), a film directed by Richard Curtis and featuring an ensemble cast including Phillip Seymour Hoffman, Bill Nighy, Chris O'Dowd and others. While the movie is hardly a historical account of pirate radio ships such as Radio Caroline, it does give you a sense of enthusiasm and air of possibility in the illegal antics of pirate radio broadcasting.[7]

Galway's Pirate Women: A Global Trawl (1996) is a patchwork of narratives, personal accounts and ethnography of an woman-focussed pirate radio station in Galway, Ireland that was organised by Margaretta D'Arcy. I discuss examples from this book in the section on women and voice in Chapter 3.

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[7] A popular Hollywood film from my youth, *Pump Up The Volume* (1990) starring Christian Slater and Samantha Mathis – also a romantic comedy with pirate radio as its backdrop – no doubt encouraged many teenagers from that generation to join campus radio stations or start pirate radio stations of their own!

2.4 Conclusion

The literature discussed here shows that worldwide, radio has been a valuable means for transmitting communication, and – in theory at least – community radio strives to encourage two-way, or multi-way, communication, by encouraging listeners to engage actively with their local community media by participating in its creation. Celebrating our communities by sharing our stories and valuing and respecting our differences is important to our sense of well-being and collective strength. VOWR in St. John's, Newfoundland, Radio Free Derry in Derry, Northern Ireland, and Radio Equality in Portadown, Northern Ireland have all been shown to exemplify the use of community-focussed radio as an opportunity to present voices, information, music, and stories that resonate locally and provide an alternative to mainstream media. Community radio – sanctioned or pirate – can also be an act of resistance, carving a space on the FM airwaves for radio activists to control their self-presentation, to learn skills, to educate, to preserve their culture, language, or heritage.

The following chapter addresses some of the main theoretical frameworks for this research: cultural studies and feminist theories related to women's voice, and community radio, community building, and participation.

Chapter 3: Literature Review (Theoretical Framework)

3.1 Introduction

Radio can be a vital method of connection for many communities around the world, and much has been written on the subject. This chapter provides an overview of some of the theoretical literature that can provide insights into this research. In the first part of this chapter, I examine the domain of cultural studies, including feminist cultural studies, as they pertain to social identities and how they can be a useful frame of reference when writing about community radio. In the second section, I explore feminist theory as an analytical tool in exploring women's voice and participation. Third, I briefly describe some of the literature available generally on community radio, community building, and volunteer participation. To conclude, I articulate how this research project contributes to the discussions identified above, and provide a summary of key points for the chapter.

3.2 (Feminist) cultural studies

The discipline of cultural studies addresses the politics of culture in all its processes, representations, and meanings. We construct and interpret meaning of the symbols around us based on our positionality of experience and exposure to larger ideas. This meaning-making is both a consciously and unconsciously constructed process; we can cultivate art, media, friendships, working relationships, etc. based on our personal preferences, likes and dislikes; but where do these preferences come from? How much of our choices in creating our realities have to do with our heritage, our language, our family relationships, our class status, our gender, our sexuality, and so on? Our identities, carefully curated though they may be, are both a product of factors within ourselves and

from the outside world. Feminist cultural studies focuses in particular on feminist analyses of the politics of culture. Angela McRobbie, in her introduction to *The Uses of Cultural Studies* (2005), notes that cultural studies, or 'contemporary cultural theory,' can be used to "[amplify] our understanding of a wide range of everyday social, cultural, and political practices" (p. 1).

bell hooks and Stuart Hall are two theorists in particular whose works I drew on when considering aspects of the possible intersections of identity and culture in this work. In her introduction to *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations* (1994) hooks notes that her early experiences exploring themes that later emerged as tenets of cultural studies left her on the outside as an academic researcher in more traditional disciplines, though she was embraced by the emerging interdisciplinary fields of Women's Studies and Black Studies. She writes: "Merging critical thinking in everyday life with knowledge learned in books and through study has been the union of theory and practice that has informed my intellectual cultural work…. I continually search for ways to think, teach, and write that excite and liberate the mind, that passion to live and act in a way that challenges systems of domination: racism, sexism, class elitism" (1994, pp. 2-3). The exploration of these boundaries of identity has made cultural studies an exciting and challenging interdisciplinary way of looking at the world and researching these intersections. hooks writes that as her work crossed the boundaries of conventional pedagogy and explored new possibilities in these intersections (1994, p. 3), this placed her on the outside of traditional academic discipline/s. In her many books and articles, I found her works on representation and culture, teaching and community most relevant to this thesis research, and I incorporate several of her ideas into this work. I appreciate the ways in which she is not afraid to explore notions of difference and examine possibilities for consciously-constructed communities, formed beyond mere notions of 'sameness'. One thing I appreciate about living in rural Newfoundland is that due to geography as much as anything else one has to cultivate networks of friends and acquaintances of potentially extremely different backgrounds in order to feel connected and thrive. I am lucky to live where I do with some amazing people, and many close friends who live nearby in Bonne

Bay are also come-from-aways who decided to settle in the area and consciously make it their home, living in communities populated by families who have been here for generations, sharing those spaces, and intentionally creating new ones. At the end of her introduction to *Outlaw Culture*, hooks describes her relationship to space as a child in talking about a room in her rented house where everything is 'designed for small bodies' and there is a lustrous red door:

> I tried to remember my relationship to space as a child, the ways the break with dependency on grown-ups or older, bigger siblings and the assertion of one's own agency was a declaration of freedom and power. I remember thinking… that if I had the power, I would make everything in the world be the right size for children, and grown-ups would have to learn how to do everything different. In many ways progressive cultural revolution can happen only as we learn to do everything differently. Decolonizing our minds and imaginations, we learn to think differently, to see everything with "the new eyes" Malcolm X told us we needed if we were to enter the struggle as subjects and not objects (pp. 6-7).

A continual theme in hooks' *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (2003) is that one can build community when we start from a place of respect, allowing for a mutual acceptance of difference among people. In her chapter in dialogue with fellow educator Ron Scapp, she tells her: "The building of trust through a process of concrete action, along with cultivating the values of courage and civility, combined with commitment to community, is needed if we are to find unity within diversity. These are all essential qualities that must be cultivated when we seek to build friendship, partnership" (p. 112). In many ways, creating community radio and carving a (physical and over-the-airwaves) space for people to participate in community radio and re/present themselves, tell their own stories, and produce the sound of that telling, is part of a drive on behalf of the people involved in community radio to 'enter the struggle as subject and not objects' as hooks describes above, and also to fashion new spaces for ourselves based on mutual respect and a commitment to community.

At times hooks contradicts herself as her theories evolve in her works. As she emphasises the importance of respect in our relationships with others, she writes of the idea of "beloved community":

Martin Luther King, Jr. imagined a "beloved community," conceptualizing a world where people would bond on the basis of shared humanness. His vision remains. King taught that the simple act of coming together would strengthen community. Yet before he was assassinated he was beginning to see that unlearning racism would require a change in both thinking and action, and that people could agree to come together across race but they would not make community.

> To build community requires vigilant awareness of the work we must continually do to undermine all the socialization that leads us to behave in ways that perpetuate domination…. When we take the theory, the explanations, and apply them concretely to our daily lives, to our experiences, we further and deepen the practice of anti-racist transformation. Rather than simply accept that class power often situates me in a world where I have little or no contact with other black people, especially individuals from underprivileged classes, I as a black person with class privilege can actively seek out these relationships. More often than not to do this work I must make an effort to expand my social world (hooks, Teaching Community, pp. 35-36).

I further discuss bell hooks and her conception of voice in the following section.

Stuart Hall, one of the prominent theorists of cultural studies, describes culture "as a process, a set of practices" rather than "a set of things – novels and paintings or TV programmes and comics" and such (1997, p. 2). Culture is as much something we do, he argues, as it is something we absorb. He further emphasises that we relate to culture by interpreting its shared meanings. "Culture depends on its participants interpreting meaningfully what is happening around them, and 'making sense' of the world, in broadly similar ways," he writes (1997, p. 2). McRobbie notes in her discussion of Hall's work that:

> In highly complex modern societies the realm of ideas and beliefs and values have their own materiality and are embedded and activated in practices and institutions. Articulation provides Hall with a specific way of understanding social change, in that it shows how bundles of meaning can be attached and re-attached; they can be transplanted and they can, as it were, land in new unexpected places. New formations of meaning can…. become the terms by which people understand themselves and the world around them (p. 22).

It is the process of producing culture, creating 'new formations of meaning', and interpreting them that interests me in relation to community radio. In many ways community radio is constructed in a negative identity category – they often exist to provide an alternative to existing forms of radio in a region, to fill a 'lack' of culture, to produce new sounds that are either like what we currently can hear on the radio (though ones a community can claim ownership of, that are produced by 'everyday' people), or to create something totally different, unique to a particular person or region.

In his article "Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities" (1997), Hall writes, "You can only say something by positioning yourself in the discourse. The tale tells the teller, the myth tells the myth-maker, etc" (Old and New, p. 44). bell hooks writes, "I rely on the sharing of personal narratives to reminds folks that we are all struggling to raise our consciousness and figure out the best action to take" (2003, p. 107). It is this sharing of parts of ourselves – of a radio-confessional in terms of marking the producers of community radio in terms of their musical likes and dislikes, the stories they tell or read, their delivery of speech, and how the programme 'sounds' or is produced – that is the 'tell'. By receiving a radio programme (through listening) and interpreting its meanings based on how those behind the scenes have chosen to style it, community radio producers and listeners are both participating in the production and meaning-making of culture.

Who is able to produce culture? Is it really possible for everyone to produce culture, in the way that community radio is supposedly 'radio for anyone'? Writing of the burgeoning national cultural identity of the 1960s in Britain, Stuart Hall describes the popular representation of British/English identity as a supposedly homogenous culture – i.e. referring to popular images of white families regularly enjoying a cup of tea. He contends that this sanitised image doesn't acknowledge the full story of British identity. He writes that these popular notions of identity are formed therefore from positions of (and the process of) subjectivity, in relation to or in opposition to another identity position (which in this case is not acknowledged, rendering it the Other). "Something we have learnt from the whole discussion of identification, in feminism and psychoanalysis,

is the degree to which that structure of identification is always constructed through ambivalence. Always constructed through splitting. Splitting between that which one is, and that which is the other," he writes (p. 47). As England established British colonies throughout the world including in Sri Lanka and India, Ceylon tea came to be ubiquitous in Britain as a result of business and trading interests, to be appropriated as an indelible part of British identity. Hall, British of Jamaican heritage, writes:

> I am the sugar at the bottom of the English cup of tea… I am the sweet tooth, the sugar plantations that rotted generations of English children's teeth. There are thousands of others beside me that are, you know, indeed cannot speak, cup of tea itself…. Not a single tea plantation exists within the United Kingdom…. That is the outside history that is inside the history of the English. There is no English history without that other history. The notion that identity has to do with people that look the same, feel the same, call themselves the same, is nonsense. As a process, as a narrative, as a discourse, it is always told from the position of the Other. What is more is that identity is always in part a narrative, always in part a kind of representation (Old and New, pp. 48-9).

Like Hall, Spivak highlights the position of the Other in her work. She ultimately concludes in her well-known essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak", that the subaltern, or someone from a position outside the margins of a society, indeed cannot speak, constrained as they are by the 'epistemic violence' (p. 78) of dominant cultural identities. In a situation where identity constructions – as Hall describes above – exist in relation to a 'split', or from a viewpoint that does not acknowledge the inherent process of subjectivity, the subaltern is not allowed a position from which to speak, and therefore has no acknowledged voice. Further, Spivak argues, additional identity categories rendered upon the subaltern can place them further and further outside the dominant hegemony: "If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (pp. 82-83).

Joan Wallach Scott (2002) posits that feminist theory has contributed greatly to our understanding of, and ability to examine, the meaning of difference. She writes in "Feminist Reverberations":

If there is something that can be called feminist methodology, it might be summarized by these axiomatic statements: There is neither a self nor a collective identity without an other. There is no inclusiveness without exclusion, no universal without a rejected particular, no neutrality that doesn't privilege an interested point of view, and power is always at issue in the articulation of these relationships. Put in other terms, we might say that all categories do some kind of productive work; the questions are how? and to what effect? (p. 6).

Communities are not stable entities. People move into and depart from neighbourhoods, social dynamics change, interpersonal relations affect how we interact with one another. By examining the notion of 'community' with an awareness of cultural studies' theories of difference – rather than merely assuming 'community' to be identified with 'sameness' – one can have a more nuanced discussion of identity, representation, and how we can work together to encourage complete participation in the spaces, organisations, and places in which we live, work, love, and play.

In the following section, I discuss voice and agency, particularly as it applies to women's voices, the power held by the producers of media, and how media representations can marginalise individuals and groups.

3.3 Voice, agency, and representation

The term "alternative media" must be used with care. Especially where northern and Aboriginal communications are concerned, it is important to emphasize that "alternative" does not mean "marginal," "unprofessional," or "inferior." Time after time, we see examples of innovative survival strategies that evolve into so-called mainstream communications. Pirate stations go "legit," bulletin boards become newsletters, newsletters become newspapers or magazines, local newspapers or magazines become regional, national, or even international. "Alternative" media merit full attention and credibility (Alia, 1999, p. 64.)

In her book *In Other Worlds*, Gayatri Spivak (1987) discusses the importance of having a voice, that the very act of speaking one's ideas and opinions – and having a medium by which one can be listened to – can be transformative, potentially giving people the power to create, define, and have control over their selves and social spaces.

She writes, "…the will to explain [is] a symptom of the desire to have a self and a world. In other words, on the general level, the possibility of explanation carries the presupposition of an explainable (even if not fully) universe and an explaining (even if imperfectly) subject. These presuppositions assure our being. Explaining, we exclude the possibility of the radically heterogeneous" (p. 105). Community radio can often be messy and imperfect, both technically and dialogically; however, this can foster a hopeful sort of space through which people can learn and grow, while increasing skills, broadening perspectives, and creating a social space. A radio station through which theoretically people in a region (cultural, geographical, linguistic…) have access to "their" airwaves can foster a sense of responsibility and belonging to one's community. Radio broadcasts can also offer a platform for multiple viewpoints and perspectives. In describing Women's Scéal Radio, a pirate radio station that operated in Galway, Ireland, Margaretta D'Arcy writes: "It… freed us from the awe of radio as a Sacred Voice out of the beyond, unmarred by human fallibility; and it did create the atmosphere we wanted, a neighbourhood centre where anyone could come in to give any question, criticism, or assistance, as for example an urgent message to switch on the microphone, or not to shout too much, or to speak up. It became a real party on the air" (p. 8-9).

The importance of voice and agency is also relevant in minority-language broadcasting. In his research on media and francophone populations outside of Québec, Fernand Harvey (1992) argues that 'minority' populations may actually be in the best position to address the specific concerns of and to report on stories for their local audience, bound together by geography and the local culture of a region as much as language (pp.18-9). Further, Iarflaith Watson (2003) notes "…citizenship, as a universal concept, does not take into account the diversity of people and their experiences. This has particular consequences for minorities, such as Irish speakers. Paradoxically, at the heart of citizenship is the ideal that a diversity of people can co-exist as citizens of the same nation…. All the citizens of one 'nation' are loyal to one political culture while also having the freedom to play other roles and have disparate loyalties, identities, cultures, languages, etc" (pp. 116-7).

Community radio in and of itself is, in some ways, the media of the marginal; this is not to devalue it as an irrelevant form of media, but rather to say that built into the inherent concept of community radio as a medium it values those differences in communities in ways that commercial or state-sponsored public media often does not. The common community radio mantra "voice for the voiceless" signifies that community radio stations, generally speaking, will make an honest attempt to include many kinds of communities in their capacity to represent the diversity of their population base and our wider culture. From a feminist theory perspective, these population margins are worth exploring – the junctures of in/equality, power, and personal experience as they relate to the intersections of class, race, gender, sexuality, ability, and any other factors that affect our social interactions, social mobility, and visions of ourselves in the wider world.

In her article "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful" (2008), Kathy Davis writes eloquently about the possibilities for feminist theory – intersectionality theory in this instance – to expose and explore our 'blind spots' as researchers, writing:

> The feminist scholar merely needs to 'ask (an)other question' and her research will take on a new and often surprising turn. She can begin to tease out the linkages between additional categories, explore the consequences for relations of power, and, of course, decide when another 'question' is needed or when it is time to stop and why. Intersectionality offers endless opportunities for interrogating one's own blind spots and transforming them into analytic resources for further critical analysis (p. 77).

Kimberlé Crenshaw, writing in "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color," describes an example of the misapplication of representation in her description of a 48 Hours television program on women and domestic violence. It featured six white women subjects and one nonwhite woman, and she notes that her interview was presented differently from the others, in that the six white women were "interviewed at some length, along with their family members, friends, supporters, and even detractors" (p. 1261), while the seventh woman was never humanized in this way, instead having her story told for her in a way, through bloodied

photographs and videotape of her face electronically altered during her abuser's trial (p. 1262). These mediated presentations deny her participation in her own self-presentation and the television programme's presentation of her, by drawing and identity for her through allusions and images. Crenshaw concludes that "the program diminished this woman, communicating, however subtly, that she was responsible for her own victimization" (p. 1262). Crenshaw further explains:

> "I offer this description [of the 48 Hours program] to suggest that "other" women are silenced as much by being relegated to the margin of experience as by total exclusion. Tokenistic, objectifying, voyeuristic inclusion is at least as disempowering as complete exclusion. The effort to politicize violence against women will do little to address Black and other minority women if their images are retained simply to magnify the problem rather than to humanize their experiences…. As the 48 Hours episode makes clear, the images and stereotypes we fear are readily available and are frequently deployed in ways that do not generate sensitive understanding of the nature of domestic violence in minority communities." (Crenshaw, pp. 1261-1262.)

This example interests me in the implications it contains for representation and (self-)presentation. As indicated briefly above, agency is a tenet of community radio. Having control over our re-/presentations in a (theoretically at least) democratic forum such as the community radio airwaves is important in our recognising our sense of self and acknowledging and asserting our right to belong to our communities. I will further analyse the impact of voice and agency in Chapter 5.

3.4 Community radio, community building, and participation

Feminist research often highlights the power of women's lived personal experience and stories; we can strengthen ourselves through sharing our stories and through the support of a community. Lorraine Code (1995) provides the example of women's somatic experiences with heart disease that, as recently as the early 1990s, were not always recognised by physicians as cardiac issues. As symptoms of heart disease in

women often present very differently than in men, she argues that it was only when women were identified as a category for further research that their experiences were validated. Code connects this example with the early feminist movement, which highlighted sexism as a marker of inequality. She writes that the importance of "testimony and advocacy" (p. 26) then became central issues for feminist activism. Much as Kimberlé Crenshaw articulates above in her example of the media presentation of the nonwhite woman on the 48 Hours television program about domestic violence, many voices are marginalised in societies when they tell stories from the intersections of difference. Lorraine Code writes:

> There is no doubt, within the insider/outsider structures produced by the politics of public knowledge and the esteem accorded to scientific method, that women's voices – 'ordinary' women's voices – have not often been heard, and where they have been heard their utterances have often not been taken seriously…. Women's testimony, by which I mean women's reports of their experiences, is as often discredited as it is acted upon, from their testifying about violence and sexual assault through their experiential accounts of their maladies (p. 26).

Community radio, or other community-produced media, can be a tool of empowerment for people who may feel that issues of importance to them, such as language, culture, and politics, may be misrepresented or not at all represented by mainstream media. Paolo Freire (1970/2006) writes: "The solution is not to 'integrate' them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become 'beings for themselves'" (p. 74). Though he is not speaking specifically of particular tools for transformation, creating collaborative media spaces can foster an interest in learning how to use this technology to encourage a dialogue within one's own community. Both national public radio (i.e. CBC in Canada and RTÉ and BBC in Northern Ireland) and commercial radio stations tend to use methods involving community participation only when necessary, for example to further their own aims or to provide space for advertising. Further, these spots are often ultimately mediated by a representative of the radio station; therefore, broadcasts such as call-in shows, which appear to be a forum for public dialogue, are ultimately directed by the broadcast

corporation which often has the last word.[8] In another sense, call-in programs can also be used by organisations in order to disseminate information or even to temper bad publicity. This charge was recently lobbied at the current provincial government during the Cameron Inquiry on breast cancer screening in NL. A May 2008 article in The Telegram notes: "Former deputy health minister John Abbott told the inquiry that the government's communications staff monitored and manipulated the province's wildly popular radio call-in shows to deliver key messages to the public on various issues, including revelations there were persistent problems with breast-cancer testing in the province dating back to 1997."[9] Community radio, some would argue, differs from state-owned and commercial forms of media in that they have a desire not only to present programmes by and for community members, but also to encourage a variety of people to participate – to represent a multiplicity of views, to have active participants producing the types of programs and facilitating the kinds of discussions they would like to hear.[10]

> 'Access' and 'participation' are often offered as central characteristics of community media…. both public service and commercial media participate in some way in the life of their listeners, announcing their events, playing their music and reflecting their culture. Most of these stations also offer their listeners a chance to participate by requesting a particular song and to access the service by phoning to express an opinion, usually, [sic] on a topic selected by the station. However, of the three media sectors discussed, only community radio are based, unequivocally, on access as a reason for being, and this is why they should always be distinguished from both commercial and state radio… neither see public access to the microphone as being of central importance and incorporate public participation only when it suits them to do so (Byrne, 2006, p. 38).

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[8] "All sectors of the media provide access for listeners to phone in to chat shows, but this must be recognised as pseudo participation, as listeners' voices are used to provide colour and interest to a programme that is controlled by the presenter and producer in studio…. it is essentially cheap programming, which does little to empower the participants and is heavily controlled by the station" (Day, 2007, p. 240).
[9] Brautigam, T. (2008, May 12). Former DM's Comments 'Offensive': Williams Lashes Out Against Accusations of Tight Message Control. *The Telegram*, pp. A1, A4.
[10] "[C]ommercial media make programmes to make money, while community media make money in order to make programmes" (Byrne, 2006, p. 3).

Community radio, in encouraging both listeners and producers to become actively engaged and involved – at least when access to the radio station is facilitated and encouraged – therefore has the potential to create a uniquely democratic media space. However, it could be argued that radio it is not the only form of media that provides this kind of space. With the internet and proliferation of personal media devices capable of recording (i.e. laptops, video recorders), along with the popularity and relative accessibility of social networking sites, blogs, and tendencies towards 'citizen journalism,' these elements are changing the notion of, and possibilities for, participatory community media. An article in the Christian Science Monitor on the Occupy Wall Street Movement addresses how protesters are harnessing new technologies for near-instant communication. It describes how Occupy Wall Street activists are able to connect virtually with other Occupy movements worldwide, by receiving and uploading content such as photos, videos, and messages via the website StudioOccupy.org.[11] The site relies on new and emerging internet technologies such as cloud computing (allowing unlimited data storage), free in-browser video editing tools (eliminating the need for expensive software), and smartphone applications (enabling videos to be recorded and content uploaded nearly surreptitiously and with very simple mobile technology via pocket-sized devices).[12]

The example described above is certainly a democratic media space in many ways. However, factors such as geography, age and skillset, and finances affect our access to certain technologies. Community radio, while a precursor to these newer 'communities of online communities', is a widely accessible medium in many areas. Many rural communities in Newfoundland still rely on dial-up internet access – if they have any internet or cell phone access at all. Older residents of rural communities in the province are more likely to find radio an accessible technology, as discussed in chapter 5.

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[11] Wood, D. B. (2011, November 23). Occupy Wall Street: Can filmmaking unify the movement? *The Christian Science Monitor*. Retrieved from http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2011/1123/Occupy-Wall-Street-Can-filmmaking-website-unify-the-movement
[12] *About Studio Occupy.* (n.d.) Retrieved from http://studiooccupy.org/#!/about

And while portable ICTs (information and communication technologies) such as laptops, smartphones and other devices are more affordable that ever, they are not accessible to everyone.

Despite some of the issues of accessibility outlined above, in many ways, the internet does democratise our access to creating and making meaning for ourselves, and participating in online communities can augment our 'real-life' communities in new and surprising ways. This is deftly illustrated in Gill Valentine and Tracy Skelton's article "Changing Spaces: The Role of the Internet in Shaping Deaf Geographies" (2008). They remark that "The Internet has, for the first time, offered Deaf people an alternative way to access Deaf and generic information and to communicate with each other in sign language without the necessity to be in the same space at the same time" (p. 473). They further explain that the internet "has been credited with giving its users greater autonomy to choose their social contacts rather than relying on the co-incidence of proximity, to bridge multiple social worlds; as well as the ability to maintain dispersed social relationships over distance" (p. 474). Indeed, all of the community radio stations discussed in this thesis – VOBB, Féile Tilting, Raidió Fáilte, and Féile FM – all broadcast simultaneously on the internet, augmenting their more traditional FM output. Mirroring my discussions of community radio and the internet in many of my interviews with participants in this project, Judith Klassen notes that VOWR benefits from having an internet presence. Broadcasting on the Internet allows community radio stations to reach audiences that may also identify with a particular community, despite geographical distance. She writes:

> VOWR's recent addition of Internet broadcasting also makes it possible for the station to reach audiences in new locations. Speaking to the presence of listeners across Canada, Tessier [VOWR's Station Manager] notes that VOWR has received positive feedback from people as far away as Alberta. This new listenership is engaged with the station in unique ways. While birthday announcements are often understood to unify a local constituency, the sending of birthday greetings to friends and family in Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta point to VOWR's expansion beyond local boundaries, to encompass national constituencies as well (p. 219).

Similar to Klassen's findings above, in a previous research project on the benefits of community radio and participatory communications to rural regions in Newfoundland and Labrador, I described how the Internet can be a cooperative – rather than competing – technology for community radio stations:

> Using these technologies cooperatively enables those speaking on the radio to reach loved ones, family members, and friends living away from home. Coupled with additional technologies such as email, Facebook, and Skype, community radio and the Internet can have a symbiotic relationship in which those near and far can have two-way communication. In this province, where so many of our workers are employed seasonally and may be away from home for extended periods of time, community radio can provide an immediate connection with a place despite long distances. It provides a new community meeting space, an intangible one that transcends geography. "'We're having a kitchen party and you guys are the entertainment,'" was a comment from listeners in Ontario about Radio Bell Island. Mallary McGrath of St. Bride's spoke of community members listening to the Cape Shore radio on their iPhones while operating heavy equipment in Alberta, eager to hear family and friends at home (McKee, pp. 12-13).

Christina Dunbar-Hester wrote an interesting article entitled "Geeks, Meta-Geeks, and Gender Trouble: Activism, Identity, and Low Power FM Radio" (2008) on the technical side of radio (e.g. building transmitters and fixing hardware). She examines the intersection of identity performance and technology, noting several identity categories relevant in her study: self-described 'geek identity', activist identity, and gender identity. She writes: Though FM radio is consistently cited by both [her focus group] and others as being desirable due to its relatively low-tech and inexpensive nature, there still remains a barrier to access. In the activist group, women tended not to participate in technical work when it came to the FM hardware. This represents a significant tension for a group which is founded on, and genuinely committed to, equality and diversity" (p. 211). In her interviews with women activists of low-power fm radio, her participants offer several potential reasons for why women may find it difficult to participate fully in learning particular technical radio 'hardware' skills, including: being made to feel like an 'outsider' on several levels (both as a novice and as a woman), feeling silenced from asking questions leading to further understanding, competition among women in a male-

dominated field, a shortage of women willing to learn or participate in technical skills, and perhaps a reluctance for women to sometimes value activities that are traditionally considered masculine activities, particularly when it comes to physical technology (pp. 216-219). A lack of prior skill, agency, and confidence can sometimes inhibit women's routes to learning in non-traditionally 'feminine' spaces such as the field of radio technology, and women themselves can also play a role in enforcing particular gender stereotypes. One of her interview participants comments that among women she's "regarded as a little bit of a traitor [for having an interest in technical projects]" (p. 219) rather than preferring more 'feminine' activities like knitting. Dunbar-Hester writes of another interview participant:

> [S]he felt that asking questions that exposed her ignorance was discouraged, and instead participants tacitly encouraged each other to speak up only if they were able to guess correctly or display useful knowledge. She said that she felt that novices – men and women, but perhaps particularly women – who might be more comfortable in the group were people who were 'quiet', who would, when presented with something they didn't understand, make a mental note of it and look it up later, and would come to the next Geek Group [a tech-learning space] armed with this new knowledge…. she found that her inclination to ask a lot of questions was at odds with the dynamic of the group; in particular, she said that Geek Group reminded her of childhood experiences in which she was made to feel as though her loud, curious behavior was inappropriate for a girl, and she was self-conscious about this, in spite of the group's professed commitment to being a space for pedagogy (p. 217).

Valentine and Skelton's article on D/deaf and hard of hearing users of the Internet referred to above may not initially seem to relate to community radio. As a hearing technology, community radio may not seem like a particularly useful corollary. However, as indicated here, many community radio stations are interdisciplinary in their approach to using technologies to represent communities, augmenting the radio by making use of communication and participation tools such as websites and by providing space for live performances that local residents can attend in person. Uniquely, a community radio station broadcasting in Ireland – Community Radio Kilkenny City – recently incorporated a 'radio for the Deaf' event into their programming (they also offer classes

to the community, including a sign language class). According to an article in the Summer 2011 issue of the DeafHear.ie Service for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People South East Newsletter, Community Radio Kilkenny City provided a "broadcast you can see" (p. 1) by streaming video of the radio broadcast live on the internet, accompanied by the volunteer services of a sign-language interpreter. Mass, a sports programme, and a community talk radio programme were all simultaneously radio broadcasted and interpreted.[13]

Generally speaking, community radio stations have a mandate towards enabling inclusive participation for people of all manners of ability, and there are many ways for people to participate in and enjoy their local community media. The creativity of community radio volunteers and staff can enable them to push the boundaries of what we consider 'community radio' in a multitude of diverse ways.

In asserting agency – via microphone and broadcasting devices – over one's own identity, we can negotiate our rights and subjectivities within the group/s where we 'belong'. In utilising and sharing the power of broadcasting, people can create and encourage dialogues on their own terms.

In her essay "On Air/Off Air: Defining Women's Radio Space in European Women's Community Radio," Caroline Mitchell (2000) states: "Feminist media academics have emphasized the importance of alternative sites of media practice. These sites promote feminist ideas, practices and content and counteract what Tuchman (1979) calls the 'symbolic annihilation' of women by the mass media, caused by under or misrepresentation" (p. 189). The example provided by Crenshaw indicated above, of the difference in story presentation of the nonwhite woman in the 48 Hours program, illustrates what Mitchell explains here. Community radio stations, by existing as alternatives to mainstream radio stations, can explore topics and issues pertinent to their local listening population, according to their own internal regulations and values.

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[13] DeafHear.ie Services for Deaf & Hard of Hearing People. (2011). 'Radio you can see' – CRKC 88.7 FM. *South East Newsletter*, Summer 2011. Retrieved from https://www.deafhear.ie/DHFiles/NewsLetters/Summer 2011 South East.pdf

Margaretta D'Arcy states that one of the aims of Women's Scéal Radio in Galway, Ireland was to have a space in which "[we could] speak freely on all subjects in the spirit of Article 19 of the UN Charter of Human Rights (Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Expression, Freedom to Impart Information). This meant defiance of the Irish censorship regulations, i.e.: Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act, the prohibition of information on abortion, and the banning of certain books and magazines dealing with sexuality" (p. 5).

Research by feminist scholars over many years of hard work and fighting for access to the tools to represent themselves and their histories in academic research has enabled research such as mine examining notions of community, identity, and representation to exist. It was impossible to know before I set out on my research and contacted potential participants what I might find; however, women have a long history with radio and community activism in Canada and internationally and I hoped that I would find some sympathetic women willing to talk to me about their ideas of representation, identity, community, and education. In addition to gender, there are many factors of marginalisation – race, language, ability, sexuality, geographic location, class, etcetera – gender is but one variable of many interlocking realities, as identified in the literature above.

3.5 Conclusion

Cultural studies and feminist theory combined have addressed issues of identity and the locations from which we speak (or are unable to do so). Contributions to these fields have also addressed how we interpret and make meanings through culture and how we are able to represent ourselves, or be (mis-)represented. It also encourages the further examination of community radio as champion of the marginalised voice: can it really provide 'the voice for the voiceless?'

Safe community spaces can also be presented on the Internet. However, radio offers unique educational and technological opportunities for participants, and is a widely accessible medium.

The following chapter discusses my research methodology, featuring examples of how I solicited participants for this project, approached the interview process, addressed ethical concerns, and examined researcher reflexivity in the writing of this thesis.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe my methods in choosing sites, collecting data, organising and then analysing my research findings. This qualitative research study was informed by principles of grounded theory, feminist and cultural studies research, and interpretative and reflexive writing processes. I begin here by describing my data collection, which involved choosing locations for research, soliciting participants for this study, conducting in-depth interviews and participant observation. Then I briefly discuss feminist principles towards interviewing, and the complexities of agency and power in participating (or not) in a research project. I offer an explanation of grounded theory as a method for organising research material, and how I found it useful. Finally I present some of the ethical concerns and challenges I encountered – or anticipated – during the process of writing my research.

4.2 Locating the research within feminist principles

Feminist research explores the complexities of power and oppression, control and choice. In writing this thesis, particularly when interpreting interviewees' stories or including narratives based on my observations, I tried to be sensitive to potential concerns or misunderstandings that could arise. However, this research is necessarily informed from my personal observations and perspectives. I further describe the ethical concerns of 'writing responsibly' in the ethics section of this chapter below.

In *Feminist Research Methods*, Shulamit Reinharz (1992) discusses the possibilities for feminist research involving information gathered via open-ended and semi-structured interviews. Though I had a printed list of potential questions to ask

participants with me at each interview – this list of sample interview questions is available in Appendix A of this document – ultimately the interviews were directed by their participation and through our shared contributions, and therefore flowed conversationally. In my experience, while preparing to conduct interviews for a potential project it is important to be attuned to new topics and ideas that can develop via the interview process, so I didn't limit my follow-up questions only to that which I'd prepared beforehand. Reinharz notes: "Interviewing is also consistent with many women's interest in avoiding control over others and developing a sense of connectedness with people. This idea of abdicating control comes through in Hilary Graham's opening quotations about respondents being 'actively involved' and 'constructing data about their lives,' and in Robin Gregg's decision to allow her interviewees to choose their own pseudonyms" (p. 20). Reinharz provides many examples of feminist research whereby researchers "discussed their interpretation of the first interview with the interviewee" (p. 21) and the significance of "careful listening [that] allows the interviewer to introduce new questions as the interview proceeds" (ibid). It was important for me to recognise that volunteer participants in a project had agency and control over the terms in which they participated.

Mary Allen's recent research on violence against women and voice further elaborates on possibilities for feminist research that encourages the development of new research paradigms that could provide a framework for supporting the agency of research subjects (Allen, 2011). Citing Kathy Charmaz' work, she connects feminist research methodologies to constructivist grounded theory, explaining that "the contribution to social justice" (p. 41) is an important methodological tool of both traditions. She concludes that by using in-depth interviews as a method for data collection, she could "[reduce] the scope for the researcher's 'blindness' while enhancing the scope for participants' insight" (p. 31). In re-creating her participants' narratives and stories in her analysis of the material, she writes: "The emphasis therefore was to represent as faithfully as possible the words and experiences of the study participants, together with the

meanings they constructed for these experiences (keeping in mind the challenge to representation by any voice mediating that of others)" (p. 36).

Soliciting participants for a research project can be challenging at times, particularly when using interviews as a method of obtaining data. Glynis George's ethnography *The Rock Where We Stand: An Ethnography of Women's Activism in Newfoundland* (2000), focuses on her experiences of participant observation and interviews she conducted with women involved in the Bay St. George Women's Council and the Women's Centre in Stephenville. She notes that during her 14 months living on the southwest coast of Newfoundland, she got to know many interesting and well-spoken people who perhaps eyed her with suspicion at times due to her University of Toronto connection. "[T]hroughout my residence in Bay St. George, I frequently noted that even among well-educated people there is, if not an aversion, then a dislike for 'book learning'" (p. 195) she writes, and further comments that at times, people declined her requests for interviews despite their willingness to engage her in thoughtful conversation and involve her in the community otherwise:

> [John] would invite me to join him and his wife, Lynn, for dinner and the occasional journey into the woods. He would tow us in the sled behind the ski-doo [sic] to cut wood, snowshoe, and have a 'boil up' on a bed of balsam boughs. As he cut the wood and made the tea, John would talk, non-stop, about the responsibilities of fatherhood, the decline of the fishery, working conditions in the mill, and his own childhood experiences in the outport where he was raised. When I requested an interview with him or sought to record his insights as he spoke, he firmly refused. 'If you don't want to sit and talk to me like a regular person, then I don't want to talk to you at all' (pp. 195-196)

Refusal to participate in interviews – while frustrating for the researcher – is a valid form agency and choice for (non-)participants. While some of the people she describes may not have contributed to her research directly by allowing her to interview them, they still impacted her research project in other ways, particularly by orienting her to and including her in community life. For research that also involves participant observation and the possibilities of reflection, an interview refusal therefore is not in itself necessarily without its interpretative possibilities for a project. I myself had similar

experiences to George's during my data gathering, which I discuss in Chapter 5. In several instances I had polite refusals to my interview queries by people who were very well-spoken on the subject of their communities and community radio generally, and their generosity with me in other ways greatly impacted my orientation to a location. George equates agency in choosing to participate or not participate in a research project as an important form of feminist leadership: "Feminist leadership in Bay St. George can also be exercised [sic] by sarcastic quips, silent withdrawal, and the refusal to sit down to anything more structured than a basic conversation," she writes (p. 196).

Christine Ashby writes about agency, voice, and expression in her recent contribution to Disability Studies Quarterly (2011). Describing feminist research in her discussion of voice and qualitative research methodology, she writes:

> Despite the continued focus on the centrality of women, feminist principles of voice have been applied to critical research with other marginalized populations and their interactions with oppressive systems. Whether those systems are oppressive for their inherent sexism, classism, heterosexism, and racism or, in the case of my research, ableism, feminist concerns with power and voice are clearly relevant and useful (p. 4).

Describing the power dynamics inherent in any researcher/subject relationship, she warns that this inherent imbalance of power is magnified if researchers attempt to give someone their "voice", or speak on behalf of others. Responsible researchers will strive to be sensitive to their study participants' concerns as they mediate and interpret their words and stories in their academic analysis. She says:

> Regardless of the intentions of the researcher, hierarchies of power and privilege are re-inscribed when the researcher presumes to give voice to someone else. A desire to 'give voice' can assume several troubling 'truths'. One, it assumes that the person or group being researched has no voice and therefore, needs someone else to bring their experiences to light. It denies that these individuals have their own voice and can (and do) choose to exercise it, although admittedly students with disabilities are often denied the opportunity to do so (p. 5).

Further discussion on the importance of voice and agency follows in Chapter 5.

Though I had my own ideas about the importance and value of community radio, I tried not to impose my outlook on my interview participants and to allow for them to choose the topics they wanted to address and steer the interview in directions they wanted to take it in. In transcribing and then analysing the material gleaned via this form of open-ended interviewing, I noted any themes and correlations that emerged and grouped these insights accordingly, inspired by the tradition of grounded theory and comparative research.

4.3 Research design and rationale

Some of the quotes included in the text of this thesis have been edited for readability. In addition to my quoted material, I've written vignettes or portraits based on my experiences with these stations, particularly to set a scene and describe it more thoroughly for you, the reader. Charmaz mentions the importance of thick description in obtaining and relaying detailed data: "[Rich data] reveal participants' views, feelings, intentions, and actions as well as the contexts and structures of their lives. Obtaining rich data means seeking 'thick' description (Geertz, 1973), such as writing extensive fieldnotes of observations, collecting respondents' written personal accounts, and/or compiling detailed narratives (such as from transcribed tapes of interviews)" (p. 14). Vignettes and thick description are staples of ethnographic research, and allow for nuanced observation and reflexivity while writing.

4.4 Ethical concerns in this research

None of the participants in this study requested anonymity and they were all active members of organisations and often occupying public positions as such (e.g. managers within community organisations or known members of a group or activity).

I've identified them here by their first names. However, in reviewing the material for this document I decided that if a quote could potentially cause discord between members within their communities, I would leave it anonymous in the text. In writing this thesis I have tried to be sensitive to the issues that at times might arise between community organisations and the communities they are attempting to serve. Janice Lynn Ristock and Joan Pennell write in *Community Research as Empowerment: Feminist Links, Postmodern Interruptions* (1996) that researchers have an ethical responsibility to respect the wishes of their study participants:

> When such work leads to publication… there are some methodological issues that demand consideration. If a consultant intends to produce a report for publication, provisions for informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality should be clearly written into the consulting contract…. In cases where a consultant who has not made such arrangements later decides to report on the process after all, anonymity can be achieved by excluding any identifying information from the published report…. Researchers can still write about the process as long as we are reporting on our own experiences and observations and ensure that no harm results from the publication: by not identifying individuals or organizations, taking care not to quote any material that might identify the source, and reporting only on the areas that the organization agreed to include in the consulting process (p. 36).

I experienced some difficulties in writing this research, as I had paralysing worries at times about 'doing justice' to my interview participants and their stories. Was I interpreting their meanings accurately? Was I representing them fairly? Would they agree with my observations and narrative descriptions? One of the reasons for this fear has to do with my personal connection to my research sites in Newfoundland. I was relatively new to the Bonne Bay area when I conducted my initial interviews there in 2008. However, my decision to relocate to the area for employment had a lot to do with the friendly and interesting communities of people I met, and the active, outdoor lifestyle popular here. Though early on many of my friends were other co-workers and come-from-aways (I will always be a 'townie' – hailing from St. John's – to some), as I began to volunteer and become involved in projects and events locally, these communities of acquaintances began to intertwine. Rural small-town living – especially when you cease to become a visitor and start to be recognised as a somewhat curious fixture – ensures

that everyone knows about you (in one capacity or another) and friendship groups and familiarities tend to overlap. Jodie Taylor writes of the ethical complexities in navigating the researcher/friend identity in her article "The Intimate Insider: Negotiating the Ethics of Friendship When Doing Insider Research" (2011). Her connection with queer culture and community inspired her to write her doctoral research on queer musical aesthetics and gender and sexual performativity. Some of her informants either became friends or were friends/acquaintances before she approached them as a researcher. She writes:

> Where the researcher-self is a part of the Other's narrative, the narrative of the researched and the researcher become entwined. The researcher, then, is forced to look both outward and inward, to be reflexive and self-conscious in terms of positioning, to be both self-aware and researcher self-aware and to acknowledge the intertextuality that is a part of both the data gathering and writing processes. Moreover, the researcher needs also to be aware of the limitations of reflexivity… particularly as the relationship between knower and known is never unproblematic (p. 9).

Sometimes the most difficult writing is that which involves the observation of situations and explorations of subjects which you know intimately, and navigating the spaces of multiple identities: as friend/researcher, resident/non-resident, and insider/outsider.

Originally I had planned on this thesis being a collaborative, empowering process between researcher and interview participants along participatory action research traditions, in which together we would reinvent the way academic documents are traditionally produced; the interview participants provide the data and the field sites and the researcher observes and creates connections and conclusions. I had originally hoped to provide an opportunity for participants to review the thesis material after it was written. Participants were offered a chance to review their interview transcripts and receive copies of either/both the audio and the transcript if they wished. A few people took me up on this offer, and no one responded with any further concerns or corrections. Despite my original, perhaps fanciful, views of a collaboratively written thesis, while several of my interview participants are curious to see the final document, this paper was

written primarily in the usual fashion – alone and with a few sets of friendly eyes as editors.

As described above, member checking is an analytical technique sometimes used in qualitative research in which researchers share the data obtained with their participants, hopefully encouraging a collaborative interpretive dialogue. While my participants in this project were willing to contribute by providing interviews, leads for potential sources, and further suggestions, no one had the inclination to analyse their own interviews any further (though a few sent "hope the project is going well!" replies via email). In "Evaluating Interpretive Inquiry: Reviewing the Validity Debate and Opening the Dialogue" (2000), Maureen Jane Angen writes that member checking can sometimes cause confusion between the 'realities' of participant vs. researcher and therefore complicate any written analysis:

> [Janice Morse, in Designing Funded Qualitative Research] … argues that this process may only lead to confusion rather than confirmation because participants may have changed their minds about the issue. The experience of the interview process itself may have made an impact on their original assessment, or new experiences may have intervened. Respondents may disagree with the researcher's interpretation, and then, the question of whose interpretation should stand arises. From a nonfoundationalist perspective, there is no universal fixed reality, and because understanding is cocreated through dialogue and experience, there is no static truth to which the results of an interview can be compared (p. 383).

Jeasik Tro and Allen Trent write in "Validity in Qualitative Research Revisited" (2006) that member checking is sometimes used to ensure transactional validity and establish credibility for both the participant and the researcher. This collaborative process, in theory, ensures that there are no misunderstandings or misinterpretations: "validity as a transactional process consists of techniques or methods by which misunderstandings can be adjusted and thus fixed. In most cases informants are engaged in making sure their realities correspond with the interpretations brought forth by the researchers. In transactional approaches, validity of the text/account is of primary importance" (p. 322).

For this research project, I attempted to allow for multiple realities, as I believe that there is no one fixed 'truth' of an event or 'correct' viewpoint. Further, while my participants were willing to sit and have a chat about community radio, few were inclined to academically theorise on the issue. They were happy enough to leave that work to the graduate student.

4.5 Participants and sample recruitment

As described in Chapter 1, for this project I conducted 14 qualitative interviews with participants of community radio stations in West Belfast and rural Newfoundland.

My most successful method for finding interview participants was through introductions and referrals. An enthusiastic social worker in Belfast – a friend of a cousin of mine – personally brought me to both Féile FM and Raidió Fáilte for face-to-face introductions, as she had worked with some of the staff of each station on community wellness projects. Being introduced to people had a snowball effect once the word spread about my research. These initial face-to-face introductions were instrumental in validating my position as a potential 'friendly researcher,' someone who could be trusted with their stories and included in the community.

Participants were also recruited for this study via a request for volunteers distributed via email. Interview requests were sometimes unsuccessful, usually receiving no reply or sometimes a polite decline. A sampling of these emails can be found in Appendix C.

Lack of funding for this project and limitations of time and geography also of course had an impact on my availability to chase down potential interview leads. I had a limited amount of time to physically be in Belfast, and following up with participants by email and telephone after the fact was not a reliable method of communication for some. Sometimes I had to come to terms with the fact that, despite my desire for a particular person's input or an organisation's participation, if they were unavailable at the present

time for whatever reason, I wouldn't be discouraged from pursuing other avenues to solicit participants and continue on in my research.

Each time I interviewed or met someone new involved in the stations or grassroots community organising in West Belfast, I would ask them for suggestions on contacts, leads for information, and other resources that may be useful in following new ideas and themes that emerged. People were generous with their time and suggestions. Internet and newspaper searches gleaned further sources of potential contacts and information. Eventually, after many informal discussions, I was able to get a picture of what community radio in West Belfast was like in 2007.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, introductions occurred much the same way. Having had direct experience working with both local activist organisations and a campus/community radio station in St. John's, I had friends and acquaintances that I could ask to participate. Internet databases and article searches for community radio stations were also helpful. As word spread of my project, people contacted me with suggestions. As my Newfoundland interviews were conducted after I'd already spent time in Belfast, I had a better idea of what kinds of information and themes I was hoping to find, and who to perhaps target for potential interviews.

All participants were informed of the study's themes and goals and were encouraged to request additional information if they so desired. In a few cases, potential questions were discussed or circulated prior to interviews, and participants could choose which topics to address. As most participants had their own experience with community media, they were very media-savvy and in many cases had significant experience themselves in conducting interviews for on-air broadcast or print. They were often familiar with interviewing techniques and analysis, as well as the responsibility placed upon the intermediary person preparing a product (such as a radio show or a thesis document) based on information gathered from stories and conversation.

I conducted open-ended interviews with participants. A sampling of the interview questions is in Appendix A. This list was primarily for my reference, notes I brought to

each interview that guided my approach in directing conversations with interviewees on community radio and its implications for community identity.

Consent was obtained either verbally or in writing. Consent forms were distributed and participants could determine how their interview material would be used, e.g. for future study, as future broadcast material, or for the recordings to be made available in a facility such as MUN's Centre for Newfoundland Studies archives. Participants were also given the option to withdraw from the research project if they so wished. A sample of the consent form is included in Appendix B of this document.

In early proposals for this research I wrote of the potential benefits of participation. This thesis research, I hoped, would provide:

- A further venue to promote a community's radio station (or media project) and their community itself, including issues of culture and language;
- The potential to create networks between people involved in this project. Fergus at Raidió Fáilte brought this to my attention, as he is interested in learning of language activists using radio as a means of communicating and educating here in Canada;
- The potential to facilitate the sharing of technical skills, information, and knowledge about community development and radio in a grassroots fashion, i.e. in regards to operating minority-language radio stations (such as Raidió Fáilte and CJRM, a French-language community radio station in Labrador City) or how to promote issues not always recognised or under- or misrepresented by mainstream media;
- Sharing of stories. An important facet of community radio is that it can be used as a tool of empowerment, to endow people with the skills, control, and creative possibilities to create media for themselves.

To some degree, at least in creating a space for thoughtful dialogue between my research participants and myself, I hope this written thesis has succeeded in the above goals.

4.6 Data collection and securement

The interviews for this thesis were all conducted in person and audio recorded using a Sony MZ-100 Hi-MD Minidisc recorder. Early recordings were made with a small stereo t-mic and for later recordings I used a Shure SM58 vocal microphone. Recordings vary in quality; I conducted interviews in a variety of locations, from restaurants to auditoriums, kitchens, offices and production studios. The variety of suitable empty spaces available in which to record the interviews account for variations in the sound quality of my field recordings.

I transcribed all interviews myself and audio recordings were kept in a safe place and backed up as hard copies (printed transcripts) and digitally (CD and minidisc copies and on an external hard drive). This data, along with any other personal information and consent forms, were kept confidential. Some of the audio recordings were used in a presentation of my thesis research to members of the Department of Women's Studies at MUN in January 2011.

Occasionally, additional comments and input were provided by participants via telephone and email correspondence. Follow-up interviews occurred in at least one instance. The interviews conducted were qualitative, open-ended interviews that usually evolved into in-depth conversations. I had a prepared list of potential questions and topics of interest with me, and the conversations often flowed naturally beyond a simple question-and-answer format. Topics included community radio and community identity, voice, representation, education, challenges and barriers, volunteering, fundraising, the Internet and new technologies, and community building.

4.7 Data analysis

Grounded theory is a methodological approach to organising one's research material through simultaneous coding and analysis, as pioneered by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in the 1960s (Charmaz, 2006). I found Kathy Charmaz' book, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis* a helpful guide. Working with my lengthy and in-depth interview material by transcribing and analysing that data was a very time consuming process. My interviews varied in length from about 30 minutes to a few hours; consequently, some of the transcriptions are quite long and hold a multiplicity of cues and ideas.

As I transcribed each interview, I identified keywords and topics which I noted at the beginning of each transcript. For example, an interview with Raidió Fáilte's station manager, Fergus, yielded the following keywords:

> Identity, language activism, language community, Lá Nua, Belfast history, language acquisition, living language, language and classroom learning, adult education, Internet, podcasting, radio and accessibility, community radio and funding, volunteers, volunteering, government regulations, government responsibility, Irish language media North and South, BBC, Raidió na Life, RTÉ, Raidió na Gaeltachta, Irish language act, An Cultúrlann, non-Irish speakers, pirate radio, Radio Free Belfast, Radio Caroline, Radio Shankill, Radio Peace, Radio Free Derry, 1960s-80s, radio organisations, CRAOL…

In looking at Emma of Féile FM's interview I identified the following:

> Women, education, accessibility, access to technology, employment/skills, feminist radio, health, housing, community groups, seniors and youth on air, accountability to one's community, representation, grassroots community organising, political organising West Belfast, voice/who gets to speak, community radio funding, radio in N. Ireland and Ireland, being an "outsider" in a community, Internet broadcasting & podcasting…

Fred of Ryakuga (NL) particularly spoke of:

> Education, radio is political / activist, Fogo Process, community development, community building, grassroots organising, MUN Extension, Donald Snowden,

participatory media, participatory video, AMARC, cultural celebration, access to learning about & using technology, oral societies, storytelling, sharing, personal enrichment, rural communities, Newfoundland and Labrador, indigenous communities and representation, St. John's Women's Centre sit-in …

Periodically, while transcribing, I would make notes in the margins of the document, either in red in the typescript or handwritten on my printouts. These thoughts would often connect to articles I had read, or I would make notes relating to recurring themes among other participants and how to connect them. For example, both Anita in Bonne Bay and Glenn in Belfast mentioned the effect of tourism in their communities as a consideration for their community radio stations, both in that it can bring a financial benefit to their area and also trouble residents' impressions of their community identity. I would also bold or highlight particularly interesting or relevant insights by my participants in each interview. When I began to write the thesis itself, I set up skeleton frameworks for each chapter, containing outlines for sections and lists of potential subjects for discussion. Initially, I would cut-and-paste selected quotes into each section, along with any notes from my margins or notebooks. I would tag each quote or brief insight with additional keywords so they could be moved around in the document if I made linkages elsewhere. A quote or piece of writing could have several tags, such as "education," "seniors," and "access".

This process of writing and revising small notes and placeholders for myself constituted a memo-writing of a kind, as described by Charmaz as a useful way of analysing coded materials to "provide a record of your research and of your analytic progress…. You can revisit, review, and revise your memos with a critical eye as you proceed" (p. 94). Grounded theory tends to emphasise and value the research process itself, acknowledging that insights and analysis may not occur in a linear fashion. This is certainly true in my case; at times I felt as though I was building the thesis from the inside-out, fleshing out topics and piecing together patterns as I went along, no matter what the position within my draft.

Mary Allen writes of theoretical sampling and constant comparison: "Constant comparison involves comparing and integrating incidents and statements relevant to each

theme that emerge from the data" (p. 32). In continually reviewing my interview audio, transcripts, and memos, my analysis of my material perpetually evolved. The process of inputting raw data and notes into my drafts enabled me to sort them into categories as identified through my keywords and codes. By developing my analysis while writing early drafts of this thesis and reviewing my interview audio and transcripts simultaneously and continually, I was able to focus in on relevant research questions and further direct any interviews still to come.

I began the writing of this thesis by looking for support tools. The online program Refworks was helpful in organising my literature materials into categories, following themes for searches, and creating a detailed reference list. Other useful online reference materials included the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's website *Qualitative Research Guidelines Project* at http://www.qualres.org and Simon Fraser University Library's *Citation Guide: APA* (6th ed., 2010) at http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/apa. As the final stages of my thesis writing were conducted either on-the-move or in rural Newfoundland (a 1 1/2 hour drive from the nearest MUN library), MUN's interlibrary loans and document delivery service were exceedingly helpful with my requests and queries, and the plethora of journals and books now available online offer an incredible service to researchers writing up their findings no matter where they may reside. Google Scholar and Google Books were also useful sources for tracking down reference material. My local Newfoundland and Labrador Public Library librarian and their interlibrary loans service was another helpful resource, particularly for obtaining books from Newfoundland and Labrador. In Belfast, I conducted searches at both the Queen's University Belfast library and the Linen Hall Library downtown.

I kept several notebooks throughout the data acquisition process, both to jot down information on library or Internet searches, potential people to contact and how to reach them, and ideas as they came to mind. I kept them at the ready nearly constantly, as I found insights or linkages would come to me often a day or so after I'd spent some time reading other materials or had conducted an interview. I found the process of writing notes useful in organising my thoughts, and my mind has a tendency to unconsciously

synthesise that which I 'take in' or experience over a period of several hours or days before I may have an 'aha!' moment of connection. During my interviews, having a notebook on hand allowed me to jot down follow-up questions and connections to other material as my interviewer was speaking.

While I didn't do this often, I also attempted an audio journal of sorts using my reliable old Sony minidisc recorder, noted "Thesis Radio Show" on my computer. If I did not have immediate access to a notebook, sometimes I found the process of organising my thoughts out loud helpful, particularly late at night or when out for a walk. I did record (with willing participants of course) occasional conversations with friends and fellow students in addition to my self-dictation. This material was useful to me in processing my insights and ideas, but is not represented as data in this project.

4.8 Conclusion

Community radio often goes hand-in-hand with other forms of community organising. Many of the people I spoke to who were involved with their local community radio stations were also organising local festivals and events, or were otherwise connected with a variety of community initiatives. Where possible, I interviewed those involved with such organisations to learn their stories and benefit from their knowledge about community building in their area.

As described in my earlier paragraphs here about the difficulties in writing what you know, in many ways, as I've moved through this research project, my thoughts on community radio have certainly changed, particularly towards VOBB. When I reflect on the early interviews I conducted in 2008, I can't help but notice how my line of questioning and my observations noted then are less nuanced than my views on the subject today. I now live in the Bonne Bay area. Though I didn't know most of them prior to this research, all of my interview participants from VOBB are now considered friends and I have an active role as a VOBB volunteer – prior to 2008 I had never heard

or been to a station broadcast – and this has absolutely given me a more nuanced interpretation of those interviews in retrospect. While I am no longer conducting research on my friends and neighbours, in some ways, this type of qualitative analysis is not unlike Newfoundland's history of MUN Extension field workers being placed in communities and staying there for several years,[14] learning how they could best offer support and research that the particular community would want and need, earning the trust of local residents, and often becoming locals themselves. This process of integrating fieldworkers conducting research in communities offered a foundation for community understanding and development in ways that are perhaps less commonly seen now.

Chapter 5, the following chapter, is an analytical chapter examining the intersections of community and community radio among my research sites, and how community radio can be a mirror reflecting the communities it serves. Chapter 5 discusses issues relating to festival radios, participation and voice, grassroots community development, access and technology, as well as the challenges faced by community radio stations in terms of long-term sustainability, funding issues, volunteers and human resources, technical challenges, trailblazing, and developing a strong community radio identity in the face of other forms of popular media.

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[14] Donald Snowden discusses this in a transcribed interview from 1984 with Wendy Quarry; see pp. 488-489 in particular of Gumucio-Dagron and Tufte (2006). Fred of Ryakuga also spoke of field workers becoming intertwined with their community/research sites in my interview with him for this project.

Chapter 5: Presentation and Analysis of Data

5.1 Introduction

> True community emanates from the hearts and minds of people. It deepens with
> our feelings and support for each other. It is sustained by a continued belief in
> ourselves and those around us (Pardy, 2010).

In this chapter, through the use of narrative method, I explore what community
radio can bring to the processes of community-building by interweaving the voices of my
participants (through excerpts from our interviews) with discussion of their context in
relation to theoretical work in cultural studies. I also explain the connections that exist
between my field sites, despite the fact that they are, in many ways, very different from
one another. I begin with a historical context for community radio in these locations,
which provides background information for the reader while showing how community
radios came to be – or could potentially become – significant sites for cultural and skills
development in these regions. As the chapter progresses, I explore themes that emerged
from both the interviews with my participants and the theoretical material discussed in
my literature review, discussing the commonalities and challenges in ways that explore
the importance of meaning-making, identity, and voice.

For this project, I interviewed participants involved with both Féile FM and
Raidió Fáilte in West Belfast. Interviewees were both staff and volunteers of those
organisations. In some cases those I interviewed were also involved with other
community organisations – such as Fáilte Feirste Thiar, a West Belfast tourism
promotional agency, the Cultúrlann, an Irish-language community centre, and Féile an
Phobail, a group that promotes regular tourism events in the area, hosts popular regional
music festivals, and is the owner of the radio station. In Newfoundland, I conducted
interviews among members of the Voice of Bonne Bay [VOBB] – an organisation that
I've since become involved with – and was invited to participate in Féile Tilting, Fogo

Island. Both of the Newfoundland stations identified here are connected with festivals and are currently broadcasting on temporary licenses, for a week or more at a time. VOBB-FM eventually plans to operate as a permanent community radio station, broadcasting year-round. In West Belfast, Féile FM began as a station with a temporary license (RSL, restricted-service license) connected to the Féile an Phobail West Belfast festival. Raidió Fáilte also began broadcasting with a temporary license, and grew from the pirate radio and grassroots Irish-language movement. When OFCOM introduced full-time licensing for community radio stations in 2004 the stations applied for and eventually received permanent status. Though operating an Irish-language station in West Belfast could be interpreted as politically motivated,[15] in Raidió Fáilte's licensing application they state explicitly in their opening statement: "We are totally non political, non-sectarian and anti-racist."[16] All the stations discussed in this document rely on volunteers and fundraising to operate. The stations in West Belfast have small rosters of paid staff to keep things running, and as of this writing the two stations mentioned in rural Newfoundland are primarily a labour of love for their volunteer boards and organising committees. Many of my interview participants were very passionate for the community radio work they were doing.

Common themes arose from the interviews I conducted, which I will discuss in this chapter. They include:

- Festival radio: a celebration of culture and stories
- Participation and volunteerism: how to make community radio work

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[15] Broadcast restrictions for television and radio stations licensed to broadcast in the UK can be found under *Ofcom Broadcast Code Guidance* located online: http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/broadcasting/guidance/programme-guidance/bguidance/ Chapters include sections on harm and offence, crime, religion, fairness, and due impartiality. These requirements are similar to Canada's Broadcasting Act, particularly the section entitled Regulations Respecting Radio Broadcasting: http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/SOR-86-982/page-3.html#anchorbo-ga:l_I_1-gb:s_3
[16] United Kingdom. Office of Communications. (2004). *Community Radio License Application Form: Raidió Fáilte.* Retrieved from http://licensing.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/radio/community/archive/radiofailte.pdf

- Voice, marginalisation, and access: is community radio really a 'voice for the voiceless'?
- Building strong communities: grassroots organising and community development
- Technology and accessibility
- Challenges of community radio

In both Canada and Northern Ireland, there is a tradition of radio reflecting and influencing community, be it in the form of pirate radio stations, festival radio, hospital radio, church or military broadcasts and so on. The pirate radio ship Radio Caroline, broadcasting from a boat offshore in the 1960s brought rock n' roll music to youth in Ireland, Scotland, and northern England (Radio Caroline, 2011);[17] US military stationed in Newfoundland or Labrador during WWII and into the 1950s – and civilians – could listen to American Armed Forced Radio Service broadcasts featuring popular music on VOUS and other radio stations set up to broadcast to US army bases in Goose Bay, Stephenville, St. John's and Argentia (Fitzpatrick, 2001; Webb, 2008, pp. 136-137);[18] VOWR is a long-running radio station of the United Church of Canada, broadcasting from downtown St. John's since 1924 (VOWR, n.d.). Jeff Webb writes in The Voice of Newfoundland that VOWR managed to fill the role of public broadcaster in Newfoundland during the "fiscal crisis of the 1920s and 1930s," when "churches, volunteer groups, and businesses took up the role of public service broadcasting" before the Newfoundland government established a state-owned radio station (Webb, p. 17). In West Belfast, community radio has a political history, with pirate radio such as Radio Free Belfast operating from 1969, during the years of the Troubles in which riots

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[17] Radio Caroline was mentioned by both Emma and Fergus in their interviews, and is still in existence.

[18] Fitzpatrick, J. (2001). *Popular music: Newfoundland and Labrador heritage*. Retrieved from http://www.heritage.nf.ca/arts/pop_music.html. See also Webb, J. A. (2008). *The voice of Newfoundland: A social history of the Broadcasting Corporation of Newfoundland, 1939-1949*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

occurred and communities were barricaded and separated from one another. Pirate radio continued through the 1970s and 1980s as a method of transmitting information despite physical borders, and this tradition spawned community radios, such as Raidió Fáilte discussed here, which aims to boost Irish language learning and cultural promotion in the region. A brief discussion on community radio in Northern Ireland, including examples from the Radio Free Derry and Radio Equality pirate radio stations, is featured in the previous chapter, chapter 4.

As I will show, a community radio station aims to provide a benefit to its listeners by sharing information, music, stories and culture in a participatory fashion; a community radio station's producers are also its audience and vice versa. In general, community radio stations aim to foster a sense of well-being, cultural celebration, and dialogue among community members, and support positive community development.

In rural and geographically isolated areas on the island of Newfoundland and in Labrador, alternative communications still play a vital role. Much of the province does not have adequate cellphone coverage, and CB radios are still popular along our highways. There are several different organisations dedicated to ham radio in the province, and satellite phones are used for emergency services in remote areas. There is a social aspect to being familiar with tools such as CB radios, and being involved in community radio projects in the province is no different. Community networks form when people get together as a result of shared interests and beliefs in communications technologies, and information-sharing across communities has been facilitated through community media ever since the Fogo Process, as described in Chapter 2. Despite advances in audio recording and broadcasting technologies, community radio doesn't have to be something technically complicated to produce. It can be as simple as a transmitter, mixer, laptop and a microphone.

5.2 Research sites:

5.2.1 Community Radio in Norris Point, Newfoundland

Norris Point is a rural community of approximately 800 people, many of whom are seasonal workers in the tourism and fisheries industries or are retirees from other parts of Canada and the world attracted by the scenic beauty and outdoor recreation possibilities of the GMNP area. Parks Canada is a major employer for people living in the region. There is a university office there – MUN's Bonne Bay Marine Station – which hosts students and faculty for classes and research opportunities. The Bonne Bay Health Centre located in Norris Point is the largest medical facility for the 200 kilometres between Port Saunders and Corner Brook. B & Bs dot the roads, and there are several businesses specialising in outdoor recreation tours and activities.

As Gary N. explains:

> I really think the potential for community building, and making communities viable and strong, is just incredible…. Norris Point is a community that is one of the most popular tourist areas of the province; we have a huge number of visitors come through every summer. With the radio station I think you can enhance that, and also help really develop and maintain the identity of it as a community that's been around for a long time, with a history and interesting citizens who are part of that history.

In 2008, attendees and organisers of the Trails Tales and Tunes festival hatched the idea of a community radio station for the region, which became the Voice of Bonne Bay. The Trails Tales and Tunes (TTT) festival is a springtime event that extends the tourism season of the area into May and provides a respite from the winter for local people. It's a 10- to 15-day walking-storytelling-music festival that is extremely participatory and lively, and a small community radio station both enhances the storytelling side of the festival and provides an additional venue for musicians to play.

In Bonne Bay, the radio station is anchored in the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre, a community centre that was formerly the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital (BBCH). The history of the BBCH is significant, in that it was one of many government-funded and community-built hospitals that dotted rural Newfoundland beginning in the 1930s

(Crellin, xi). It was established in 1939, and townspeople in Norris Point and the surrounding communities volunteered their time, skills, and supplies to build it (Crellin, 19-20). It is because of this legacy that when the BBC closed its doors and was put up for sale, a heritage committee was established to procure the building and turn it into the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre.

Broadcasting for a couple of weeks at a time each year since 2008, the Voice of Bonne Bay became a permanent community radio station in late 2011. At times the radio station becomes mobile, providing remote broadcasts made possible via Internet connection to the main studio area.

In a large common room – the former women's ward – four tables are arranged to hold stereo equipment. (These tables, on a different day, could hold wares for a community bake sale, or perhaps a stack of fabric remnants belonging to a quilting class.) You might wonder what the large grey box atop an old metal nightstand is, lights flashing away: it's the transmitter, and there's a large black cable strung out the window and up onto the roof, connected to the precariously attached antenna. Joanie of the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corporation explains:

> The way the station was set up here, this table was here with all the equipment on it, and the guys sat behind there, but we had couches and a rug and a table in the middle of the room and the coffee and cookies set up in the corner, and of course during May month that door was open and people were wandering in and out. We had musicians staying here, so the building was already alive anyway... there'd be 40 or 50 people just lining the walls, and down the hallway in and out there, while a little music event was just going on in the middle of the room.

VOBB volunteers can set up and tear down the station quickly in a few hours, and visitors who drop into the station during quieter moments would be encouraged to ask questions, explore the former hospital building, offered a cup of coffee and coaxed into joining the voices on-air. Gary N., a frequent VOBB contributor and volunteer, describes it as follows:

> [Fred] wanted people to feel like… if they had any idea at all of what to do on air they could drop in and do it, so the way we set it up was that we provided a really

kind of comfortable public space in the old hospital building, where the hostel and a few other things are, and we made a comfortable room there with couches and a coffee table and coffee and snacks and all that, and we kept announcing on the air that it was open to the public and anybody could drop in any time and within a couple of days people were driving by and dropping in. We had a sign up out on the road saying 'Voice of Bonne Bay here' and 'drop in anytime' and people did drop in and after a while it was just completely ad-hoc programming. Somebody would come in who had a story to tell, or somebody who might be interested in being interviewed on the air, and you know, because we had no real schedule we could usually just fit them in right then and there. It became something that was really popular.

The VOBB license application to the CRTC describes the objectives of the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corporation (BBCHHC), the non-profit entity with ownership of the station, as the following:

1. The preservation of local culture and heritage (including arts, crafts, music and oral history),
2. The promotion of health and wellness, and
3. Community economic and social development (Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corporation, 2009, p. 2).

The application goes on to state that a community radio station fits well with the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corporation's (BBCHHC) intentions of supporting regional development. Describing the first broadcast of VOBB during the second Trails Tales and Tunes festival, the applicants write: "This provided a platform for the greater community (students, seniors, tourists, etc) to come together to discuss issues of mutual importance and concern. It promoted exchanges between amateur and professional musicians, and gave seniors an opportunity to tell their stories. All of this was combined with recorded and live music, and broadcast to the communities of Bonne Bay" (ibid).

5.2.2 Community Radio in Belfast, Northern Ireland

West Belfast is an area that was hit particularly hard by the Troubles, the thirty or so years following the 1960s in which British soldiers and Royal Ulster Constabulary

(RUC) officers occupied parts of Northern Ireland in response to political insecurity which led to civil protest. Republican and Loyalist paramilitary groups such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) were formed or renewed, and sectarian violence continued to intimidate communities. In many ways West Belfast is composed of neighbourhoods and communities still healing from the memories of violence, economic instability, and segregation. Some of the grassroots organisations mentioned here – such as Fáilte Feirste Thiar, promoting West Belfast tourism to provide local economic benefit to the community, and Féile an Phobail, with their cultural festivals and the radio station – are working to revitalise their neighbourhoods.

The existence of sanctioned community radio stations as designated by Ofcom, the broadcast licensing body of the UK, is a relatively new phenomenon[19], and many such officially-identified stations come from humble origins. Fergus, the director of Raidió Fáilte tells me tales of pirate radio broadcasts in West Belfast during the 1960s and 1970s, particularly when there were police and military barricades separating communities:

> …After the civil rights movement started in the late '60s, and the conflict began where the state began to hit back at the demonstrators and things, and then no-go areas were set up, and the whole political situation began to develop in that sense, an aspect of that was that local community radio stations began to set up. The first one I think was Radio Free Belfast, which was set up here in Belfast, in the west, incidentally. And this was a pirate station, and it was organised almost in a classic pirate sense in so far as it was moved from house to house, because of the threat that the police or the army would come in and take the equipment…. Because it was the first local pirate radio station, it had a massive listenership. Everyone was listening to it, in every house you would go into; in every shop you went to they would be tuned into Radio Free Belfast. It was local, they were playing songs about the struggle and what was going on, and they were showcasing local talent, people could actually hear their neighbours in singing or whatever. And it had, people were ringing up and getting requests played for so-and-so, for their neighbours or friends. So it was a very popular phenomenon, probably one of the most popular local radio stations.

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[19] See *Community Radio Order 2004*, http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1944/contents/made.

Raidió Fáilte began in the early 1980s, an offshoot of the grassroots Irish-language education movement of West Belfast that began in the 1960s. With significant declines in Irish-speaking communities over successive generations in Northern Ireland and a predominantly English-language oriented school system, a group of families in West Belfast decided to revive the Irish language among young people by establishing informal language schools and activities for children. Four wards around West Belfast eventually came to be known as the Gaeltacht Quarter due to the concentration of residents involved in this revival.

Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiach (An Cultúrlann) on the Falls Road was established in 1991 as an Irish-language education and arts community centre (*The Story*, n.d.) Formerly an Orange Lodge, it now provides a presence for the Irish-language movement in the North. The building became a space for language schooling, houses a bookstore, provides a performance space for musical and cultural events, boasts a café and restaurant, provides office space, and is the home of Raidió Fáilte. Its historically significant location demonstrates the pride local people take in their cultural and linguistic heritage. Raidió Fáilte, operating as a local community radio station, augments other Irish-language media such as the Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ) national radio and television broadcasts from Ireland. By providing a space in which residents of West Belfast can showcase their culture and heritage in the Irish language, Raidió Fáilte continues the tradition of celebratory community radio. Fergus, the station manager, explains:

> The people involved in this station would be language activists as opposed to I suppose what people might call 'radioheads'. A lot of the younger people might be coming to it because of an interest in media and the language. But a lot of the people who set it up were more interested in setting up a radio station from a linguistic point of view than like from a radio point of view. Our interests weren't necessarily in being involved in radio and getting involved in the media, it was 'how can we promote the language?' And I think that, in the attempt to create a language community… there is a necessity for people to be able to hear the language in all sorts of different contexts, so for that reason – radio, television, records, and all sorts of different areas where the language can be heard – is very important to keeping it alive and vibrant. But a radio has a particular importance

in creating a language community and a sense of identity, because it allows the community to debate with itself and raise issues, and argue about the issues and agree about issues or disagree about issues. So it gives a vibrancy and a coherence, it helps build some sort of coherent sense of community. And it also allows us to have a voice to the rest of the world.

Féile FM, by contrast, is a West Belfast community radio station with the mandate to represent the myriad populations living in the area.[20] Emma, Féile FM station manager at the time I visited in 2007, explains that Féile was established "to give people here in West Belfast a voice [and] to showcase the good talent going on in the community, a voice to show what was going on politically, in terms of what maybe wasn't getting reached by other media outlets, and to highlight the positive work that was going on in the community." They are located on the top floor of the Conway Mill, a former spinning mill and linen manufacturing company turned community centre. A multipurpose space, it houses both community ventures (Community Education Centre, Irish Republican History Museum, a drop-in centre for ex-prisoners and their families, and Féile FM) and commercial enterprises (upholstery, mattress, and stationery factories; a printing company and a design studio, to name a few). The Conway Mill Preservation Trust was established through community efforts "for the purpose of stimulating, promoting, and supporting community economic development" (*History of Conway Mill,* n.d.) in the region. One of the organisers, Fr. Des McCarthy describes the early vision for the repurposing of the Mill in his autobiography, *The Way I See It* (2005):

> In the nineteen seventies we had dreamed of an education project which would be independent, financially supported by a commercial operation.... Conway Mill seemed like fulfilling the dream, one hundred thousand square feet of space, one floor for education, an education project upheld by a commercial venture, over all of which the people working would have control.... For years as a mill it had been

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[20] p. 6: "Giving expression to all members of the community is an important ethos of the station. Féile actively recruits volunteers from ethnic or underrepresented groups and currently has a significant number of volunteers from ethnic-minority backgrounds who highlight issues respective to their respective communities." Féile FM. (2010). *Ofcom Report 2010.* Retrieved from http://www.feilefm.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/08/Ofcom-Report-2010.pdf

a private enterprise in which workers, especially women, suffered. Now it was to be an integrated site where work, enterprise, independence, culture, education would be in one place, where you could go to work in the same building as the theatre, where you could have education alongside people building up their enterprises (p. 160)

Sean-Paul, the director of Féile an Phobail, the cultural organisation that oversees Féile FM, tells me that the Conway Mill is an ideal building for a cultural and education centre in West Belfast, but making it work has been a challenge:

The mill was, in terms of, for investment and creativity, it was an absolutely perfect building for artists. Big big rooms, great for mural artists, you can be creative. We spent twenty years campaigning for these buildings to be upgraded, and anywhere else where there was such a collective strength and creative strength, from so many different organisations, most governments would have recognised that and pushed that as a social enterprise. The mill has had to fight so many campaigns like so many community groups or organisations for recognition.

It also houses the Conway Education Centre, providing adult education, a health and healing centre, programs for youth, a woodworking shop and an after-school program.[21] Sean-Paul explains:

For a lot of kids who were, you know, late in the '70s and '80s in this part of Belfast, this was daily rioting, this was conflict, this was major issues. So a lot of people did step out of education, a lot of young men went to jail, young women went to jail, got educated in jail, some didn't, and they'd come back and they used the informal Education Centre. And it's a brilliant centre now in terms of providing education beyond the formal system. So the Education Centre has been probably the key element as well as the artists.

It was within this vision of grassroots organising and community strength that Féile FM was established, as another local resource for information and community engagement in West Belfast.

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[21] See http://conwaymilltrust.org/our-work/conway-education-centre/ for further information.

5.2.3 Radio further afield in rural Newfoundland

A wonderful community radio event happened during a weekend in September 2009 in Tilting, Fogo Island. Part of an Irish-Newfoundland arts festival celebrating Tilting's historical connection with County Wexford (where many of the town's early settlers originated), it featured writers, storytellers, musicians and artists from Ireland and the town of Tilting. The organising committee, spearheaded by Dan Murphy, decided to incorporate a radio station into the festival, courtesy of Ryakuga (a non-profit entity that facilitates community media, particularly community radio, in the province) and the College of the North Atlantic. Inspired to create further connections across the Atlantic, the 2010 broadcast for Féile Tilting Radio included a simultaneous broadcast with Radio Youghal, a community radio station in County Cork, Ireland.

I happened upon the radio in Tilting almost by accident, as it was not one of my planned research sites. Invited to the event by one of my interview participants, it was one of those occasions where I felt all my theories and hopes for community radio were really happening right in front of me.

The radio station in Tilting was set up in St. Patrick's Hall, a large performance space with a kitchen, stage, and a bar. We set up in the back of the room, broadcasting while workshops and events (even lunch) were happening, lending a festive atmosphere to the radio. Different crowds would wander through the Hall in the early mornings and late nights, and Féile Tilting Radio captured the ambiance of the event.

I remember wandering the community one sunny afternoon and marvelling at how I could hear the radio everywhere: in people's houses via open windows, out back while people were working in their sheds, in local businesses and in the post office. You could hear Féile Tilting Radio all around the bay. The corner store had it on, and people were talking about it seemingly everywhere I went. The consensus seemed to be that the town hadn't experienced anything quite like this during a Come Home Year, and people

were enjoying hearing their family and friends through the radio. I could imagine older residents sitting near the woodstove, listening to the broadcast.

At one point about town, noticing the radio throughout the community, I heard a local resident interviewing his mother and two other women. These three women in their 80s and 90s were sitting around in the Hall, telling jokes and carrying on. When I arrived back at St. Patrick's, I saw that they had couches set up around these women and the interviewer, like a very small theatre. People in the background were participating, offering comments and questions for the women on-air, from their perch on a couch. As my first experience with rural community radio, this scene was powerful. I had imagined how it could work as an interactive, lively, community event but had not actually experienced it. When I walked into the Hall that day, it was kind of magical for me to see it happen the way I had hoped it could. This sense of community connection and camaraderie isn't intrinsic in small community stations, but the potential for that sense of connection and celebration is always there. Hosting Féile Tilting radio in conjunction with the festival really brought the town together in many ways, both as an excuse for people to get out of the house, and to give them a purpose or reason to come by and participate in the radio in whatever fashion they felt comfortable.

Tilting on Fogo Island is one of those special places in the province. A community of Irish-Catholic heritage amongst eleven others of primarily English ancestry and located at the northernmost tip of an island northeast of central Newfoundland, it's not difficult to imagine Tilting as a remote and desolate place to live. A registered Heritage District,[22] many of the houses, stores, and stages in Tilting are still built and maintained in traditional styles (Mellin, 2003), often moved from one location or another over land or by boat, wooden structures perched and nestled amongst the rocky barrens. Family names and family neighbourhoods have remained the same for generations.

One of the highlights of Féile Tilting in 2010, the second year for the festival, was the increased expectation of the community with regards to the radio; people enjoyed it

[22] See http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=2731&pid=0

so much in the previous year – when they were unsure of what it was all about – that they really looked forward to it for 2010. I found in talking to people at St. Patrick's Hall, everyone took it as expected that a radio would play a role in the festival, and they looked forward to listening. In this second year, outside organisations such as the Shorefast Foundation (a cultural development organisation busy revitalising arts and tourism on Fogo Island) and CBC radio were present. Féile Tilting had become a cultural event to watch, as a result of the success of last year's festival.

Féile Tilting in both 2009 and 2010 managed to simultaneously promote cultural celebration and reflect the community through positive mirroring and participatory engagement. The festival and radio provided great excitement for the town, and a lot of that energy spilled out onto the newly established airwaves.

5.3 Commonalities & Themes

Despite the differences in communities, many common themes arose from the interviews. In both West Belfast and the Bonne Bay area, issues of economic development and job creation and training were mentioned by interviewees, as was the importance of community radio to transmit and explore local history, culture, and language and to act as a social community space. In terms of exploring questions relating to community radio and community development, in terms of a gender analysis, women and men participated in all of the stations identified here, and there were programmes that focussed on women's voices. Emma of Féile FM in Belfast highlighted several programmes of theirs in particular in my discussion with her:

- Her own program, a discussion and music show that she co-hosts entitled We're Every Woman
- A Wednesday night education program entitled Education Matters, co-hosted by a young mother
- The Shankill Women's Centre hosted a programme in partnership with Falls Road women's groups during Féile FM's early years as a temporary festival radio station

In Newfoundland include Féile Tilting 2009 in Newfoundland, a local resident led a lively on-air discussion with three elderly women of the community. In some cases, I did observe that women seemed to be at times more inclined to operate 'in the background' as far as a listener not physically present could tell, by facilitating the on-air production instead of speaking into the microphone themselves. I discuss this further in the section on voice, marginalisation, and access.

Other issues of marginalisation were very relevant: social class and economic status, how to revitalise communities economically, providing access to educational opportunities and training, exploring multiculturalism, sharing stories and experiences of

elders and children, and sharing a community's music, language, politics and history. Community radio – or any kind of community project, be it a newspaper or museum – was being used by communities in order to speak to and amongst themselves, and also to share those discussions with those outside of those communities. Joanie provides an example from a 2008 Voice of Bonne Bay broadcast during Trails Tales and Tunes in which she interviewed the daughter of one of the former doctors of the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital, Dr. Dove, on the air. An oral history project on the early years of the BBCH was in process during that same spring, in which videotaped interviews of former staff and patients of the hospital were recorded and archived. The Voice of Bonne Bay interviews were included in that collection.

5.3.1 Festival radio: a celebration of culture and stories

Attached to a festival, a radio station can play a celebratory and energising role, as a pseudo-megaphone to broadcast events and announcements, and offer further opportunities for dialogue, for participants to reflect on festival events, to broadcast concerts and interviews, for storytelling, sharing, and collective listening. This cultural space also provides a forum for participatory, engaged citizenry in communities.

In Norris Point, events such as the Trails Tales and Tunes festival really invigorate much of the community, and VOBB complements the festival activities. "…If radio's there, it becomes an event in itself," Joanie tells me. Festival events are widely attended and discussed, and impromptu radio programs would result from collaborations and connections after a concert or event. This was also true of the Come Home Year radio station events I attended in both Norris Point and Tilting. A variety of people and their creative ideas surrounded the radio station; all kinds of topics were broadcast on the air, be it discussions of climate change, community gardening, musicians and creativity, books, and interviews with local residents or performers.

In Belfast, Féile FM began broadcasting as a complement to Féile an Phobail's twice-yearly festivals, operating as festival radio station with a temporary Restricted Service License [RSL]. Emma, the station manager, tells me that Féile FM was started with the intention of serving the local community, providing information and "creating projects that are different, through Féile an Phobail, which is the community arts organisation. We showcase our talent and messages that we want to get across through the arts." She describes a recent Hallowe'en festival complete with a lantern parade in a local park, a play, a ghost tour in the Conway Mill, and a radio drama. The events were open to the public and free of charge. "We're engaging with young people and their families, to get involved through the means of the arts, because it's a fun way to do it and it helps you showcase talent as well, which there's so much of in this community…. it's providing access to something which is really really different."

The momentum of festival radio can also provide a forum for cultural celebration. Local holidays, come home year events, local history, music, and stories can all be celebrated on the radio. In Norris Point, Sheldon, a VOBB volunteer, tells me that "community events like the [Trails Tales and Tunes] festival and the radio station are great ways for local people to understand each other, maintain and celebrate the local culture and community life." Parks Canada is a supporter of both the festival and VOBB, and he adds, "and I can't think of anything better for the Park to be involved with as a government body that's really trying to ensure a connection and support of local community."

In another interview, Fred, of Ryakuga Grassroots Communications – Ryakuga is a non-profit organisation that has been instrumental in assisting with and encouraging the development of local community media projects around the province of Newfoundland and Labrador – states that engaging in this kind of celebration of one's community and heritage empowers people to discover and develop their voice and therefore encourages dialogue:

> You have all the voices, in a forum which is egalitarian and which is basically built on respect, and so you have people being able to talk about their own issues

with each other, and it's not done flamboyantly, it's not done condescendingly, it's done with respect…. And, so you have, concepts like pride of place. Well, what some people call 'entertainment', which I call 'cultural celebration', actually leads to pride of place. So, in its simplest form the concept is, if people feel proud about themselves, and feel empowered by themselves, then they can talk about issues.

Storytelling is another means by which people can encourage dialogue in a community. "The similarity between people in Ireland and people in Newfoundland…is that they identify themselves through the stories they tell, and through talking, and through communicating," Joanie tells me. In this way, local community radio can be a valuable resource for sharing. In Radio Pirate Woman, Margaretta D'Arcy writes of the power of kitchen radio, of hosting women in her home, enjoying cups of tea and bantering in a room doubling as a broadcast studio. After a while, other neighbourhood women may show up and join in – they had of course been eavesdropping on the whole conversation at home via receiver. This casual, kitchen party-style radio, could be a very effective model for rural communities in Newfoundland. During Féile Tilting, similar magic happened when a local man arrived during our first 'official' broadcast morning with a cassette in hand. "Do you have a cassette player?" he asked, and of course we did. He had dug out an interview he had recorded with someone about 30 years ago. "Let's play this, but can you announce it?" he asked. "You should announce it yourself," I ventured. "Okay, but I'd like to be anonymous, I don't want my name on the radio," he said.

He spoke on the air, explained who was on the tape, when it was recorded, and how he came to find it that morning, and we played the recording. Being an old cassette recording, the sound quality was poor, but we made our best attempt at boosting the volume and masking the pops and crackles as much as possible. Once the interview had finished playing, we cut to our music CDs, and within what seemed like minutes, a small crowd of people had wandered into the Hall: "Oh, I haven't heard him speak in such a long time!" Someone had even brought along their little dog. People milled about for a short while, reminiscing about the person on the cassette – he had died – and amazed to hear his voice again. That particular event really got our radio broadcast started, and over

the next couple of days, we had the energy of the festival, the workshops, and the music programs in the evening to sustain us in the Hall, but it really took some kind of community connection – a catalyst – and people recognising voices on the air to come to their own conclusion of 'oh, I can do that,' or 'maybe I have some tapes or CDs that I could bring in'.

Oral history is a powerful tradition of both cultures on either side of the Atlantic Ocean. It highlights the power of word of mouth even today – other methods of information transmission, such as posters or brochures or online forums, may reach a different audience entirely or convey that information in a different way. This form of sharing our stories is important in that in allows us to find common ground across our differences in positionality and experience. As I describe in Chapter 3, bell hooks writes in Teaching Community of the value sharing personal narratives with her students has in her classroom. She further writes, "creating trust usually means finding out what it is we have in common as well as what separates us and makes us different.... [we can] learn both to engage our differences, celebrating them when we can, and also rigorously confronting tensions as they arise… it is not just what we organically share that can connect us but what we come to have in common because we have done the work of creating community, the unity within diversity" (2003, p. 109). As Stuart Hall describes how "the tale tells the teller", by sharing these aspects of ourselves publicly via the radio we produce shared culture (through difference) and create our community (of unity, not sameness) simultaneously, by positioning ourselves within both. Storytelling bears strongly on cultural identity. Joanie mentions:

> I think if you looked at maybe other cultures, it would be identified through, you know, look at those kinds of Ukrainian cultures who built the Prairies, they identify through hard work… they work together to do something and that's how they build their community and create their identity. But the Irish and the Newfoundlanders create it and maintain it through their storytelling and sharing information. That's why community radio works so well as a catalyst for those groups to bring them together.

Participatory radio is welcomed in communities that like to speak and listen to themselves. Programs such as the CBC's Fisheries Broadcast and VOCM's Open Line, which are both call-in radio shows popular across the province, have long been stages of lively interaction among presenters and radio listeners. Sheldon says:

Newfoundland it seems like, has also been very responsive to the public actually being on the radio, so things like call-in shows and the Fisheries Broadcast, where half the broadcast is fishermen talking about their experience. So it's not just the news being presented to you, it's, [local people telling us] what the news is, speaking back to the community. The [internet] is evolving towards that, and in some ways radio's been doing that for a very long time here in Newfoundland if not elsewhere, the idea of social interaction on the radio as opposed to the radio just presenting a story.

In Tilting, I saw first hand how community radio could be a powerful means of social interaction. While I was out and about rustling up people that weekend to speak on the air, I found three women to join me on the radio. They had grown up on Greene's Point in Tilting, been away for many years, and had returned home for the Come Home Year. I would introduce them and work the equipment while they spoke into the microphones. One woman told of stories growing up in the area for a while, and then she introduced her sister:

So that's my little story about Tilting, and my sister Imelda, who also grew up here, who also was born on Greene's Point…. And is now… living in Grand-Falls Windsor, and she's going to sing a song for us, a song that was a favourite… with my mother, who, it would be wonderful if she could be here, but she's in a nursing home in Grand-Falls Windsor at 92 years of age. And this was one of her favourite songs too. It's called the Fields of Athenry, and my sister Imelda's going to sing it for us now.[23]

Her voice warbled as she sang into the microphone in the otherwise crowded and noisy St. Patrick's Hall. As she and I were the only ones at that time sitting close by one another, both wearing headphones connected to the same mixer, it felt like an extremely intimate performance. I was suddenly very aware that I was listening to a woman shyly

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[23] Féile Tilting radio broadcast. (2009, September 19).

singing this song – an old Irish song that my father used to sing at home when I was growing up – in a roomful of people where none of them directly could hear her, unless they were standing next to, and listening intently to, one of the radios strewn at the far end of the room. People were talking and carrying on amongst themselves, and it felt like, aside from the two of us side-by-side and whoever was out there listening to their radios at home or on the internet – also both relatively solitary activities – that she was singing the song into my ear. I thought about how she was singing this song for her mother in the nursing home back in central Newfoundland, and how they had told me earlier that she would be unable to listen live to the broadcast – central Newfoundland is a fair distance from Fogo Island – but they wanted to share stories and words for her all the same. I also recalled my connections to my own family, and the nostalgia this particular song has for me in recalling my childhood. I managed to stay very still while she was singing, and when she'd finished:

> "Did it come out all right?" she says to me.
>
> "Yes, thank you, that was lovely. This is, uh," – I clear my throat here on the tape – "This is Tilting community radio. Um. It's 105.9 FM and maybe you're listening online. The website address is www.townoftilting.com. If you have any comments, or if you want to, uh, say anything about Imelda's lovely singing, uh, please send Dan an email…. I'm going to put on some music now, everyone's enjoying their lunch, and maybe we'll see you soon."[24]

Though it might not have been immediately obvious to anyone listening, in retrospect listening back to the recording of that broadcast I can hear every hitch in my voice, and I recall the feeling of just needing to wrap it up quickly so I could get away from all the people in the hall. I thanked the women quickly and ran to the washroom and proceeded to cry. I was stupefied by what had happened. Why on earth did I have such a powerful emotional reaction to that experience of sharing the airwaves with women I had

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[24] ibid.

just met? In retrospect, experiencing the same song as meaningful to a family outside of my own was very touching. I don't know if Imelda's mother heard the broadcast, but I hope someone was able to play a recording for her, or sit by her side as they listened on the Internet.

Once I'd composed myself, I went back out and apologised to them for leaving hastily – they were worried something was wrong, and when I explained how the experience of having them on-air made me feel, we laughed. This particular example still sits with me as representative of the possibility for making personal connections with one another via the airwaves.

Sheila Nopper (in Lalglois, Sakolsky & van der Zon, 2010) identifies her growing awareness of the power of the "raw sound of the voice" (p. 53) as she began to become increasingly transfixed by the feature documentaries broadcast on CBC Radio in the late 1970s. She writes:

> Suddenly I would feel compelled to stop whatever else I was doing while listening to the radio and I would plunk myself down in a chair to focus all of my attention on the audio collage of stories woven into an engaging narrative tapestry. It was the raw sound of the voice – the sighs, the breath and the silent spaces in between the words as much as the words themselves – that often revealed the essence of that storyteller's truth. Isolating a voice from the often distorted filter of visual dimensions that tend to (mis)identify a person enhances the likelihood that they layered emotional nuances contained within (and between) those vocal sounds will resonate directly from inside the speaker to inside the listener. The experience of this intimate type of radio documentary can be profound because it enables the listener to more consciously empathize with the storyteller's experience through their common humanity (p. 53).

Studs Terkel, Chicago's well-known oral historian and public radio broadcaster, once told Sydney Lewis in an interview, "I see radio – public radio specifically, of course – as saying that which is unsaid but felt" (Lewis, 2001, p. 5). As community radio can provide a platform to showcase narratives that are potentially familiar to its listenership – family histories, interviews with residents about days gone by, singing songs popular in the community – and both listeners and the producers of the medium have the potential to respond empathically to what is broadcast, forging a possible emotion connection with

what is said and heard. Hearing a voice in your ear – even through the mediated-yet-intimate physical space of sound resonating in headphones – will always sound to me like the speaker could be talking to me directly, communicating straight to my self, past any limitations of a physical body. Listening to sound in headphones gives the sense of transmitting those messages directly to your mind. The act of listening to another person speak – and relating to the sound of their voice and understanding or interpreting the meanings in which they communicate on an unconscious level, can be a transcendent process. Listening to radio, especially what Terkel describes as "the unprocessed voice", can seem a uniquely intimate and connecting performance:

> Public radio has to be organic and unprocessed. When you hear somebody talking, that's actual. You hear the voice down the block, and you think, "That's like me talking! He's saying what I wanted to say and never got around to saying." Or you hear an actual conversation, as though you're eavesdropping, and suddenly you feel less alone. But more than that, you feel pretty excited. There's something in that community (Lewis, p. 4).

While we may feel connected to one another via the radio, via shared ideas and interpretations of words spoken and stories told over the airwaves, Stuart Hall writes in *Representation* (1997) that the process of interpreting cultural meaning is fluid and is never fixed. Furthermore, this process of listening and understanding is an active process – "Meaning has to be actively 'read' or 'interpreted'. Consequently, there is a necessary and inevitable imprecision about language. The meaning we take, as viewers, readers or audiences, is never exactly the meaning which has been given by the speaker or writer or by other viewers" (p.32). He further notes that these meanings and shared interpretations between speakers and listeners are not without their historical context, and we can never remove these historic notions from words and discourse within a language. "There is a constant sliding of meaning in all interpretation, a margin – something in excess of what we intend to say – in which other meanings overshadow the statement or text, where other associations are awakened to life, giving what we say a different twist" (p. 33). Even though these collective meanings exist outside of our own interpretation, they are never entirely separate. When Terkel talks about the excitement of feeling connected

within a community, it must be acknowledged that this 'sliding of meaning' in what we hear on the radio will have different relevance for different listeners.

Authenticity, or the potential for authenticity, is another characteristic that may separate community radio stations from other forms of media, particularly commercial radio stations. "There has always been a special power in direct speech. The raw recounting of experience has an authenticity and persuasiveness which is hard to match, and most of us would rather hear someone speak directly than read about them through another's words," reads an excerpt from Slim and Thomson's article, "Words from the Heart: The Power of Oral Testimony" (2006). Speaking out is powerful, as is taking ownership of your stories, as Ivan, a university professor deeply involved in community media projects in the province, notes below:

> If you're the storyteller for your society it's kind of interesting, because you're the one who gets to see things that are happening, and it's a real privilege to be able to tell people, 'here's what I saw happen,' or 'here's what people say was happening,' and so on.

Ivan notes above that being the storyteller for your society is a privileged position. This storytelling privilege also carries a responsibility. It can be understood via bell hooks' nuanced challenging of what she terms the 'authority of experience.' This can be divisive, she argues, "used to silence and exclude" (Transgress, 1994, p. 90). Using the example of learning black history from a white professor in university, she notes that stories are always understood in the context of "the passion of experience, the passion of remembrance" (ibid). She writes that while she enjoyed this class with her white professor, she feels that she would have learned even more from a black professor teaching about black history, as they would be able to add 'experience and remembrance' to their interpretation of these stories. "Often experience enters the classroom from the location of memory" (p. 91), she writes. Speaking of Rigoberta Menchú's passion when she tells the story of her mother's dedication to emancipation for women in Guatemala, hooks writes: "I know that I can take this knowledge and transmit the message of her words. Their meaning could be easily conveyed. What would be lost in the transmission

is the spirit that orders those words, that testifies that, behind them – underneath, every where – there is a lived reality" (p. 91).

Community radio done in participatory fashion allows for introspective connections between our friends and neighbours. Encouraging people to share personal stories, histories, discussions and interviews with local residents can become a celebration of shared culture and traditions, of passion for our 'lived reality' as hooks describes above. Ivan further explains that when people stop doing 'old-fashioned things' in favour of more modern conveniences – he uses the example of rural Newfoundlanders now 'getting your bread in bags and your milk in tins' – that our collective sense of community in a region can be lost. Community radio, and other methods of coming together to share, produce, and archive local culture, can keep traditions and histories from being forgotten:

> When some people modernise, or they think about becoming modern, and they throw off whatever they see as traditions of the area, they end up losing a lot in that case too…. So, one of the things that MUN Extension and community media can do, would be to remind people of those traditions, and more than remind them, to celebrate those traditions. To sort of try and give us an antidote to the usual media we get, which celebrates modernity.

As discussed in the literature review, Stuart Hall writes of British national identity constructed around ideas of modernity and colonialism, leading to tea from Sri Lanka, India, and other British colonies, becoming a major signifier of British identity (Old and New, 1997, pp. 48-49). In this way cultures are lost, when we enforce a hegemony of identity on a population.

Gary W., technical wizard of VOBB, mentions a successful radio programme featuring former employees of the Cottage Hospital that happened in one of the early years of the festival broadcasts. "It was kind of a group discussion, a lot of the former employees sat around and just reminisced. 'Do you remember when?' and this was all broadcast [and recorded]. And I did hear a lot of people say, 'wow, that was really nice to hear that.'" Broadcasting from the former women's ward provided a historically significant location – a sense of place and physical space – for the discussion.

Comfortable chairs and couches and plenty of tea and coffee created a comfortable space for both listeners in the audience and speakers in attendance.

Emma at Féile FM asserts that the stories of elders in the community need to be shared amongst the younger generations so that their neighbourhood history has context, and that the hardships residents of West Belfast went through during the Troubles are not forgotten:

> There's so many personal stories that I suppose need to be showcased, of people's lives down through the years, and maybe through the Troubles here and their experience, maybe their experience within their family, their experience in the workplace, their experience through school, you know, that young people now maybe have no idea of, that's not taught in schools, so you can showcase that through the radio … So again, it's a platform, it's speaking out, and community radio can do that, it can speak out.

Sean-Paul, director of Féile an Phobail, the parent organisation of Féile FM, tells me that the origins of the West Belfast Festival – later called Féile an Phobail, the Festival of the People – began amid the riots and disillusionment of the area in 1988. It was decided to have a festival to inject a positive feeling in the community. He says, "The festival was also about showcasing… the skills and the artistic talent [of our young people and all our people.] And also the Irish culture, the Irish language, music, traditions, dancing. That was all very key in terms of this festival, because this community sees itself as very much Irish, and was told it wasn't, its culture wasn't, that it was second class." In addition to creating an arts and music festival they feature a platform for political discussion entitled West Belfast Talks Back. Sean Paul says:

> For the past twenty years (Féile an Phobail) has grown now into one of the biggest community festivals in Europe, and it's certainly the biggest community festival in Ireland. It has played a very vital and strong role in terms of debates and discussions, in the whole process of conflict resolution. West Belfast Talks Back is probably one of our key events, and… we were one of the first events to bring the DUP [] and Sinn Féin together on a platform… We've also brought many Unionist representatives and people from various communities that aren't, as they say, their politics or whatever aren't shared politics by people within this community. But we put them on a platform, and we give them and the local people a chance to integrate and they ask and debate and discuss and listen, more

importantly as well to other people's opinions and political opinions and divisions of where we are going in the future.

Sean-Paul further explained in his interview that in 1996 Féile an Phobail established Féile FM as a community radio station to promote the festival, initially broadcasting with a two-month festival license so they could operate a community radio in conjunction with their St. Patrick's Day and their summer festival in August.

Festival radio as discussed in this section refers to community radio that is generally awarded a temporary license by a regulatory body such as the CRTC or Ofcom to run in conjunction with an event. It augments the celebratory space of a festival by providing a new kind of space – the airwaves – and therefore the possibility to reach people in physical locations beyond the boundaries of the actual festival, such as those listening at home via FM or Internet broadcasting. The radio complements the festival activities, providing further opportunities for discussion, cultural celebration, and participation. It provides an additional and unique venue for community residents to engage with their local history and heritage in a celebratory fashion, especially when drop-in, kitchen party-style radio is encouraged. Community members can listen and participate in collective storytelling and music-making, share seldom-heard recordings to an audience, and send special announcements to (and with) friends and family.

Community participation and support is a key element in creating and maintaining a successful community radio. The following section will identify some of the benefits of participation and address challenges in encouraging volunteers to participate.

5.3.2 Participation and volunteerism: how to make community radio work

Community radio requires volunteers to operate, and in some ways that commitment can be an easier sell if the radio station is a temporary one. While people may not otherwise have the time to host a regular weekly on-air slot that may require a commitment of several hours, many will be enthused to do so in the short-term. This

could potentially correlate to listenership as well – with the momentum of a festival revitalising an area, people may be more likely to tune into a temporary radio broadcast out of curiosity and enthusiasm. The celebratory nature of festivals certainly adds dynamism to communities that may otherwise be less overwhelmingly social as a population the rest of the year. Ivan says:

> What makes community radio which takes place around Trails Tales and Tunes, or when it's done during a festival, is that people are already out, they're already, they've decided to participate in the event, they want to listen to music, to listen to stories and so on. And so when the radio is a part of that, it's just very natural to say, 'well, ok, I'll go on the radio and do that too.' So when a community radio station exists apart from a special event… it's a different issue in terms of participation, in that a fair bit of participation on long-term community stations would be an individual sitting in a room by themselves, or two people talking about things, or three people or whatever. And it might seem a little less social because there are fewer people around, but that's how radio is sustained and maintained over time. People make a commitment…. then it becomes easier, because it becomes a part of what the community is.

For volunteer-driven organisations, it is certainly important to have either a large volunteer base to draw from or a core group of people who are committed to that endeavour and who will take responsibility for what needs to happen, such as production and hosting duties, soliciting interviews and musical performances, finding means of financial support, drafting documents, etc – whatever is collectively seen as necessary. Not only is this valuable from a human-resources perspective, it is a "means of ensuring community involvement in the programming and broadcasting" (Moore, p. 46). In the case of permanent community radio stations, the volunteer base may require a continual influx of new people, in the event that current volunteers may move on to other things after a time. Eddie, Volunteers and Community Outreach Officer with Féile FM, mentions:

> One of the difficulties with getting volunteers is – it's kind of a positive thing – the volunteers before that were involved in the news team, there was maybe three or four, they've now gone on to have a career in the news, so they've all got jobs in Belfast or beyond. So it's left us with no news team, but that's the nature of it.

>Some people volunteer just to fill some time and to make friends and learn new skills, where other people… can see a little further in their career, which is great.

As Eddie describes above, though volunteer turnover may have detrimental effects for the organisation in terms of human resources, providing volunteers with opportunities to learn skills and gain experience in community radio benefits the community.

The Voice of Bonne Bay hosted a weeklong radio event at the end of October 2009, in partnership with Memorial University. Community-University Research for Recovery Alliance (CURRA) researchers were holding a conference at the Bonne Bay Marine Station and VOBB jointly broadcast many of the workshops and held a radio open house at the Julia Ann Walsh Centre. This was a kind of test event, as VOBB had recently applied for full-time FM licence status from the CRTC and were awaiting the results of that application [which was granted in November 2009]. Previously VOBB has broadcast primarily as a companion event to the Trails Tales and Tunes festival, and the CURRA event was a new opportunity. Broadcasting with CURRA gave the station a reason for being during most of that week but was also not without its challenges. VOBB was without a core group of volunteers at this point and most Board of Director members were simultaneously involved in work and projects elsewhere – VOBB is entirely a volunteer organisation and many people volunteer prolifically within the community, in addition to work obligations. One volunteer in particular wound up exhaustingly running the airwaves during most of the week when events weren't in session. Other VOBB committee members came and went, and often there was "just music" playing over the air if workshops were not in session and being broadcast. Only a few members of the community who weren't already involved with VOBB in some fashion dropped by; whereas during the TTT festivals the Julia Ann Walsh Heritage Centre is a hub of activity, with musicians dropping by, visitors coming in to find out the festival schedule or to chat with announcers or share a story on-air, and all kinds of people sign up for on-air programming duties, so there is a multitude of people sharing stories, ideas, and music on-air during TTT, allowing for varied and interesting listening. Mirroring the concerns

mentioned in Eddie's comment above, one of my Newfoundland participants mentioned that one of the challenges with community radio, particularly in rural communities, is one of human resources: finding reliable and diverse people who are available and committed to producing regular on-air content for broadcast. Ivan explains:

> The challenge of radio is always a content challenge; it's not a technical challenge. I mean, there are technical challenges certainly, people listen to community radio they'll know that at times.... Community radio like this, you come in, the wires are all over the place, you set up for a few days, you've got like a few minutes before you have to try and test something. So, yeah, there are technical challenges, but it's really the content thing that takes a lot of time, and participation. One reason why radio is a little better than cable TV I think, is that radio is a little bit less scary for people. The microphone is still scary I think for some, but when people actually go to a community radio station, like when the Voice of Bonne Bay is set up during Trails Tales and Tunes, and they go in and they realise, 'oh, this is a radio station, it looks like a table full of wires and CD players and computers and so on,' it just looks sort of, I don't know, friendly.

Communities that may initially be reluctant to embrace radio technology can be encouraged through community gatherings that feature the radio station as an element rather than its only component. Events such as community suppers, concerts, and craft and bake sales – certainly popular in rural Newfoundland – are all traditional means of community building through cultural sharing and celebration, by bringing people together and providing a space for storytelling, music-making, and doing traditional activities. Using locations such as community centres, church halls, community museums and historically significant buildings can add to the atmosphere by connecting the present-day celebrations with local history. With a radio station operating in the background and a welcoming location, a space with a friendly atmosphere could encourage participation. Though the technology inherent in producing radio can seem very different from other kinds of heritage projects, it's something people can learn and doesn't have to be needlessly complicated in order to work effectively and enjoyably.

I experienced VOBB for the first time as part of Trails Tales and Tunes in 2010. This was a lesson in community radio practicalities. Several times I found myself (or other volunteers) doing mundane tasks associated with the radio, such as cleaning dishes.

(We had an open-house drop-in policy going, and we received regular donations of coffee, tea, and homemade snacks to entice people to hang out and stick around.) I generally prefer to do the technical production and other behind-the-scenes work involved in community radio projects. This got me thinking: how many positions in radio are unsung and otherwise uncelebrated or unappreciated, but necessary? A lot of radio is behind-the-scenes work, save for that lone celebrity: the voice behind the microphone. What about the technical producers, the people setting up snacks and coffee for those dropping by, the 'fixers' arranging for introductions and interviews, the people responsible for the scheduling, the emailing, the promotional material, those who lend their houses for committee meetings, the people who intercept questions about other TTT events and hostel maintenance so those currently on the air don't have to. The Julia Ann Walsh Centre has a hostel upstairs; while there is a person employed to look after the hostel there is no front desk as such, and so with the activity for the festival happening around us, the VOBB common room and the TTT office were the busiest locales in the building that day. One night, with the hostel full mainly of performers and artists, I was chatting with a friend of mine, planning a short interview with her about the proposed Norris Point Community Garden. In walks a musician asking about bedsheets and towels; after directing him to the linen closet, I found myself doing the laundry that was languishing around the kitchenette area during the festival – we would need those tea towels and such for coffee in the morning, if nothing else. All of these details were part of running VOBB. With many people volunteering in multiple locations, plus tending to their families, suppers, providing spaces for people to stay, and so on, we all had to pitch in in a variety of ways so the radio station would work. It was a dynamic environment, and sometimes stressful over the course of 10 days. There were occasional interpersonal meltdowns amongst volunteers and visitors to the radio station, likely due to the immense amount of energy required to keep up the level of activities, coordination, and assistance for the duration of the festival.

When I visited Tilting, a local family generously provided a place for me to stay. We had many conversations about the community radio – which was a new concept for

Tilting residents – the reactions of local people listening, and participation. In the kitchen with the woman I was staying with, several times I asked her if she'd mind if I recorded our conversations about the radio, or could I encourage her to participate on-air. She would demur, "oh, that's more my husband's thing," or "oh, I wouldn't have much to say." Respecting her wishes, there were no recordings. But it strikes me that many interesting, well-spoken, and thoughtful people often hesitate to speak their minds when offered a local public forum such as a community radio. This woman had many interesting things to say and her own perspective furthered interesting conversations.

In my Methodology chapter (Chapter 4), I note that researcher Glynis George had similar experiences with potential participants declining to be interviewed. She writes of an otherwise outspoken woman on the Bay St. George Women's Council, and her refusal to sit for an interview with George: "Peg, too, refused to sit for an interview, claiming that she had nothing to say. What I think she meant was that she had nothing to say to me under artificial circumstances" (196).

Ultimately though, this invisibility of some of this behind-the-scenes work may lead to difficulties with the credo of radio being a voice for the voiceless. Some people choose not to speak on the air. Their input and work as volunteers was also integral and important, but might not have been as directly acknowledged or noticed in the same way as those voices heard on the radio. In an early interview for this project, I asked one VOBB volunteer (Sheldon) if he had ever gone on the air – I don't think I would ask this question now in the same way, recognising these other factors of volunteer involvement and support – and he had this to say:

> I don't think I was, actually. No, I never did go on the air at all. Which is fine, because personally, from my own individual perspective, I'm quite happy being behind the scenes and kind of facilitating, helping to plan, organise, and for those that are more naturally drawn to that, OK, I'll help you make it happen, but I don't need to be there myself.

Though it may be at times unrecognised, this form of facilitating what is being broadcast on the air is also an integral part of providing broadcast material. In terms of representing a community more diversely, radio programs can be produced almost

incidentally, as a background activity to other things already on the go in the community. I asked Joanie if it's possible to draw out all of the voices in a particular community, to encourage participation in a community organisation, and she told me that it was. She described an exercise program that she led during the Trails Tales and Tunes festival at the Julia Ann Walsh Centre with local seniors, which was simultaneously broadcast live on VOBB. Many of those in attendance didn't want to talk on the radio, but she encouraged the group sitting around the circle by talking to those who didn't mind speaking into the mic conversationally, as she normally would. People relaxed and saw that having VOBB on the room didn't have to turn the exercise class into something much different than it normally was, and people became less shy to speak. Joanie explains:

> If you sometimes just wait for the voices to come to you it's the stronger voices that are always heard, that always come. But if you kind of go around the circle to each one, if they don't want to say anything they don't have to, but sometimes they find that they do have something to say, so it's more inclusive.

She further notes that having a radio station set up in a multi-purpose community centre can be advantageous in that it can capture life as it happens in the community, such as providing a window into seniors' thoughts while they are already out of their homes for a communal event. "They're not necessarily coming for radio, they're coming for other purposes. Say the group of quilters is in here doing a landscape quilting workshop, you talk to them, 'tell us about your landscape quilt that you're doing,' 'well, it's a picture I took of my husband's fishing store down on the shore,' and you know. So you can get those voices in that way, and that's the advantage of having it in a community centre." Integrating a radio station into the community in a casual way can demystify the radio station as a separate entity. Joanie says, "the more they hear other voices in their community, then they realise 'that could be my voice too.'" Margaretta D'Arcy, describes how those planning Radio-Pirate Woman in Galway, Ireland also encouraged a non-threatening environment in establishing the radio. "None of us had had

any experience of broadcasting, let alone running a radio station," she writes, and further explains:

> We were, at this stage, more interested in encouraging women onto the radio than in building up a listenership, so we did not plan programmes, and any woman who wanted to could drop in for a cup of tea. If she then wished to be part of the radio, she could be. In fact, we brought back the old rural tradition of 'visiting'. (D'Arcy, 1996, p. 7.)

For community radio to work, the community and communities the radio station exists to serve has to feel a sense of ownership and investment in their radio station. This is not unlike the tradition of cottage hospitals in Newfoundland and Labrador, which were essentially built by workers in the communities and therefore local people felt a sense of pride and ownership of these buildings and services. Communities have to want to have a community radio station and they have to support it by actively participating. In this sense, some forms of participation are 'more valuable' that others – without active participation and support, a community radio station cannot exist beyond a form of audio jukebox, where recorded playlists are continually playing on loop. People in the community have to come in and produce programs on the air for something valuable to be able to be heard. Further to this, as D'Arcy describes above that they 'brought back the old rural tradition of 'visiting,' people need to remain interested in the radio station and physically participate where possible in order for it to remain relevant to a community.

At times those involved in organising the radio station can find themselves strategically selecting people to participate. During different VOBB broadcasts I find myself contacting teachers at the schools, trying to entice them to bring students down to the station. The 'content challenge' Ivan previously described becomes an issue if your community radio station would like to represent multiple facets of a town or region, not just a group of like-minded people. Those outside the organisation may not be vocal to organisers if they don't enjoy particular aspects of the radio: when things are broadcast, the music that's playing, how it 'sounds', who is involved or how the station operates. In trying to encourage youth to participate, a student tells me that they aren't interested because of all the Newfoundland music they hear on the radio station. (Paradoxically,

that same day someone told me they enjoyed it when VOBB was on the air because they could hear 'Newfoundland' music on a regular basis, telling me it's rarely played on other radio stations nearby.) When I counter that they could play whatever music they liked, they reply that they can listen to the music they like on their own with friends, so why would they host a radio show? Worse still, another student shows up to a meet and greet at the station and quietly leaves after a few minutes. There is no one else his own age there and there is abundance of adults in the room. One of the VOBB volunteers says:

> One of my fears about VOBB to be really honest and, this is a private opinion, but I wouldn't want the community radio to be run by this same group of people all the time. I really want to encourage the committee to reach out and make sure they're including all aspects of the community, and aspects of the other communities. Like I would encourage them to absolutely make sure they have people from Trout River who are on that radio, and people from Rocky Harbour who are on that radio. And not just young people or not just old people, but a mixture. Not just men, but a mixture of men and women. I think that's something that really should be carefully thought out, there should be almost forced inclusion if you like. Because otherwise what will happen is that there will be a gang of people running the radio station and it will, and especially if many of them are not, weren't born here, it's going to take on that aspect of something that, 'it doesn't belong to us, we have nothing to do with it,' because, you know, the crowd are from St. John's or Ontario or it's a Park thing, or something like that. I think it's really important that everyone in the community be approached or be encouraged to contribute in some way or another, and I think it's going to take a very clever coordinator too, and someone who is really aware, that this is what has to be done to actually proactively go and do it. But I think if you don't do that, you will really run the risk of having a cliquish thing that's not of any benefit to the community because it's going to be something else that the community feels left out of.

This kind of 'strategic selection' as the VOBB volunteer mentions above of different people and different voices for a community radio station is desirable, though not always possible or effective. What are the benefits of participation for these individuals and groups that are already choosing not to come on their own? Do they not like what they hear on-air, have they already assumed that community radio isn't for them? The benefits for those of us who already participate and listen is evident – by

encouraging new and different voices on the radio, we benefit from opportunities for what bell hooks calls "greater dialogue and engagement" (Teaching Critical Thinking, 2009, p. 105). Writing about fostering diversity in university classrooms, particularly in relation to the encouragement she felt as a student when literature by black authors began to be introduced into courses at the university in which she was a student, she writes: "the focus on diversity revitalized learning by changing education so that it would not reflect and uphold the biases inherent in imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchal thinking. It returned an integrity to teaching and learning that had long been absent. In many cases, inclusion of new and different classes focusing on diverse thinkers and writers provided an invigorating boost to 'traditional' departments that were experiencing low enrolment" (p. 105). As the VOBB volunteer mentions above, the very nature of community radio is reflecting the communities it intends to serve. As a community radio station becomes more dynamic, it could theoretically reach a wider audience and inspire further discussion and debate. However, unless there are tangible benefits for all participants (across difference), strategic inclusion to 'get' all the voices in a region may not be a sustainable strategy for participation.

Sometimes I find myself wishing that there were some kind of magical formula to increase volunteerism, or the diversity of voices in a community radio station. *Volunteers: The Heart of Community Organisations*, a document published by Ontario's Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, describes four methods of motivating volunteers:

1. Provide a reason to participate in your organisation
2. Provide recognition
3. Provide goals that are clearly defined and communicated
4. Conduct stimulating meetings.[25]

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[25] Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, Province of Ontario (1996). *Volunteers: The Heart of Community Organisations.* Retrieved from http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/facts/96-017.htm#WHY%20DO%20PEOPLE%20VOLUNTEER

How can radio stations encourage community members to participate in the radio, rather than just listen? A report by the Community Sector Council of Newfoundland and Labrador (formerly the Community Services Council) on engaging youth volunteers in Newfoundland provides many suggestions, most of which could be useful in attracting volunteers from any demographic:

- Prepare clear volunteer job descriptions.
- Provide a range of types of volunteer positions, including short-term opportunities.
- Highlight the benefits of volunteering.
- Work cooperatively with other groups.
- Promote opportunities through many avenues.
- Know that word of mouth works best.
- Think inclusively, recognize barriers, devise and promote solutions.
- Realize that friends and family can encourage and deter young people from volunteering.[26]

Many people volunteer because they have what one of my participants calls "a passion for community": they take ownership of where they live, they enjoy feeling a sense of belonging and they see the value of working on community projects together. The issue of ownership has come up when talking with other community radio members – if a community feels vested in the organisation, represented by what they hear on the air and welcome at its events, then this will often produce supporters and volunteers willing to contribute. An online article on the value of volunteers states, "Community engagement is community ownership. Volunteer involvement demonstrates that the community is invested in the organization and its goals. What demographics are represented among your volunteers, and how does this show community involvement at your organization?" (Cravens, n.d.) In my interview with Anita, VOBB volunteer and community coordinator for the CURRA initiative of Memorial University in Bonne Bay, she mentions, "So many things that you have to be aware of, you have to always be

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[26] Locke, F., & Rowe, P., Community Services Council Newfoundland and Labrador (2005). *Engaging Youth Volunteers in Rural Newfoundland (Overview)*. Retrieved from http://test.communitysector.nl.ca/sites/default/files/reports/2010/csc_engaging_young_vo lunteers_overview.pdf

taking the community temperature in a certain sense, to be sure that you're treating everybody the same and in a fair manner and that people have an equal opportunity to be on the radio, if they see it as a good thing to be doing." Using a variety of methods to increase participation and providing an array of tasks and opportunities for volunteers – such as raising the profile of the community radio station by gathering and recording stories from the community on an ongoing basis or before a festival radio event – could help drum up interest while providing an audio archive to draw from for both the radio and any other community history/heritage projects. Creating documentaries could be a way to engage youth and listeners beyond festival radio. Students could create podcasts or documentaries for archive, interview elders in their communities, thereby fostering new skills for multiple literacies in language arts, history, and other curriculum subject areas. Partnering with local organisations such as towns and municipalities, cultural groups, schools, libraries, and other services in the area, can also provide further access to resources (volunteers) and skills. All of the community radio stations represented here sought out and relied on partnerships with other organisations.

Attempting to represent a diversity of voices in a community may require strategic inclusion, as previously discussed above. Explaining how the towns within the Bonne Bay area could be invited to participate in VOBB, one of the station's volunteers suggests that municipalities could be allocated particular slots on the air during designated times. "I think it has to be set up, like say, 'Thursday is Trout River Day,' 'Tuesday is Rocky Harbour Day,' and that might be a way of approaching it. 'Monday is Norris Point Day,' you know?" They mention that access to the radio scheduling should be flexible to support availability of volunteers and to connect with goings-on (or when there is a lack of it) in a particular town. "If you're going to do it from 6-7 for one then it should be 6-7 for everybody, so that you don't care, 'oh they're putting us on at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, well, they don't want to hear what we want to say anyway,' that kind of thing…. I really think that VOBB can be a fabulous community development tool, and a communication network for a community if it's carefully inclusive. If it's not,

then it can be a complete waste of time if all you're doing is replaying CDs on the radio for hours and hours. People will soon get bored with that, I think."

The CRTC decision awarding a license to VOBB (2010) notes that "[Voice of] Bonne Bay stated that it would regularly feature local music and spoken word artists, would encourage participation of local school groups (drama clubs), and would participate fully in community festivals to ensure the regional broadcast of events" (Proposed service, section 6).[27] Emma, the station manager of Féile FM, tells me that they spent two years planning the station once they had official approval from Ofcom for a license, and before continuing, asked the local people directly what they wanted a radio station to be: "we worked with our community through consultation, and we said 'what do you want with a community radio station, what programs do you want to hear, what do you think a community radio station should be?' and through the findings of all those reports that we'd done, we found that the schedule that we've produced at the minute of all the different types of programs, that that's what people wanted to hear."

Both members of VOBB and Féile FM recognize that in order to be accepted by the community to which they broadcast, local residents have to feel like the community radio station belongs to them. Judith Klassen writes of St. John's community radio station VOWR that community involvement and recognition of it as 'one of our own' community organisations is vital to the survival of the station:

> [T]he fact that the radio station is volunteer-run means that the distinction between "us" and them" – essential to the success of commercial radio marketing – is less easily determined. Each participant in the day-to-day activities of VOWR represents both media and listener, subject and participant, creating continuity in the life of the station. The maintenance of this connection, between station operators and the constituencies they serve, is a significant element in the volunteer's position at VOWR and is reminiscent of the "community radio" model (Klassen, p. 211).

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[27] Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Division. (2009). *Broadcasting Decision CRTC 2009-690*. Retrieved from http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2009/2009-690.htm

One of the ways in which the community radio stations I profile here were successful in encouraging community participation, in particular ones such as VOBB which I was able to have prolonged observational contact with, has to do with the fostering of dynamic environments in which people can participate in a multitude of ways. Further to this, which I will discuss in the section entitled Building Strong Communities, Glen of Fáilte Feirste Thiar told me that it is the 'dynamism in the communities' in West Belfast since the Troubles began that has allowed community groups and services to flourish in that region. While in West Belfast this dynamism and resourcefulness that Glen mentions above was in spite of, and as a response to, the fear and uncertainty produced by the Troubles, in the example of Norris Point, theirs is a dynamism of choice rather than as a necessary response to local violence and political instability. In both situations there are economic and community wellness dimensions.

Further, a community needs to be invested in a community radio station in order for it to thrive. Without active participation from local people, including the potential for strategic inclusion of certain voices/energies, a community radio station would have limited relevance. Additionally, this cross-participation between community members of different backgrounds, skills, and abilities should hopefully embolden the credo 'community radio is the voice for the voiceless'. When all members of a community become visible and are recognised for both who they are and the work that they do, then community radio is really nurturing community development. I will discuss further in the following section the importance of community radio and voice.

5.3.3 Voice, marginalisation, and access: is community radio really a 'voice for the voiceless'?

> Over the years I've gone to my mother and I'll say, 'Mom, I'm going to bring out the tape recorder and I want you to tell me about when you were a young girl,' and 'oh my god Jim, no, don't go at that, no, I'm no good for that,' and to see my mother, up in St. Patrick's Hall in Tilting and someone in Australia listening to her [on the internet], if you told me that two years ago that you were going to get

my mother to do that I'd say 'yeah right'. I'd never thought I'd ever see the day you'd get my mother on radio.

Jim told me the above story over breakfast the morning following the end of the first community radio broadcast in Tilting in 2009. Though many voices were heard and stories told during Féile Tilting, it was sometimes difficult to encourage people to speak on the air. As mentioned in the previous section, a microphone can silence people; people are willing to talk conversationally with you and share stories, until you pull out a microphone. Though my example here is from Tilting, I've noticed while attending and assisting with other community radio events that at times people are reluctant to engage in conversation when a microphone, recording device, or broadcasting equipment are present. Why is this? Much like the case of VOBB where a lot of unsung work was done behind-the-scenes yet was still integral to the station's operation, I wonder if women aren't somehow less likely to talk on the radio. Many people in Tilting, both women and men, were involved in all kinds of facilitating for the radio: encouraging their friends to go on the air, providing us with music to play, making lunches and dinners, providing childcare and doing all kinds of other non-on-air work. During an evening in Tilting in 2010, a woman working with CBC in Corner Brook mentioned to me that she often has similar problems when conducting preliminary interviews of potential people who could speak on the air as part of a story for a radio program – women will speak freely and be very open over the telephone, but will refuse to be officially interviewed or otherwise speak live on air.

A document from The Multiculturalism and Education Policy Research Centre of Chiang Mai University in northern Thailand, *Women and Community Radio in Thailand,* notes that there are several factors that act as barriers to women's participation in community radio projects in that country. All of these items, I believe, could be broadly applied to women's participation in community radio generally, including the stations presented here:

Several factors negatively affect the participation of women in community radio:

1) Economic factors, i.e., the poor cannot volunteer as they have to work for a living;
2) Cultural factors, i.e., marginalised people and women have limited access to certain spheres and roles; and
3) Radio-specific factors, i.e., broadcasting hours mean that a broadcaster will not be able to be gainfully employed fulltime (Mansap and Wellmanee, p. 5).

I will discuss some of these issues further in a later section of this chapter, challenges of community radio.

Joanie, who has been involved with rural development projects in Bonne Bay for around 20 years, asserts that while "community radio can be a very valuable way to allow women's voices to be heard again in rural communities," a particular effort may be required to draw out those voices. Space for a variety of community voices, including women's voices, should be 'built into' the radio she says, though not necessarily as 'women's programming.' The merits and possibilities for 'strategic inclusion' as discussed in the previous section are difficult. How can we encourage active participation without making people feel like their participation is mere tokenism? Joanie explains that traditionally in rural Newfoundland, women played a strong role in maintaining communities:

> Women are often, were often and still are the sort of silent backbone of the economic development in these [rural] communities, because it came from the time when the men were either offshore fishing or away working in the woods all winter, so the women were the ones who managed the homes and dealt with the merchants in terms of selling the fish or whatever. So the women managed the family finances and, because the men were gone, the women did the community development and kept it going very strongly on this coast.

With many Newfoundlanders working seasonally out of province or otherwise away from their families, women occupy many leadership roles. Generally speaking, Joanie muses, women may be outspoken in their community, but it's not a given:

> The women in positions of power, a lot of the towns had women as mayors, and they were the ones involved in the development associations and other organisations.... And yet, in some communities the women maintained that strong

voice when the men came home, and in other communities when the men came home the men became the voice. So in some communities women still can speak very strongly for their community, but in other communities, again, they defer to the men.

She further explains that it is important for young girls in rural Newfoundland to see women occupying 'positions of power' and for the communities to maintain traditions that value women's strengths. "For role-modelling… to the young girls that are here, so they can see that they can be strong, powerful women, even if they don't go away to a big city," she says. "I think there's really valuable roles that community radio can play for women especially in these rural communities."

The notion of representation and providing space for participatory, active language use is important as well in terms of language as a means of communication, particularly in areas that are trying to revive a language or pass it on to younger generations. In Newfoundland and Labrador, organisations such as the OKâlaKatiget Society in Nain produce radio and television broadcasts in Inuktitut, and Rafale-FM was recently established by La fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador as a French-language community radio network connecting the French-speaking areas of the province. The Irish-speaking community of West Belfast's Gaeltacht quarter is represented through Raidió Fáilte. The Irish language is historically significant in Belfast, according to Fergus, Raidió Fáilte's station manager, and gives both meaning to where people live and provides a sense of place and identity, even to residents who may not speak it. He explains to me that spaces like An Cultúrlann – the Irish-language cultural centre – and the radio are particularly important in maintaining the Irish-language community by providing a space in which community members can establish a sense of identity and maintain and promote communication skills in Irish. He says, "[Raidió Fáilte] allows the community to debate with itself, and raise issues, and argue about the issues and agree about the issues or disagree about the issues. It gives a vibrancy and a coherence, it helps build some sort of coherent sense of community. And it also allows us to have a voice to the rest of the world." He further explains:

[The radio] gives a platform for people to put forward the points of view which can then be articulated through other media, for example, [what] we might say on Raidió Fáilte can be picked up in Lá Nua, the Irish language newspaper, which is linked in to the Andersonstown News Group so that will be translated into English and the, the story can go out that way, or statements about what's going on in the radio can be put out bilingually. So it's very much providing a platform for internal debate and discussion, and craic, just listening to music and having a laugh, playing, doing arts and drama and sports and discussing things, and also discussing issues which are of relevance to the Irish-language community, and even discuss issues which are of relevance to the wider community from an Irish-language perspective…. That's the sort of thing we've been trying to do here with Raidió Fáilte, provide that sort of an instrument, whereby people can use the radio as a platform and as a voice to the big world.

As Fergus describes above, having a radio station that enables a community to establish and maintain a sense of self in their language of choice provides an exceptional space that contributes to a sense of legitimacy and belonging. Directly or otherwise, the political situation in Belfast in the 1970s and 1980s led the residents of what became known as the west Belfast Gaeltacht area to consciously re-establish what Stuart Hall (in *Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities*, 1997) calls the rediscovery of identity or the search for roots (p. 52). Hall describes early identity politics in Britain in the 1960s as an anti-racist backlash on behalf of British citizens from other countries (Jamaica, in his case) being forced to confront their sense of self and identity in the face of their being established as an 'Other' within contemporary British identity at the time, and how "people were being blocked out of and refused an identity and identification within the majority nation, having to find some other roots on which to stand…. Blocked out of any access to an English or British identity, people had to try to discover who they were" (p. 52). He further writes:

In the course of the search for roots, one discovered not only where one came from, one began to speak the language of that which is home in the genuine sense, that other crucial moment which is the recovery of lost histories. The histories that have never been told about ourselves and we could not learn in schools, that were not in any books, and that we had to recover (p. 52).

A sense of belonging and a sense of place are also relevant for older residents of rural communities, or those with mobility or independence issues who are otherwise unable to participate in community events without assistance. Community radio can be a way for people to remain connected to each other, (re-)discover their histories, and remain or become involved in local life around them. Anita comments that the population of rural Newfoundland is aging:

> Rural Newfoundland generally speaking, people are moving to the urban areas, and the demography has changed enormously. There's much more older people than younger people living in all of these communities, and Rocky Harbour and Norris Point are lucky enough that they still have enough kids. But that whole thing is being observed everywhere in Newfoundland, the older people are living in places and the kids are just, not so many. People aren't having as many children, number one, and younger people are moving away with their families for work.

The community radios profiled here were available to listeners on the FM band, if those who wanted to listen were within a specific geographic range. Larger stations, such as commercial stations, are able to broadcast with stronger signals and a higher power output, thereby increasing the distance in which they can be heard. In many cases the community radios were also available on the Internet, which theoretically allows anyone anywhere to listen. Despite this, for seniors and others, navigating changing technologies can sometimes be a challenge. There are several places in Rocky Harbour, one of the towns near Norris Point, where local people or businesses – such as the fish plant shop – have strung antennas from their stereo receivers high along a ceiling in order to boost their reception of VOBB's signal. In other instances, people can record radio broadcasts – via cassette or a digital audio recorder – and play the recordings for their friends and family. In Chapter 3 I refer to Valentine and Skelton's article Changing Spaces: The Role of the Internet in Shaping Deaf Geographies. They mention that D/deaf communities in the UK are harnessing internet technologies to establish new ways of interacting together, connecting and creating online and in-person community spaces that suit their own needs. Much like these new spaces for D/deaf culture, in Norris Point, when people are able to

share their knowledge and teach others how to use technologies, or to otherwise facilitate ways for people to listen, then community radio can really involve everyone.

At Féile FM, Emma tells me about a show called Afternoon Delight, run by the West Belfast Senior Citizens Forum. With seniors' issues as their focus – they've interviewed government ministers and local MLAs, the fire service, the housing executive – they're providing a radio show that offers both information and a platform for discussion.

"When they're going out doing their interviews throughout the week, it's the young people in the production team who go out and help them do the interviews with them," Emma says. She names one of the benefits of having this kind of radio programme on Féile FM is the social interaction between elderly and younger members of the station:

> You have young people engaging with older people, working together, building relationships, building friendships. They're emailing each other, they're contacting each other by telephone, they're maybe meeting up for a coffee during the week to discuss how they're going to prepare their interview, you know, edit their interview for their show the next week. So you have all those, what funders call 'soft outcomes', those confidences, team building, those friendships that are made.

In working together on a project, each group benefits from the other's skill and knowledge base. Though younger people may have only otherwise had contact with seniors in a limited or specific capacity (such as their grandparents or people in positions of authority – managers, teachers, professionals), learning to work on a radio show provides an avenue for different forms of understanding and peer interaction within the larger context of the radio station community. As where we live, our generation, and our abilities can affect our interactions with technology as discussed in Chapter 3, community radio operating in tandem with other forms of media such as the internet increases possibilities for communication and participation when practitioners share their skills and knowledge. Community radio can also be used to establish alternative literacy skills for youth. As an alternative site for media practice, using a variety of communications

technologies allows for different strengths among students' aptitudes in learning methods.

One success story from VOBB that nearly all of my interview participants mentioned was a show involving youth called Ben and Friends, which grew out of a visit by VOBB volunteers to the local school, to invite students to participate on the radio. Gary N. explains:

> There was the kind of unexpected programming that happened, the kid who was 10 years old named Ben who just got on one afternoon with his cousin who's the same age and started chatting about hockey and stuff like that, and which was the better place to live, Norris Point or Gander or St. John's.

Dave, a dedicated VOBB volunteer, comments:

> They came back as part of an arrangement that had been made with the school to do a daily broadcast – this was Ben and his sister Sarah – and that became really really popular with everybody in the community, but among the young people in particular. And I heard stories that many of the young people had their computers turned off that week – they were listening to VOBB because they wanted to hear Ben and Friends come on after school.

Anita says that she found that Ben and Friends was one of the most interesting features of VOBB's beginnings. "I was never so informed about young people's lives," she says:

> It had a real element of, that you were just sort of a fly on the wall listening to some young fellas talking, and you had a sense that they were just being themselves and talking about what they found interesting. And that was surprising, some of the insights they had into things, and he would ask some questions about issues in the town, you know, it wasn't just sort of all entertainment stuff, it was kind of an interesting approach that he had to the whole thing.

Ben and Friends was perhaps one of the more popular broadcasts on VOBB during TTT, and it provides an example of the unique opportunity that a community radio station can offer youth in rural or urban communities: opportunities for training and

learning in different ways (rather than in a school setting), encouraging an interest in something new, and fostering a sense of responsibility and commitment.

Those who volunteer with VOBB and the Trails Tales and Tunes festival are generally of an older demographic than the students of Ben and Friends. The average age of the population in the Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour region is 43;[28] the community profile for Norris Point shows that the average age of the local population is 42.6.[29] Many of those in the community are seasonal workers, working particularly in the months between spring and fall, and younger people are continually leaving the area in search of further work or educational opportunities. The 20-34 age group is among the smallest population demographics for the region,[30] and people in that category may be particularly career- or family-focussed and not necessarily available for volunteering. As noted in the section of this chapter on voice, marginalisation, and access, Mansap and Wellmannee had similar findings in their research on women's participation in community radio in Thailand. There are economic, cultural, and radio-specific (i.e. broadcasting hours may be limiting) factors that affect people's ability and availability to volunteer. Many VOBB volunteers are retired or come-from-aways,[31] making it difficult at times to attract and retain very young volunteers. In the case of school-age volunteers, often their involvement ends with VOBB when they enter the workforce or graduate from high school and leave the community. Nurturing a connection with youth and providing a space for shows like Ben and Friends allows an important transfer of skills and sharing between volunteers of different generations, and also allows for further learning opportunities while potentially encouraging younger people to continue further training

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[28] See p. 15, Economics and Statistics Branch, Department of Finance and the Rural Secretariat, Executive Council. (2007). *Regional Demographic Profiles Newfoundland and Labrador*. Retrieved from
http://www.economics.gov.nl.ca/pdf2007/regionaldemographicprofiles.pdf
[29] Town of Norris Point. (2009). *Community Profile*. Retrieved from
http://www.norrispoint.ca/profile.html
[30] Regional Demographic Profiles Newfoundland and Labrador, p. 16.
[31] A common term in Newfoundland indicating residents not from the region. The 'come-from-away' moniker can persist for a lifetime in certain communities, even if residents have lived in the area for many years.

for careers in areas such as broadcasting, journalism, heritage preservation, or community development and non-profit organisations. Gary W. offers:

> The neat thing about the radio from my perspective is, it has a lot of interest for people who are interested in talking and doing interviews and broadcasting, but there's also people who are just interested in the technical side of the thing, working with the equipment and all that. So if you give kids around here another opportunity – you know, the drama clubs for instance – and some of the kids just want to flick switches and turn buttons, they can be involved. There's not that many opportunities in rural Newfoundland, and this might be a nice one to throw out there.

At Féile FM in Belfast, their station manager articulates some of the reasons for young people to get involved in community radio: it gives young people something constructive to do, and allows them a creative outlet. When I visited the station 2007, they had three 11-year-old boys volunteering, hosting their own weekly program about GAA (Irish football). They ran the show, preparing all the interviews, production, and doing the hosting themselves. Of the possibilities for youth to get involved with the station, Emma says: "Why not spend your Saturday or your Sunday down here in Féile FM, helping out with a show, helping out doing some admin work, or helping out on the phones. It gives young people some skills, they're learning how to present, they're learning how to answer phones, they're learning how to produce." Sean-Paul tells me of these young volunteers at Féile FM:

> They're brilliant. And they're very very keen…. Our kids are making ads, they're great quality…. And that's the skill that they have, and local businesses need to be buying into that. I don't just mean buying advertising, but you're actually helping skill up a young person who's going to go away off and work for BBC or work for wherever. And that to me is just a stepping-stone and a gateway from this into the media, and this station does that very well, has done it throughout the years.

"Part of the work of community radio is to develop people to their full potential and in doing so raise the capability of the community as a whole," writes Nessa McGann in the opening to her essay "Women in Irish Community Radio" (Day, 2007, p. 89). Community demographics in West Belfast differ from rural Norris Point. It is a younger

population overall – the average age is 33 – and the total population according to the 2001 census was 87,610 residents[32] (277,391 in the city of Belfast).[33] Both Féile FM and Raidió Fáilte are located in the Falls / Clonard Neighbourhood Renewal Area. This encompasses some 16,023 residents, with the largest population base ranging in age from 16-39.[34] It is a community of high unemployment, and as a post-conflict society, has developed grassroots-based organisations and partnerships as a result of a lack of state or government involvement in certain services in the area. I will discuss this further in the following section.

Gillian Rose writes in "Spatialities of 'Community', Power and Change: The Imagined Geographies of Community Arts Projects" (1997) that "Certain forms of cultural identity, [Stuart Hall] argues, are imagined through a profound sense of belonging to a bounded and stable place" (p. 2). She further notes that for many cultural studies theorists, 'community' is a contested term, which needs to be interpreted beyond essentialist meanings. Describing her work with community arts groups in Edinburgh, she remarks that her interview participants describe community in terms of a 'geography of lack', writing that their marginalised status causes community to form in ways that may inhibit public speech and re/presentation:

> Most important to almost all the community arts workers I interviewed is the lack of self-confidence of those living in such marginalized communities. In particular, to be marginalized is understood as the absence of the self-esteem necessary for speech. The HIV/AIDS project worker said she believed that people considering her project often thought:

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[32] Whyte, N. (2010). *West Belfast (Northern Ireland Elections)*. Retrieved from http://www.ark.ac.uk/elections/awb.htm
[33] United Kingdom. Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. (2004). *Census 2001 Population*. Retrieved from http://www.nisranew.nisra.gov.uk/Census/pdf/Census2001PopRep.pdf
[34] United Kingdom. Department for Social Development. (2010). *NINIS Neighbourhood Renewal Areas – Area Profile of Falls / Clonard Neighbourhood Renewal Area*. Retrieved from http://www.ninis.nisra.gov.uk/nra/report.asp?NRAName=Falls%20/%20Clonard&devOffice=Belfast%20Regeneration%20Office

Why should anyone want to hear about what I've got to say… it's a lot about people not really valuing their experience, their life experience, and not thinking they've got anything important to say.

Placing a 'community' in the spatiality of power thus allows community arts workers to articulate the cost of such positioning: to be produced by power as lacking is to be so deprived as to have nothing, so devalued as to be silence, so marginalized as to be nothing (p. 8).

While being positioned into a marginalised location may infer a necessary silence for some, in the case of West Belfast in particular, local residents decided that they would create their own community organisations in response to their 'geography of lack', to borrow Rose's term. Organising at a grassroots level meant they took and created space for their own voices to speak and be heard.

This section, on voice, marginalisation, and access, highlighted a number of issues that affected volunteers and staff at the community radio stations I sought out for this research. Sometimes people are unable or unwilling to speak, and their voices are not heard. Sometimes the 'unvoiced' work that volunteers do, such as behind-the-scenes technical producing or even maintenance of a community space by preparing suppers and washing dishes isn't noticed or valued as active participation. It can be difficult to draw out women's voices and other voices in a community, and strategic inclusion was a suggestion by several of my interviewees in order to encourage active participation and therefore representation of different communities and voices by a community radio station. Hearing one's own culture, music, stories, and language over a community radio gives meaning to where people live and provides a sense of their identity and histories, values a continuity of heritage. Community radio can encourage seemingly different people to share knowledge and learn technology together, as in the example of seniors and youth at Féile FM. Community radio can provide unique spaces for youth to be heard and listened to, as evidenced by the example of Ben and Friends from VOBB. Community radio can also give young people, marginally employed people, and others access to new skills and educational opportunities, and this form of community skill-sharing can "raise the capability of the community as a whole," as Nessa McGann writes

(p. 89). An acknowledgement of the importance of all of these elements in encouraging voices to speak and people to participate can encourage healthy participation, as discussed in the advice for successful volunteer participation mentioned in the previous section.

In the following section, Glen of Fáilte Feirste Thiar, a West Belfast community-tourism organisation, notes that there is a particular 'dynamism in the communities' of West Belfast that allowed for the formation of community groups and organisations to fill in gaps where social services were needed and not received through government institutions. The following section discusses methods my field sites have used for community building through grassroots organising.

5.3.4 Building strong communities: grassroots organising and community development

At the National Campus and Community Radio Association's (NCRA) annual conference (NCRC) in 2006, I attended a workshop hosted by several women involved with CJSR-FM Calgary's Youth Menace radio program. Incarcerated or troubled youth required to complete community service hours could serve them by working on this radio program. The teenagers could then build and learn teamwork, media literacy, and technology skills while creating radio shows on topics and issues relevant to them. Many shows were about the crimes they were sentenced for, creating a transformative space of sorts in which they could learn to empathically work through their recovery or rehabilitation, all the while sharing this process with a radio audience. These youth were learning tangible skills in media production, writing, and interviewing, all while creating educational programs for kids like themselves to listen to, and the radio provided a positive community space for them to participate in.

Though most participants seemed to have well-developed concepts of their community radio station, when asked directly, they sometimes had trouble offering a

definition of community, or articulating a target community or communities that their radio station served. In many cases, people defined their communities by geographic boundaries – the community they served were the ones who could hear the radio, and whose region the station was located in – but sometimes other demographics were also mentioned, often pertaining to age, cultural background, and language. In talking about Norris Point, Dave mentions: "I would describe [Norris Point] as being a small, fairly tightly knit community. One that has seen a lot of changes, partly because of Gros Morne National Park and the fairly big tourist industry that we have here, and like any rural Newfoundland community, the changes have been quick and it's hard to adapt to those changes, but I think the community's been doing a good job of adapting. I think certainly the VOBB experience helped to bring the community together in ways. Things are even better than I've seen since I've been here for 17 years."

Gary N., had this to say:

> I guess unlike most small Newfoundland communities, rural areas, there are probably more influences from the outside in Norris Point than a lot of them. We have a Marine Biology Station from Memorial, we have a hospital, and we have the national park, a lot of people who work for the Park live in Norris Point. So I guess, unlike most communities, you almost in a sense have two communities, the people who've grown up in Norris Point and their families, even for generations in some cases, and some of them are involved in the fishery and some of them are involved in the woods work with the mills and that, and some work for the Park and all that sort of thing, but then you get the component of people who are involved in tourism industries as I'd mentioned, they have a presence there. And there's a bit of a sense that sometimes these are two separate kinds of groups of people, but there is a lot of interaction I think between them, so that… may characterise our community a little differently than some I think.

Grassroots community building in marginalised or rural communities often comes from what residents see as a lack of existing services in their area. In Newfoundland, current interest in local food sustainability and awareness of our regional environment has grown in recent years. Initiatives such as farmers' markets, community gardens and community kitchens have arisen out of groups coming together across the province, networking and organising via projects such as the Newfoundland and Labrador

Environment Network and the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador. Cross-community grassroots initiatives such as this offer models for community partnerships and development in other areas. Community radio can be used to further the aims of these organisations, by offering a venue for the dissemination of information, as a gathering space, and to document and record an event. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter and in Chapter 2, a historical example of volunteers organising over the radio is St. John's, Newfoundland's VOWR, which filled an information gap in the 1920s and early 1930s, "using the church transmitter to provide news, entertainment, and public service [announcements]" (Webb, p. 18) when there was no public broadcaster to do so. Sean-Paul, director of Féile an Phobail, mentioned to me that Féile FM was initially established in order to be a "mouth-piece" for promoting the Féile and Phobail festival and events to the community.

Coupled with a drive to better the places they live in, creative projects such as community radio stations have been good ways to keep busy and to strengthen ties between people and communities. In the anthology *Racism and Anti-Racism in Ireland*, Deepa Mann-Kler writes about some of the lesser-known communities within Northern Ireland, and how their position as 'minority ethnic' groups – within larger communities featuring people of predominantly Caucasian, Protestant and Catholic backgrounds – can be grounds for erasure of voice and identity. This is not unlike how Spivak, Hall, and Scott have described national identity constructions in an opposition to those not identified (those left as 'other'). She identifies the communities of Traveller, Chinese, Pakistani, and Indian women living in Northern Ireland and comments: "One indicator reflecting the position of minority ethnic women in Northern Ireland is the multitude of community-based, voluntary and support organisations. Many have grown slowly out of grassroots initiatives. In the absence of statutory service provision these groups are a lifeline for many women" (Mann-Kler, 2002, p. 66). McGann argues that

> Many of the minority groups targeted by community radio are marginalised by both mainstream media and society in general, for example older people, Travellers, early school leavers, the disabled and ethnic minorities. Community radio aims to provide a space where the members of these communities have

access to training and can participate in the power structures and day-to-day output of the radio station. (Day, 2007, p. 89)

Several of my interviewees argued similarly when asked why grassroots organisations sprang up in West Belfast. Emma, the station director at Féile FM, explains that it is their intention to reach out to all communities in the area and foster local connections and understanding between groups. She explains:

You know, we have a cultural show, where we have the Indian community, the African community, the Filipino community and the Chinese community, all these different individuals and families that are becoming part of our community, who are living locally, so therefore we need to provide for them as well at a community level. And we do that through the means of the radio. And it also educates and informs people who have been living in this community for a long time, information about the different cultures that maybe they don't have access to, that they don't have the resources to travel to or know. So they can learn about those cultures, maybe their music and their food, their language through the form of the radio.

I asked Glen, the director of Fáilte Feirste Thiar, a community organisation established to promote West Belfast tourism, about the history of grassroots organising in West Belfast, and if similar initiatives happened in other communities in Belfast, such as on the Shankill Road, a primarily Protestant community. The neighbourhoods within West Belfast were isolated from one another by violence during the years of the Troubles. The 'Peace Wall' still physically separates many neighbourhoods, particularly along Catholic and Protestant divides, such as the Falls and Shankill Roads. Connections between such communities can still be strained. "It seems to me quite obvious that people in West Belfast have really self-organised because they've had to. People were denied access to jobs, people were denied access to education, so people needed to do it themselves," explains Glen. He contends that, particularly during the years of conflict, many West Belfast communities took a proactive approach in order to create social and support services locally, "they weren't just sitting back and living a quiet life":

I think there was a lot of dynamism in the communities, and that's clear if you look around at the amount of women's groups and community groups and after-schools clubs and the whole Irish-language schools movement.

Community organisations can act as catalysts for further actions in other areas, leading by example and offering alternative visions for possibilities in strengthening a community. Father Des Wilson writes in *The Way I See It*:

One way to understand what happened in the north of Ireland is to think of a constant creation of alternatives by people in crisis. They created alternative education, alternative welfare, alternative theatre, broadcast, theological and political discussion, public inquiries and much else. They also created at various times alternative policing and alternative armies. The authorities who had power of these in the past were and still are engaged in an equally constant struggle to regain total control of them. With only limited success, fortunately. (Wilson, 2005, p.128)

Emma of Féile FM also mentioned in her interview that a lack of available institutions for community services in the area may have contributed to those services being provided at a grassroots level:

And maybe that's exactly what it is, maybe the services aren't there at a local level, from maybe a government level or… from the people who should be providing them, particularly in this area of West Belfast. So in order to make a quality of life, you know, better for people at a local level and provide them with access to services, and provide – particularly in the tourism – provide a good economy for West Belfast, community organisations and community activists had to set up projects because they needed to provide access to services to people at a local level, and we have such a huge resource here in this community and that's tourism.

All the community radio stations I spoke with were in areas where their region was being revitalised by tourism, or where tourism was a major economic factor in community development. Tourism was seen as a potential resource for communities to tap into, in order to create employment, celebrate their culture, and learn and share their histories. Two interviewees addressed this in particular, which I will describe in further detail below.

In the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, there has been an increasing push on developing attractions and services for visitors (both local and those from elsewhere) as a means of providing job opportunities and revitalising economies, particularly in rural areas where traditional ways of life (fishing, farming, hunting, logging) may no longer provide the level of sustenance they used to and populations are ageing or declining. Tourism has become an industry that sustains many rural communities that may have otherwise been resettled. It also provides cultural opportunities for local residents, to increase their enjoyment of the places they live in. Anita describes below how VOBB and the Trails Tales and Tunes festival impacts local people:

> Well, my first experience with it [VOBB] was during the first TTT festival…. I just thought it was fabulous, everyone in the area was listening to it everywhere you went, people had it on in their cars or houses and so on. Norris Point particularly was a place where everyone in the community went to see everything that was going on during those ten days. It was like a huge big party in the very early spring. And there were quite a few visitors too coming up, they were coming up from Corner Brook and other towns in the region, people come here and they rent out the cabins, hotels and motels and stuff. It's kind of an interesting early start to tourism and I think that's why Shirley [Montague] and her committee, that's why they placed the festival at that time, because they were hoping to increase the tourism season, which would normally not open until… the end of June, early July. But with this TTT now, everybody opens around May 24th… and then they stay open. So people who are employed in the industry get more weeks work and tourists start coming earlier. They come for this and then it sort of gradually begins to sort of wake up. I mean, winter's long.

In West Belfast, organisations are nourishing cultural industries and promoting them for the potential tourism benefit to the local community. Glen of Fáilte Feirste Thiar sees tourism as a possible economic opportunity for local people, and aims to ensure that the local tourism industry benefits the area rather than taking from it. Further, the organisation hopes to promote attractions in the area to local residents. Glen says, "there's a role there for Fáilte Feirste Thiar to play in terms of saying to people, 'this is what our own area has to offer, let's go' and if it's putting on events and pushing people, because it only takes sometimes somebody to go there once, and they could be hooked."

Like Fáilte Feirste Thiar, similar initiatives and opportunities for local community and economic development occurred on the west coast of Newfoundland, particularly with the creation of Gros Morne National Park. The decline of the fishery and other resource-based economies along the Northern Peninsula led to residents seeking out other forms of employment if they were to stay in the region; thus, certain communities in the Park area, such as Rocky Harbour, are now full of B&Bs, restaurants, craft shops, fishing and wilderness outfitters and the like. This is a change that has occurred on a very large scale in the last 30 years, and was mentioned by both Dave and Anita in their interviews. VOBB and other local community initiatives, such as the recently established community garden that is also operating from the Julia Ann Walsh Centre, offer possible sites for deeper connection and sharing among residents.

There are challenges in promoting tourism to a local audience, and Fáilte Feirste Thiar hosts radio shows on both Raidió Fáilte (in Irish) and Féile FM (in English). The community radio stations provide a unique forum for the organisation to promote attractions and events in the area. Glen is not originally from the area that Fáilte Feirste Thiar aims to serve. He contends:

> I would say that sometimes, not being born and bred in an area sometimes does give you a little different angle you know, you can look at it as an outsider. I mean, I live in Lenadoon, which is an estate just literally across the road from Colin Glen Forest Park. There's people in my street who've never been to Colin Glen Forest Park, and I think sometimes when you're coming from outside, you look around at everything and you want to see everything before you make your decision whether or not to go there again. And I just think that, there's people my age, you know, who've lived in Lenadoon 40 years and they've never even gone the – literally – the 30 yards. And I think that's quite sad, and I think somebody from outside has that chance to go and do that. They might go there and it's not to their liking and that's fair enough, but they might go and then be hooked and go every Saturday with their children and stuff and that's the sort of unmeasurable effects, positive effects that we can have that you can't always put down in terms of facts and figures on a spreadsheet, but it's the quality of life stuff that we can really do, which for us is just as important as putting on a good visitor experience for people from Europe or wherever.

Above, Glen discusses the unawareness or unwillingness of some residents of Lenadoon to 'go the 30 yards' across the street to attractions such as Glen Forest Park; Anita mentions a similar phenomenon that happens in the Gros Morne National Park area, in which local residents may never have visited some of the Park interpretation programs aside from "bringing visiting family and friends" to Park-run programs. In the case of GMNP, there is some history of opposition to the creation of the Park by local residents.[35] As Glen discusses above, Fáilte Feirste Thiar can play a role in promoting local attractions to local people as well as outside visitors, via promotional activities such as the two radio shows he hosts on both Féile FM and Raidió Fáilte; similarly, in discussing VOBB, Anita notes that the possibilities for radio programming that includes broadcasts of Park interpretation programs and contributions by local historians, could potentially create a more dynamic space for dialogue in the region. VOBB's intended broadcast schedule is a bit of an unusual one, in that they intend to broadcast during the Spring-Fall season, which is also when visitation and tourism is at its peak. Anita also mentions Banff Park Radio,[36] a radio station that operates in Banff National Park, and how it is used by the Park and the community:

> What they do in Banff, they have the radio station that's about the Park for visitors. Whereas that's not our aim here, our aim is to kind of do community development through radio in a way, that's what we're trying to do, I mean I think that's the original idea of the radio station, but also to provide information about the attractions of the area for visitors, so, including the Park attractions and so on, so the Park has, in a way it's a unique kind of community radio, because it's got those two totally different goals…. And I think broadcasting some of the actual programs that are in the Park will encourage, surprisingly, there's not much visitation of the Park programs by local people…. residents. They sometimes will

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[35] The Mummers Troupe theatre company staged a play entitled Gros Mourn in 1973, the year Gros Morne National Park was established, as a result of stories collected in the community of Sally's Cove, a town that had been scheduled to be annexed as Park land. Public protests, which included a staging of the play, ensured that this didn't happen. Brookes, C. (1988). *A Public Nuisance: A History of the Mummers Troupe*. St. John's, NL: ISER Publications.

[36] For further information on Friends of Banff Park Radio please see their website: http://www.friendsofbanff.com/park-radio/

go, like one member of a family will take visiting family out to see something, but there's people in Rocky Harbour and Norris Point and Cow Head who've never been to a Parks program.

Community building can also be formed through local partnerships, which can strengthen connections and communication between various groups in a region. As mentioned in the previous section on volunteerism, in October 2009 VOBB set up a temporary broadcast for a week, to cover the events going on at the Bonne Bay Marine Station as part of the CURRA research project. This community partnership between local organisations had the goal of more widely sharing some of the research about Bonne Bay by the university with local residents who may not otherwise have any direct connection with the institutions (MUN, CURRA, Bonne Bay Marine Station) in their midst. Local residents were invited to presentations at which researchers, scientists, and Marine Station staff shared details of current and past research in the area. "It was a chance for the researchers to get their message out to the community as to what they're doing, and to make their research understandable to the community," explains Joanie. One of the public meetings had 60 people in attendance and many more listening on the radio. Both Joanie and Anita mention that broadcasting the CURRA presentations on VOBB had a beneficial effect in terms of bringing the university staff closer to the community. They reference an example in which Bob Hooper, a marine biologist involved in establishing and maintaining the Bonne Bay Marine Station, gave a presentation on the 40 years of research on (and in) Bonne Bay. Joanie says:

> We didn't realise that there would be such an active herring fishery ongoing at the time of these meetings, because the fishermen were one of the groups that we really wanted to target, they couldn't come to the meetings because they're too busy fishing, but they did listen to Bob Hooper's presentation. They listened to it on the radio and they came back and asked Bob questions about it.… So that started the conversation between some of these fishermen and Bob Hooper as a researcher, which is just a brilliant use of community radio.

Anita notes that people would call her at the Marine Station during that week if the radio station went off the air at all or if a particular workshop they'd only caught part of was going to be rebroadcast.

> Bob Hooper noticed that fishermen, or people mainly involved in the fishery, they'd have questions on his talks that they'd heard on the radio. They'd have questions about the crab or various other marine biology things, which they probably wouldn't have ever rung him up here at the station to ask those things if they hadn't heard his talk on the radio, you know? That to me is a good indication that people were listening to it, because if you have ten people listening to something, you might only get one person ever contacting you.

Using the community radio to augment an event increases access to locally relevant information, and encourages local organisations to utilise the radio station as a venue for promotion.

Ultimately, the benefits of grassroots organising around a project allows participants a sense of ownership, responsibility, and pride in what they worked collectively to create and maintain. Writing about feminist activism on the west coast of Newfoundland, Glynis George remarks: "In other words, grass-roots activism in Bay St. George has been successful insofar as it has had made a difference in the lives of council members and residents and in the way social issues have been taken up in the region and even the province itself" (p. 220). Using a community radio to make small inroads in social activism – that may only enrich the lives of participants and listeners – is still a healthy benefit of grassroots organising.

Above, Glen talks of the 'dynamism of communities' and the resourcefulness of people in West Belfast that led to the establishment of community organisations to provide necessary services during the difficult period of the Troubles. Both Norris Point and West Belfast have increasingly relied on tourism and the development of tourism opportunities to economically revitalise their areas. Community radio stations can benefit tourism, as evidenced by VOBB, originally established as another level of the Trails Tales and Tunes festival, and Féile FM, which was initially established to promote events at the Féile an Phobail festival. Both provided or continue to provide a different kind of space for discussion, concerts, and ways to participate in community life and nourish grassroots cultural industries. For marginalised voices within communities, community radio can provide a space to connect people to one another. Local partnerships between

organisations can also strengthen networks of support and communication within a region. While grassroots organising in West Belfast comes from a necessary tradition of political activist organising, in both sites the cause of furthering our knowledge of our history and sharing our heritage and culture is a different form of activism. By focussing on stories, music, and histories of our communities, we are able to form more informed representations of ourselves and where we've come from.

5.3.5 Technology and accessibility

"The access to being the storyteller is much easier now, it's democratised that [way]," Ivan tells me. Technologies used in communication – the internet, social media, video cameras and the like – have become more accessible and affordable for some over the years, but the flip side is that there is a "glut of information," says Ivan, and this information is still mediated and needs to be organised in some fashion. You have a choice to some degree of how this information is filtered, such as choosing which websites to get your news from, but there is an overabundance of information, which requires the listener/reader to be perpetually savvy about media.

In many instances, it's possible that people expect to be passive listeners of radio or consumers of media, and either don't recognize the value in producing media or don't see it as something attainable. As noted in the literature review of Chapter 3, in an article entitled "Geeks, Meta-geeks, and Gender Trouble: Activism, Identity, and Low-power FM Radio" (2008), Christine Dunbar-Hester writes: "Radio itself is viewed by some as a unique media technology, making access to it very appealing: radio does not require producers or listeners to be literate; it can reach a small, local community or area; production and broadcast technologies are relatively inexpensive and easy to use; radio is very inexpensive to receive; and it is easier and cheaper to provide programming in an aural-only medium than in a televisual one" (p. 204). Unfortunately, consuming mass media – watching movies, reading magazines, following websites – has become a

signifier of citizenship in a global, disconnected culture. Engaging in those kinds of shared (though passive) practices indicates you're a member of a community in many ways: it's conversation at work or out and about in town, rather perhaps talking about the kinds of things you're physically out doing in your community together. Local events or activity are often not seen as important in the 'wider world'; as what people pay attention to on the national news. Ivan mentions the Community Education Network (CEN) in Stephenville as an example of a proactive model for community development:

> [The CEN] was linked to so many other things. It was linked to the culture of the Port au Port peninsula, it was linked to issues around education, literacy, social and educational deficits, it was linked to the need for that region to have cultural celebration of their French roots, it was linked to labour market, things that were happening in terms of the shift from resource-based economy (fishing and so on) to a service-based economy based in Stephenville. But they seemed to have a handle on all the complexity of community development, and they were fairly adept at integrating communication into their activities.

Ivan tells me that the CEN in Stephenville, with Fred, would empower school kids to create their own programs on cable TV, which had benefits for everyone: the students' TV shows provided more local content for the cable TV station and provided a creative outlet for practical, hands-on learning that the students could be in control of. Ivan explains that linking field worker traditions of direct community development with community media technologies can provide substantial benefits:

> Fred had been an [MUN] Extension Services worker, and fortunately nobody had told him that they had closed Extension Services in 1992… but it's the kind of things that he does are really still MUN Extension kind of stuff. I think there are people who have maintained that tradition over time, which involves a lot of time in the community, which involves the kind of activity that you really can't quantify very easily in our more bureaucratic society, which involves first of all, believing that the community has value, and then going from there.

VOBB attempted an experiment in remote broadcasting in 2010: three VOBB volunteers, myself included, drove around the bay to Woody Point, a short distance away across the bay from Norris Point as the crow flies, but 70 km – over an hour's drive – by car. Setting up in the special education classroom in the school, we piled together a few

desks among the overflowing bookcases and organised our audio equipment: a portable 10-channel mixer, a couple pairs of headphones, several microphone stands, wired mics, one wireless shotgun microphone, and a laptop. There was a phone in the hallway of the school, where we made and received calls: to local residents in the area, encouraging them to come on the air for a chat, and so we could contact the volunteers back in the studio/common room over at the Cottage Hospital to which we were sending the signal. A lot of troubleshooting went on the first hour or so we were there. We weren't entirely sure that the setup would work, with internet being notoriously unreliable in rural Newfoundland, and never quite having done this before. The studio crowd in Norris Point were taking our broadcast signal – via our webcasting server on the internet – and outputting the audio to the mixer on their end, which then sent a signal to the FM transmitter and out into the world.

We had a number of visitors that day to the school during the several hours that we were there. Anita held court as our host for the day, I produced, and Fred oversaw any technical issues. We had the mayor from Trout River, a small community of about 600 people in the Gros Morne National Park area, on the air. A long-time resident of Woody Point came in and shared stories of the area from years gone by, along with tales about his beautiful garden, where he drops lobster shells in amongst his potatoes. Local musicians dropped by and regaled us with accordion and guitar songs. Best of all, the elementary students in the school took an interest at recess and lunchtime. Once they got over their initial shyness, we invited a young girl to take the microphone, and she ran about the hallway interviewing the others. A few teachers also brought their classes by, and young students read stories they had written on the air. Much like the previous example of students in Stephenville creating their own television programs with the Community Education Network, sharing radio technology with young people can spark an interest in community media, alternative literacies, and hopefully volunteering.

One of the benefits of doing a broadcast in this fashion was that we were able to physically bring the radio station – or part of it anyway – to a community far from the studio setup, increasing access to the airwaves and the number of voices heard. Advances

in recording technologies have made many pieces of equipment relatively affordable and portable. People have long used recording devices to document and collect local stories and music, and the quality of digital recording devices is continually improving. VOBB regularly provides remote broadcasts from a variety of locations. We have broadcast live concerts from both the church in Norris Point and the town hall, and ventures across the bay to Woody Point were repeated during 2011's Trails Tales and Tunes. When VOBB begins to broadcast full-time, they plan on regularly commuting across the bay with recording equipment, if not broadcasting equipment, to enable people on the south side of Bonne Bay to remain connected to and participate in the station. Setting up in a variety of locations could be key to accessing communities, and advances in affordable technology enable these connections. Joanie mentions that though the population of the towns of Glenburnie-Birchy Head-Shoal Brook and Woody Point on the south side of the bay tends to dwindle in winter much more severely than in places like Norris Point and Rocky Harbour, she says: "I think if there was remote radio stations located in a community gathering place like [3Ts, the only restaurant in town open during the winter months in Woody Point], I think it's a way to build community capacity."

The internet has transformed the possibilities for community media and has opened up new avenues to increase listenership. Eddie of Féile FM comments that their additional online broadcast, available on their website, is 'brilliant' for increasing Féile's listenership, both for local and international listeners. "It's just a good way [of broadcasting]," he says, "especially when we can only broadcast so far…if people are really interested than sure, they can listen online or maybe if the reception isn't great in a certain area they can still listen."

Broadcasting on the internet is not without its potential problems, such as issues of security and safety. Joanie describes that members of the community may not be 'sophisticated' enough to be continually aware of the perils of oversharing on the radio, particularly when it's also broadcast on the internet, and she asks if it might not also be a good idea for increased media awareness among station members. Joanie tells me:

> I think it's really important to have some education when [VOBB] gets up and running, as to yes, there's incredible benefits and possibilities with using the radio and the internet, but there's also just some things that you really need to know and keep in mind, because it's your private information and you're broadcasting it all over the world.

While in some ways broadcasting on the internet does increase knowledge-sharing across communities, it does not intrinsically mean that there will be increased access for those listeners in the community of the radio station, or direct benefits for those included in stations' target communities or those geographically nearby. Joanie further describes how people in the community – such as seniors, though she stresses that many are tech-savvy – often stick with their 'original technology' in terms of what they are familiar with regarding getting their news and music, via perhaps more familiar mediums of television or radio rather than the internet. Further to this, in rural areas in particular, internet and cellphone access is not readily available in each community.

Emma also mentions accessibility and community radio vis à vis the internet, particularly in relation to seniors, who are included as a target demographic of Féile FM in West Belfast.

> Broadcasting online is great, but if we just were broadcasting online, what about people that don't have access to a particular mechanism like internet, for lots of different reasons? People say 'yes, oh well, modern technology now and everyone has the internet,' but not everyone does have the internet, you know what I mean? If we're having a program on for the elderly people and it's on an hour a week, we expected them to get on to their computer, although, from the group that we have involved in the radio, they're very technically minded, so they probably could! [laughs] But you're not going to have that access for everyone. Radio is very very simple. It's extremely simple. It's an easy mode to turn on, it's an easy mode to understand, and it's easy to listen to, as opposed to television, where you can get distracted. There's a power behind radio.

Podcasting has opened up new avenues for sharing music and radio programs worldwide. How does this affect communities? Are stations at risk of no longer seeing value in their own communities when they have access to music and programs that are popular anywhere? Emma of Féile FM explains that for community radios to stay relevant to young people they have to embrace online and digital technologies such as

podcasting, Facebook, Bebo, and Myspace. Eddie, also of Féile FM, mentions that in particular, it's students and younger generations that may be more predisposed to consuming and creating online media, and to reach these demographics community radios should participate:

> Students seem to listen more online, there's more demand for podcasts and things like that, rather than turning on your radio. Which is a weird thing, because even five years ago when [Queen's Radio, the Queen's University campus radio station in Belfast] started, people said, 'nah, we don't want to listen online'. I don't know whether the laptops have just gotten more affordable, maybe internet connections, broadband's a bit better, maybe that's it.

Much as Ivan describes the 'glut of information' that we have to sift through online, Gary N. of VOBB remarks that increasing access to radio and other forms of media over the internet can be a wonderful thing if people value what's going on in their communities:

> Our media, particularly television and the internet and all that, are bringing in influences from outside the community, from around the world, which is great too, but it may also be limiting how much people even know about what's going on in their own communities. And to have a local radio station that people actually have enough interest in to tune in every day, that's not something that we've ever had.

How does access to the internet shape the way we think about community? As in an urban centre, online communities provide access to like-minded people with specialised interests; more people, more options. While this can be very attractive for people, especially those in rural areas, the importance of belonging to, creating, and supporting communities that are geographically local should not be neglected. As Joanie previously mentions in the section entitled Voice, Marginalisation, and Access, young people need role models locally and opportunities to grow and learn at home, in addition to learning about the wider world beyond. Having a local radio station in Norris Point can both present information and stories first-hand, unmediated by news agencies or media outlets that may make generalisations or distortions. Local media can provide unique insight and understanding into issues affecting a community.

For communities not serviced by the FM band, accessing radio over the internet can be a way for them to stay connected to other communities in their region, particularly when they are very isolated from other nearby towns in terms of geography, road, and weather conditions. (This of course depends on internet access being available; many communities in rural Newfoundland and Labrador are still without many communications services such as internet and cell phone access.) Anita mentions in the case of VOBB, which is located in Norris Point on the north side of Bonne Bay: "The year before I lived over on the other side [in Woody Point]… and that's something that needs to be, I think with the whole broadband thing, if they decide to stream VOBB it would be a really a great way for the communities to get connected, and then people can actually listen to it online if they want to, which they did during the meetings that we had here [for CURRA in 2009], and we found that a lot of people were listening in Trout River."

Ivan explains that radio has an advantage as a communications technology because of its inherent accessibility:

> Radio, because the cost is lower and the technology is easier, and I think the technology is a bit friendlier, I see it still having a future. Very much. And also internationally. I remember some years ago, I was at some meeting and people were talking about 'oh, the wired world, isn't this great,' and somebody said, 'you know, half of the world have still not made a telephone call…' We need to keep a perspective on some of these technologies. Radio is one that internationally in terms of development communications is still quite valuable as a way to get information out, whether it be agricultural extension programs, information about healthcare, public health and so on.

In sum, technology has, in many ways, improved access for people in terms of controlling or producing their own stories. Community radio technology has become cheaper and more affordable for many – but not all – individuals and organisations. This has led to more locations for stories and voices to be published, broadcast, and otherwise 'heard' – if you're able to sift through it all, as Ivan describes. Technology of any kind can still be intimidating for many people, as noted by Christine Dunbar-Hester. Culturally for many people in North America and Europe, we interact with one another through shared meanings established through our common interest in media such as movies and

television. Therefore it can be difficult to get people to think outside the box when it comes to media – that they can be producers as well as receivers of culture. Again, technology can promote alternative literacies among many people, hopefully sparking a lifelong interest in being an active part of one's community and culture. The internet has transformed the possibilities for community media, and as previously mentioned, can be used cooperatively with community radio technology. Many communities, however, particularly in rural locations, are not well served by 'new' technologies such as the internet generally, whereas community radio, via FM, tends to be more universally understood and acceptable.

Empowering communities through the use of community radio is not without its challenges, as is discussed in the next section.

5.4 Challenges of community radio

> So people do get up and they do it themselves, and they might be doing it voluntarily, they mightn't be getting anything for it, but they've a passion about their community, they've a passion about the work that's going on, and that's why they do it.

Community radio, like any form of volunteer-based non-profit organising, is not without its challenges. In the quote above, Emma speaks of community radio staff and volunteers having a 'passion about their community,' and for many people, it is this drive to contribute to community building in positive ways that enables them to keep going despite some of the difficulties involved. Some of these have been described in the sections above – such as the challenges of local content and consistent programming, increasing access to the airwaves, and including many voices in a community – but there were other themes noted throughout the interviews with participants in this project. As Emma describes above, many of us who strongly support volunteer-driven organisations are motivated by passion: a passion for community, a desire to actively work to create liveable spaces in the places we reside, and a drive to participate in the representation of

our culture/s, diverse though they may be, and to accomplish these dreams by working together. Community radios and independent media face many legal and political challenges in many countries, and as notions of democracy and activist-organising continue to be challenged in Canada, to some degree we have relative freedom of speech in public and in the media compared to many other places in the world. Historically, pirate radio was used in Northern Ireland in areas of West Belfast during the Troubles, to share information and advocate on behalf of activists during times of violence and struggle. The challenges described below therefore are some of the issues now facing by stations in West Belfast and in Newfoundland: Long-term sustainability, including funding issues in community radio and non-profit organising, as well as issues of human resources (such as attracting volunteers and volunteer turnover); trailblazing and isolation; technical challenges and how they can affect or inhibit participation; concerns about station identity and what community radio should 'sound like'; and how to make community radio different than commercial media.

Is community radio sustainable as a full-time, permanent fixture in a community, or is community radio at its best when it's informal? Some community radio stations may operate on a more "professional" radio-station-as-training-centre model where volunteers come in for their timeslots and then leave, while others may have a culture much like a drop-in community centre, encouraging people to get to know each other and establish collective working relationships. Creative stations may offer workshops to the wider community beyond the radio station, using their skills and expertise to host writing workshops, listening parties, technical workshops and other events, which has the added benefit of increasing their profile in the community. A community radio station could became a hub of potential media activity, a site for political involvement, a social or educational space; encouraging a community culture that fosters active volunteer participation beyond people just clocking their allotted hours requires patience, an awareness of the community the radio station serves, and the ability to adapt to problems that may arise with creative solutions.

Two issues affecting the long-term sustainability of community radio stations that would like to operate on a more permanent, year-round and/or full-time basis are a pool of available volunteers and stakeholder supporters, and access to adequate funding opportunities to pay station expenses. Festival radio, as previously mentioned, provides an energetic, short-term space, which requires a much shorter (though often intense) volunteer commitment. Joanie says of the Trails Tales and Tunes festival energy:

> We've had the advantage of running [VOBB] during these festivals when there's lots of volunteers around, you can keep up a volunteer effort for ten days, you can't keep up a volunteer effort for six months. So that would be a barrier that government organisations have to recognise that they have to put the money in for the human resources.

Areas that have a lot of seasonal workers or residents who are away part of the year (i.e. students and workers out-of-province) also provide challenges for volunteer retention and turnover. The necessity for paid employment also invariably affects volunteerism. Using VOBB as an example, much of its volunteer Board of Directors have full-time jobs elsewhere, and those who often have the most available time to volunteer are either on seasonal lay-off from their jobs or are retired or currently unemployed. As described previously, Mansap and Wellmanee's report *Women and Community Radio in Thailand* notes, "the poor cannot volunteer as they have to work for a living" (p. 5). While many permanent community radio stations rely on paid staff positions (VOBB currently employs one person, a station manager) to provide a consistent presence and do much of the daily tasks of running a radio station, it is not possible in most cases for community radio to rely on paid staff as does a commercial radio station.

While the Trails Tales and Tunes festival certainly requires a volunteer effort to run, they do hire a paid coordinator to oversee logistical details. VOBB hired a station manager in December 2011 for the launch of their permanent station, and both Féile FM and Raidió Fáilte have station managers and some paid staff to oversee and direct their volunteers.

While concluding the writing of this thesis, I discovered that Féile FM has since closed its doors as a community radio station. Their website indicates that this was

partially due to funding issues as the radio station had become a financial drain on the resources of its parent organisation, Féile an Phobail, the West Belfast festival. I discuss the closure of Féile FM and the implications this could have for the future of community radio stations in the conclusion (Chapter 6) of this research.

Another issue facing many community radio stations, particularly those in rural Newfoundland, is the potential to reinvent the wheel; a lack of community radio resources available regionally could overwhelm groups new to the idea of participatory local media. Many of the technical details involved in setting up a station can seem daunting at first, from discovering how to access equipment to learning how to write a license application to the CRTC. One of the mandates of Ryakuga Grassroots Communications in the province is to provide such assistance. Their website says:

> We participate in projects with rural communities; indigenous peoples; environmental organizations; women's groups; youth, and senior citizens. Our main focus is alternative media - participant controlled community television, newsletter/photography, community radio and grassroots computer communications. Ryakuga helps groups with training (technical skills); collaborative participation (working alongside groups as they make their own communications), or production of resources (we have resource material available for newsletter/photography; video skills; community radio, and community television - public forums and popular video).[37]

Ryakuga has continually supported the creation of community media in Newfoundland and Labrador, helping in some way – through either expertise or enthusiasm – to establish both VOBB and Féile Tilting as mentioned here, and many other radio projects in recent years, ranging from Radio Bell Island to Cape Shore Radio, Conche Radio to Burnt Islands CHBY. As a pied piper of community radio development in the province, Fred and Ryakuga have enabled many community groups to establish radio stations locally without having to deal with the learning curve alone. In 2011, VOBB and the Bonne Bay Cottage Hospital Heritage Corporation hosted a provincial community radio conference called Network 11, which was also sponsored by the Rural

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[37] Ryakuga Grassroots Communications. (n.d.). *What we do*. Retrieved from http://www.ryakuga.org/ryakuga/brofnt.html

Secretariat of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. This brought together many individuals involved with recent community media projects across the province, and enabled us to meet each other, share ideas, and establish a larger group to increase access to information and resources.

Another challenge for many non-profit and volunteer organisations, community radio and otherwise, has to do with interpersonal meltdowns and burnout. As bell hooks writes in *Teaching Community*, "building community requires vigilant awareness of the work we must continually do to undermine all the socialisation that leads us to behave in ways that perpetuate domination" (p. 36). Working with people of different backgrounds, interests, and ideas about how to best support community projects is always a delicate balance of respect and negotiating skills. hooks further writes in *Teaching to Transgress* that coping with difference can be difficult and challenging (p. 41), though this is an important and necessary step in navigating the true building of supportive, inclusive, and participatory community projects. Drawing on her own experience in the classroom, she writes: "My awareness of class has been continually reinforced by my efforts to remain close to loved ones who remain in materially underprivileged class positions. This has helped me to employ pedagogical strategies that create ruptures in the established order, that promotes modes of learning that challenge the bourgeois hegemony" (p. 185). We should all continue to hone our skills to challenge hegemonies that reinforce power structures that oppress and deny rights and a voice to members of our communities. Angela McRobbie, in her introduction to *The Uses of Cultural Studies* (2005) writes of Stuart Hall's work on multiculturalism and difference. She identifies some of the challenges of working together to create community: "How do we live together and acknowledge differences? Only when there is, yes, a horizon of universalism which expects us all that we bow to the rights of others to pursue their differences, not in hermetically sealed ways, but rather within a framework of intersection and overlap so that the possibilities for democracy (always unfulfilled) are opened up and extended by this 'complex unity in difference'" (p.3).

Ivan explains that even introducing the idea of 'community radio' in communities, particularly in rural Newfoundland, can be met with confusion:

> There isn't a lot of local content out there, and so people still, there are a lot of stories that aren't heard. If you were in a larger centre, you'd need to think about how targeting your audience a little bit more, than in a smaller centre where you just start by saying something about your community. And that's one of the exciting things, when you go into a community and you set up the equipment and they're always saying, 'so do I get this on my computer,' 'no, no, it's on FM,' and they'll come back after a while, 'so how do I get this? I can get this in my pickup truck?' or whatever, it's so amazing they can hear their neighbour talking on the radio when they're driving down the road in their pickup truck. But that's the real cool thing about the technology, about radio, why it's so attractive. It's so portable that way.

Community radio can at times be challenging in that it can follow formats that are totally divergent from what people might be traditionally used to when they think of radio, such as commercial radio broadcasts. During the first broadcast in Tilting, on Fogo Island, our scheduling of radio events was somewhat loose and open to interpretation. We had large sheets of flipchart paper tacked to the walls of St. Patrick's Hall, with a tentative schedule marked in; people could sign up, add, and change programmes as they liked. Very often community residents remarked that the station was operating on 'Tilting time,' that is, when something was scheduled on the programming schedule and when it was actually broadcast were two seemingly unrelated concepts. This sometimes presented challenges (or anticipation perhaps?) for listeners, as they were never entirely sure what to expect when they turned on the radio, but it also allowed a new way of encouraging participation, in that people could just show up and spontaneous decide to come on the air, and this liveliness and diversity of voices was encouraged. Any recorded music playing could be interrupted or paused – sometimes with fanfare – if we had a live guest enthusiastic for a microphone. But for some people in attendance, particularly those who have had previous experiences with commercial radio or 'professional' national broadcasters, they couldn't understand at first how the radio was successful if we weren't bound to a to-the-minute schedule. Ivan remarks, "I think the model of community radio is different from the model of professional radio, because sometimes in professional

radio, if you're trained that 'oh, you have to have absolute silence,' and everything has to be perfect and you have to make sure there's no gap between your songs." During the Tilting event, there were many technical glitches as all kinds of people were encouraged to operate the equipment, and the celebratory, hands-on atmosphere suited the event well.

The factors that inhibit women's participation in community radio in Thailand, as referenced in the section entitled Participation and Volunteerism of this chapter, could also be applied to participation in community radio – and volunteering – generally across many geographic locations. Limitations of work, self-agency, and negotiations of time are barriers to many when it comes to an ability and desire to volunteer in community organisations. As mentioned in my literature review (chapter 3), Christina Dunbar-Hester also addresses concerns of lack of prior skill, agency, and confidence as it can inhibit women's paths towards participation in community radio projects, particularly when it comes to manipulating technology.

What should community radio 'sound like'? The relative newness of VOBB and its ever-changing roster of volunteers and programming during each TTT festival leads to some interesting concerns about station identity. What should it sound like? For many, there is a concern with professionalism – volunteers may be concerned that they are unable to 'do it correctly' or, conversely, worry about it sounding 'too slick' or 'sounding like the CBC'. How does this impact the creative possibilities of community media? Fred of Ryakuga Grassroots Communications tells me, "How do you not get seduced by the technology and this kind of professionalism, how do you keep it as what it's supposed to be, basic communication, right? And people will always, if people can hear their own people, their own kids, their own grandparents, that relevance can't be beaten by any kind of flash or anything like that." Alternatively, there may not be room for different ways of listening – people often have specific ideas of what they expect radio to 'sound like'. Is there space in community radio for alternative explorations of community media, or will it often be just variations of existing popular public or commercial radio formats?

If it were possible to take the words "radio station" out of our idea of "community radio", perhaps this would encourage further creativity in both producing and listening to

community radio. With fewer restrictions – or a more open-ended approach – could we develop entirely new ways of doing community radio broadcasting?

One of the possibilities for the re-imagining or reinvention of community radio, as a tool with longevity in the age of the internet and changing communication technologies, is to envision it as a potential site for 'doing' community, like a community centre, rather than focussing on operating it as a radio station via a corporate model where there is a focus and importance on creating professional-sounding programming. This is not without some problems – what would become of the equipment, would people be respectful of it if there was an open-door policy at the station or would it vanish at the earliest opportunity? What about CRTC guidelines regarding Canadian content? Can a small station weather an open-airwave policy if there is potential for offensive or contentious speech over the airwaves during heated debates or diatribes by programmers? What if certain shows just don't "sound good"?

There are many challenges for community radio. As identified here, it can be difficult for community radio stations to secure a reliable flow of both volunteers and cash in the long-term, as befalls many non-profit volunteer organisations. Sometimes community radio can seem therefore more energetic or relevant when operating as a short-term broadcast in conjunction with another community event, such as a festival or conference. Many community radio stations, particularly in rural and geographically isolated areas, can have difficulties due to a lack of available resources on how to establish and maintain a community radio station, or knowledge community radio networks (they do exist, such as the National Campus Community Radio Station in Canada, CRAOL in Ireland, and the recently established Community Radio Network in Newfoundland and Labrador). A fear of technology can inhibit the establishment of, and participation in, community radio stations. Trying to move away from traditional sounds of radio based on listeners' expectations of radio formats can be difficult, if not impossible. And perhaps most importantly, for community radio to work, it is really something you 'do'. 'Community radio' should be a verb, not a noun. I discuss this in the next section.

> Community radio is about giving people access, no matter what gender you are, what age you are, what religious background you have, what political background you have, what nationality you are, you know, it's about giving people a voice. And giving people a voice who live at the local level, who your radio station's going to serve. (Emma)

What constitutes a vibrant community? As illustrated in this research, radio can be used as a means of promoting healthy communities, for sharing our histories. "That's what something like the Voice of Bonne Bay did for people in the community, it was their chance to share their community and their experience of life here with other people who also live here," says Sheldon. While the concept for VOBB FM began as an offshoot committee of the Trails Tales and Tunes festival in 2008 and some of its most vibrant broadcasts have been during that festival, it is growing into its own as a non-profit entity. In 2009 the VOBB committee submitted a license application to the CRTC and they were granted a permanent community radio license. As of late 2011 they have begun operating on a permanent basis.

Although the station is confined in some ways by licensing restrictions, in some ways, broadcasting in the short term, alongside a festival, makes it easier for people to volunteer long hours, buoyed as they are by the excitement of the many events going on. Radio lends itself well to the festivities: during Trails Tales and Tunes, there are a variety of daytime and nighttime events – hiking, garden walks, parades, music workshops and performances – and VOBB located as it is in the Julia Ann Walsh community centre (where the TTT office and hostel is) becomes a kind of drop-in meeting place, a central point for information. "I think overall Norris Point is a very healthy community in the sense of the citizens and how committed they are to the community," mentions Gary N. With so many individuals involved in volunteering in a variety of capacities during the days of TTT, the radio station is quite active. During the daytimes of the festival, people

are milling about, looking for tickets, talking to one another, and sometimes joining in on the air. In the evenings late into the night, it's not unheard of for musicians staying in the hostel to take over the radio late at night, once the din has died down at the local pub.

All of those I spoke with emphasized the importance of a local focus as the impetus for the existence of their community radio station, particularly in distinguishing it from commercial media. Eddie, the Volunteers and Community Outreach Officer of Féile FM told me:

> When we have our news team totally up and running, they'll be covering as local as possible. So if something happens a couple of streets down, we'll be talking about it. As well as, like the current affairs show, What the Papers Say, they talk about all the local news, it's nothing, they're not talking about [George W.] Bush or whatever, because anyone can tune into other stations and get that. So that sort of thing, a lot of local music. You'll find even bands who are never going to be signed or are never going to be big… they'll come in and play a session, and other stations don't do that, they don't have that sort of open arms.

Reflecting on their first broadcast, Gary N. of the VOBB says:

> In a place like Norris Point, if you see a notice in the post office, or if you see a notice on a bulletin board at the drugstore, sometimes that's the only way that you ever know what's really going on in the community unless somebody happens to mention it to you…. if you had a radio station broadcasting… to some extent I think it changes people's focus to what's happening everywhere else, and how they're being entertained from outside too. Maybe we can actually entertain our own selves within our own community and share information about what we're actually doing in this community.

In an article describing the community radio station on the Magdalen Islands (in the Gulf of St. Lawrence) of Québec, Suzanne Richards writes: "of course, information arrived from outside – Radio-Canada television, radio stations such as CHNC in New Carlisle, CBGA in Matane, CBAF in Moncton and CFCY in Charlottetown, and via the daily Quebecois papers… which arrived, again and again, late. We were receiving

information from the outside, but the reverse didn't exist" (p. 99)[38] Frequently this is true of communities, especially rural or otherwise isolated communities or populations, that the news is something that is told to them, rather than the other way around. As Gary N. touches on in the quote above, what if we could entertain ourselves within our own community and share information about goings-on locally?

Successful community radio promotes cultural celebration and reflects community through positive mirroring. In his article on the role of community radio on post-conflict cultural reconstruction, as mentioned in Chapter 3, Paul Moore argues that community radio can be used as a mouthpiece for the community to create their own evolving ethnography (p. 57). Ivan gives me the example of the importance of community newspapers, commenting that weekly newspapers were perhaps more profitable than the daily newspapers in the province because the weeklies "explicitly have that as part of their function, that they help to maintain the community over time." He notes that this approach to community media is a holistic and self-sustaining one:

> One of the definitions of communication is just simply 'transmitting messages through space,' and we're kind of doing that right now, because I'm speaking words that happen to be English and happen to be strung together in sentences and that's you know communicating, transmitting it across space, so you might be over the other side of town listening. But the other, another meaning of communication is to maintain a community, maintain a people over time, maintain a culture over time. And that's communication too, one of its roles. And so what community media can help to do… is to provide people a way of learning about and then thinking about what's happening in their community.

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[38] "…bien sûr que l'information arrivait de l'extérieur, par la television de Radio-Canada, par les stations de radio CHNC de New Carlisle, CBGA de Matane, CBAF de Moncton et CFCY de Charlottetown, et par les quotidiens québécois… qui arrivaient, et arrivaient encore, en retard. On << recevait >> l'information de << l'extérieur >>, mais le contraire n'existait pas." My translation. From (1996). Les radios communautaires: l'importance d'un réseau acadien de communication électronique. In *Le Congrès mondial Acadien*. Moncton, NB: Éditions d'Acadie.

An article from AMARC, the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters, articulates the importance of participation to the value of community radio as a 'social process':

> A key distinguishing factor setting community radio apart from commercial radio is its participatory process nature. Community radio is not just about producing good radio programmes. It is a social process, more than a series of products or programmes. Community radio stations spring up and survive because they can make positive contributions to societies, often to societies in turmoil or during periods of growth ("Why Assess Community Radio? It Works, Doesn't it?" n.d.)

Community radio, according to AMARC, is essentially a social process – it is something a group of people 'do' together, both individually and collectively, and therefore community radio cannot exist as an entity on its own without this active participation. Whereas commercial media may be driven primarily by the bottom line, community radio stations were often formed in response to a need for local media that represents and speaks to the communities in which their station operates, and while funding is the not-for-profit sector is eternally an issue, volunteers and staff involved in community radio tend to hold strongly to their community-minded vision. "Community radio is about a diversity of programming, alternative programming, programming that is made by and directed at the community in which the station is based," asserts an essay in *Bicycle Highway: Celebrating Community Radio in Ireland* (Day, 2007, pp. 136-137). On-air station volunteers are unlikely to have any formal broadcast training outside of their community radio station; this is one of those tenets of community radio that listeners may either find charming or untenable, depending on their expectations of "radio". (What makes a programme listenable?) An article on transnational community radio programmes in Ireland describes: "The informal presenting style characteristic of community radio can certainly come across as less polished than the standard found on commercial radio and the presenter can be perceived as lacking authority. Yet an unrehearsed delivery can mean that an unpolished presenter can offer a particularly authentic style and delivery which is effective on its own terms" (Moylan, 2009, p. 114). This certainly seems true in cases where local seniors may be sitting in a circle discussing

what their town was like when they were young, or when local kids are being interviewed on the air about their favourite nursery rhymes.[39] In *Teaching to Transgress*, bell hooks, writing about diversity in the university classroom setting, discusses providing a space for individual voices to be heard:

> Hearing each other's voices, individual thoughts, and sometimes associating these voices with personal experience makes us more acutely aware of each other… Sharing experiences and confessional narratives in the classroom helps establish communal commitment to learning. These narrative moments usually are the space where the assumption that we share a common class background and perspective is disrupted. While students may be open to the idea that they do not all come from a common class background, they may still expect that the values of materially privileged groups will be the class's norm" (p. 186).

It is in that space in which we speak in dialogue together that we have the opportunity to reflect upon our lives collectively, examine our assumptions and perspectives, and, through this examination, strengthen our ties with one another.

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[39] Both of these examples are from VOBB and Féile Tilting broadcasts.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

> Would it look any different, would the culture be any different, would life be any
> different if there were these little radio stations right across the island? Would it
> actually make a difference in people's lives? Would people be more difficult to
> control maybe, would people have more of their own ideas coming out? Would
> people band together instead of looking for something up the line to come down
> the tubes to them and stuff like that, you know? (Fred)

In January 2012, Macleans.ca published an annual list entitled "99 stupid things
the government spent your money on (IV)" on their website. A friend sent me an email
declaring, "We're infamous now!" VOBB made the list:

> 61. Even though Conservative MPs want to cut off taxpayer funding to the CBC,
> the Harper government gave $82,000 to support a radio service in Bonne Bay,
> Nfld.[40]

This kind of funding, which was secured through the exhaustive fundraising
proposal authored by the VOBB co-chairs and other volunteers, and countless meetings
with staff of the federal Atlantic Canadian Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and the
provincial Department of Innovation, Trade, and Rural Development (INTRD), meant
that VOBB was granted one year of initial funding for start-up costs and to hire a station
manager. This kind of funding is extremely rare among community radio stations in
Canada. CBC Corner Brook is the only other station regularly available via FM and staff
there are supportive of VOBB. The CBC has never had a studio in the area. VOBB does
not compete with them for listeners; rather, as an alternative to existing public and
commercial radio formats, VOBB supports a mutual exchange of ideas and broadcasting

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[40] Macleans. (2012). *99 Stupid Things the Government Spent Your Money On.* Retrieved
from http://www2.macleans.ca/2012/01/10/99-stupid-things-the-government-spent-your-
money-on-iv/

possibilities, and community radio often acts as a kind of training ground for would-be radio journalists and future media producers.

While I am of course supportive of educational training initiatives and access to funding sources to help organisations get started, sometimes I feel that this however is not the best use of community radio, if it winds up being seen as only a training ground for 'real' radio. Community radio often works well when it is organic; when it is supported as another community initiative, such as a resource centre, community hall, or library, where its main function is as much of a gathering place as it is a radio station. Without the dynamism present in a gathering of local people, community radio is such in name and presentation (as an 'alternative' to existing commercial and public radio formats) only – is just radio without community.

Since I first began this thesis, Féile FM in Belfast has ceased broadcasting. Their website is currently still active as of February 2012, though if you look closely you'll notice a blog entry from March 25, 2011 entitled *Statement on the Closure of Féile FM* on their front page,[41] as posted by the management committee of its parent organisation, Féile an Phobail. It reads:

> The management committee of Féile an Phobail regrets to announce that broadcasting on our community radio station Féile FM is to be suspended forthwith. For some time we have been heavily subsidising the station but now have reached a stage where the overhead costs are unsustainable. In the current economic climate advertising and sponsorship opportunities are very limited and are more inclined to be attracted to more commercial stations.
>
> Since last June we have looked at a number of rescue plans, including moving to a variety of new premises to lower costs, but these plans did not prove viable alternatives. As a management committee we have a responsibility to protect Féile an Phobail. We feel that we are unable to continue, at this time, with Féile FM. The management committee team have opted for immediate suspension of the station as it can no longer be maintained with the use of restricted, shared and vital resources at the same rate or in the same way, particularly as we are obligated to coordinate and oversee our other quality community festivals.

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[41] See http://www.feilefm.com/2011/03/statement-on-the-closure-of-feile-fm/

We would like to thank all those staff and volunteers who worked on the station in many capacities and without whose efforts the station would never have been able to transmit on a full-time basis for over three years.

We would also like to thank OFCOM for all their help and support, and to OFCOM we return the full-time licence which we were proud to hold.

Hundreds of people from all ages experienced the thrill of live broadcasting on Féile FM, learnt editorial and presentational skills and news-gathering techniques which raised their personal confidence and self-esteem and contributed to community morale.

"Our plan now is to protect and preserve our equipment with a view to returning, initially, to part-time broadcasting as soon as possible, and with a view to returning as a full-time station in improved economic times.

Danny Morrison
Chairperson, on behalf of the management committee of Féile an Phobail

I quote the announcement in its entirety as, when I first heard the news, I felt such a loss. West Belfast is not my community, at least not directly; when I visited Féile FM in 2007, they had just recently begun broadcasting permanently and there was a palpable air of promise and hope among many of the station's staff and volunteers. Their closure for financial reasons leads me to wonder what I have been considering throughout this thesis research: are such hopeful, affirming, community projects such as community radio stations actually viable in our societies, or are they the domain of a few specialised and interested parties? Do they promote community building for everyone in a community or only a few, and if it's only a few people, is that still not justifiable as a valuable resource? Recently I was asked to assist in the production of one of VOBB's programmes. One of VOBB's on-air contributors is a volunteer with disabilities that render him less visible in the community in the winter months. Though he lives in Norris Point and can often be seen riding his motorized wheelchair throughout the town half of the year when the road are clear of ice and snow, in the winter he is less mobile, unable to come to the radio station without assistance. Therefore he has quite the elaborate studio setup at home, which allows him to pre-record his radio programmes on his computers and then send the

mp3 files to our station manager and other volunteers who then arrange for his radio programme to be broadcast weekly at a set time.

The adaptive technologies in his setup – such as a roller-ball trackpad – was such that it allowed him to manipulate the software on his computer on his own, whereas at the VOBB studio he requires someone with the manual dexterity to work the mixing controls, CD players, and computers for him while he speaks into the microphone. When I left that day, I stopped in the kitchen to chat with his mother and grandmother. Both of them were happy that I'd come, as well as the other volunteers that have assisted in previous weeks. They both enjoyed listening to his program; he comes from quite a large family in Norris Point, and I later found out that many of his aunts and uncles listen to his radio show.

I believe that there are several elements of this story that really exemplify the benefits of community radio beyond producing programs that sound like what we expect to hear on the radio: professional announcers, that particular (if not peculiar) tone in which newscasters read the daily news, jingles identifying the station and information delivered to our ears via concise, easy-to-digest sound bites and headlines. Community radio is beneficial for its participants as it is for the listeners. Through his enthusiasm for volunteering, this volunteer makes a very valuable contribution to the 'sound' of VOBB, as do all our on-air volunteers.

For programmes that may not reach a wide audience for whatever reason – if participation and experience is a benefit to those involved, volunteers and listeners – then this is an extremely valuable tenet of community radio. Just because it is called 'radio' doesn't mean it has to be presented in a particular fashion.

6.2 Key findings in this research

There were several elements that I'd like to highlight here as key findings of this research. They are:

- **Community radio as the 'voice for the voiceless' isn't necessarily the most important contribution that community radio can make.** People can choose not to speak (as in Glynis George's 'artificial circumstances' described in Chapter 5), and the act of participating in any capacity in a community radio station is still valid and important, even if perhaps they are only speaking to/heard by a few individuals or they are 'just doing community radio' for its own sake. However, these invisibilities should always be noticed and examined so they are not being produced in a marginalised 'geography of lack', as described by Gillian Rose in Chapter 5. 'Small participation' is still valuable. Large numbers of people need to be involved or even directly impacted for community radio to be successful.

- **Dynamic communities and dynamic environments offer a sustainable location in which community radio can thrive.** A community radio station needs to be integrated into a community and the community needs to feel a sense of ownership for it to be successful. This is not unlike the model of cottage hospitals discussed in Chapter 5, in which local people volunteered to build and maintain these facilities for the health of their community, and therefore felt a sense of ownership and entitlement in these public spaces.

- **One of the benefits, as well as challenges, to creating 'true' community is difference.** Strategic inclusion may be required for community radio to be truly representative of the communities it intends to serve, but only if all groups and individuals derive a benefit from their participation.

- **Community radio is a wonderful medium for the continuation of community stories and heritage.** Stuart Hall describes that "the recovery of lost histories" is a crucial moment in the search for roots, and Paul Moore eloquently describes community radio as the communities'

'evolving ethnography'. Access to being the storyteller, as described by
Ivan in Chapter 5, is important.

- **There are many barriers to participation in community projects.** This
  can include economic factors, time constraints, interpersonal issues, and
  other issues as noted in Chapter 5.

- **Community radio and building community is something you do;**
  community radio is an activity, not an entity. Community radio is
  essentially a social process, and cannot exist as an entity on its own
  without this active participation.

6.3 Possibilities for future research on community radio

As previously indicated in the introduction to this work (see Limitations of
Study), this thesis is not intended to be a comprehensive overview of community media
in either Newfoundland or West Belfast. The communities I interviewed were ones I had
access to, and this meant that there were many other examples of community radio and
media projects that I have not acknowledged in any great depth. Currently there is a bit of
a resurgence of interest in community radio happening in the province. Radio Bell Island
has broadcasted twice now from St. Michael's school on Bell Island, and in 2012 they
raised $11,000 through pledges to support their intentions for a permanent community
radio station. Féile Tilting in Fogo Island is still running in conjunction with their festival
in September and they are also considering establishing a permanent community radio
station. Cape Shore Community Radio has a lot of support from student and staff
volunteers at Fatima Academy School in Branch and Tramore Productions theatre
company in Cuslett. Cape Shore Community Radio teachers even managed to use the
radio station to complete certain curriculum requirements: students have practiced French
on the air, grade 12 students devised, researched, wrote, edited, and presented unique

radio programs on a topic of their choice, music students performed live, and younger grades read compositions and told jokes they wrote themselves.[42]

In 2011 there was a community radio broadcast from the French Shore Historical Society in Conche, a small community along the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland. This event was an amazing example of how the internet and community radio can be cooperative technologies, which is an evolving arena for future research. When I began this thesis project several years ago I recall people asking me, "Why are you studying community radio? Podcasting and the internet will make radio obsolete!" and in my time since beginning this project and being a part of many community events and radio broadcasts I've discovered that nothing could be further from the truth. One evening in Conche, the community hosted a kitchen party in the basement of the French Shore Historical Society building (in its normal operations, the building houses the community museum and an amazing, 216-foot-long hand-embroidered tapestry detailing the history of the French settlement in Newfoundland). Dozens of local residents packed into the basement, brought in drinks, snacks, musical instruments, and – in the case of a few of the younger visitors – smartphones. Conche is one of many communities on the island that has either no cellphone service, internet service, or both. As WiFi is available in Conche but not cellphone service, some of these new technologies that residents of urban centres take for granted are not particularly useful. In this case, however, with a smartphone present – connected to Facebook via the internet – that night in particular Conche Community Radio was able to have a multi-way dialogue with residents who have left the island, particularly to settle in Ontario. Parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, and children were able to talk (and sing!) to one another via the radio and receive messages, requests, and comments in reply on Facebook. This real-time interaction between community members near and far was quite astonishing for everyone present, and added an entirely new dynamic to the notion of a (physically) present

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[42] For further description of some of these recent community radio projects on the island of Newfoundland, please see McKee, 2011 as noted in the bibliography.

community. Communication technologies in cooperation rather than in competition with each other would be an exciting area for future research.[43]

There are and have been other community radio projects in Belfast – such as Shankill Radio – and throughout Northern Ireland that I was unable to connect with in any detail in my short time there. While much has been written on community and pirate media during times of crisis and conflict worldwide and on media in Northern Ireland in general, a research project focussing on the two – a history of sorts of grassroots, pirate, and community media in Northern Ireland – would be a very interesting area for further study.

Community media as it has been and is currently being used by and for indigenous peoples could also be further investigated, particularly in how community radio can fulfil certain local needs in terms of knowledge-sharing, community wellness initiatives, or gaps in community services. Women's voices and aboriginal community media could also certainly be further explored.

6.4 Women's studies, women's voices, and community radio

> The objectives and strategies of participatory communication share a great deal with the methods of achieving change that have been developed through the global women's movement. The inclusive stance of the women's movement which values each woman's perspective and experience, and which seeks out and embraces diversity, is consonant with participatory communication. Participatory communication methods enhance the bottom-up strategies used by women's organizations around the world and aid their efforts to leverage their experiences to influence the mainstream. (Stuart and Bery, 1996, p. 199.)

As mentioned in the literature review (theoretical framework) of Chapter 3, feminist theory can address the dynamics of voice, representation, and power. There are many examples of strong women's participation, and strong women's voices, in the community radio movement worldwide. Montreal has the Dykes on Mykes [sic] radio

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[43] Conche Community Radio is also described in McKee, 2011.

show, AMARC supports a Women's International Network (WIN) of women radio broadcasters, Galway's Radio Pirate-Woman was a pioneer of kitchen radio and women's activism, Farm Radio International provides support for agriculturally-focussed radio programming in developing areas, and Canada has the Women's International Newsgathering Service (WINGS). There are and were many feminist- and women-focussed radio programmes on campus radio in Canada – each year the National Campus and Community Radio Association (NCRA) includes a Women in Radio day at their annual conference – and at CHMR-FM during my time there: the Women's Resource Centre hosted a Feminist Power Hour, LBGT-MUN and Planned Parenthood both hosted programmes, and many announcers over the years have provided women-focussed or queer-focussed programming. Radio is still an important means of communication in many countries around the world and women frequently play a large role in its transmission.

However, out of the 14 recorded interviews I conducted, only four were with women. This number doesn't necessarily indicate that there are more men than women involved in community media generally; in Newfoundland and in Northern Ireland, many of the community stations feature women in paid staff positions and as volunteers.

I did meet and have conversations with other women involved in or interested in community media and community organising, or simply as radio listeners. However, often women, especially women who believed they were only tangentially involved in community media – i.e. in the case of those present and participating in non on-air capacities during the Féile Tilting festival broadcast as I describe in Chapter 5 – didn't want to participate in a recorded interview, though they were fine with chatting with me over tea or bending my ear among the throngs of people at St. Patrick's Hall, the bar and community hall where the radio was set up and most of the festival's events were held.

It is possible that women, and other people who work hard behind the scenes on a project, are at times overlooked in analysis of community radio, where an emphasis is often placed equating participation with the voices that are heard on-air. If the ways in which someone assists on a project could be interpreted as a form of participation outside

of (or of lesser importance than) the event itself, it may not be seen at all. An example of this would be the myriad of people responsible for producing a radio show but whose voices are rarely or never heard through a microphone – frequently, only the host gets to speak. In Tilting, many women were often preparing meals for the radio participants and festival attendees, rounding up participants to go on the air, or otherwise enabling and encouraging others to get behind a microphone. If these voices are not heard on the air or not recorded, either by omission or of their own volition, it does not mean that these women and others are not participating in the event or are otherwise not relevant. Frequently, these necessary contributions go unrecognised. I explored these themes of silence, participation, voice, and representation in Chapter 5.

This thesis is a bit of an exercise in utopian social justice – if we all had endless time and energy to devote to volunteering, infinite patience for ourselves and each other's differences within our communities, continual ability to learn and grow without suffering from burnout, and – barring endless pots of money – radio equipment that could rain freely from the skies (and always work!), community radio couldn't help but be successful. Of course, that is not the case. People squabble, funding falls through, demands of life – child-rearing and paid work and health issues and so on – get in the way. Community radio demands active participation; it is not a medium that can survive when merely received as a consumer product or as a vehicle for advertising, like commercial radio. It requires that we contribute our voices, skills, energy, and time, in order to establish a community radio dialogue and create something meaningful for ourselves and others in our environment, to help build an archive of our lives and stories via the airwaves.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Sample interview questions

- What are the barriers inherent in producing community radio, particularly in rural and remote communities (in NL)?
- Does commercial radio, satellite radio, or internet radio affect your radio station? Does decentralised media threaten people's access to locally relevant information and discourse?
- How would you define/identify the community you represent as a radio station? (Who is seen as belonging to the community and how are they represented?)
- Can radio (or other media) be used as a mirror to magnify issues of importance to small communities?
- How relevant is [your station] in your community? How active a presence are [you]? Do [you] think [your station] is representative of, or reflects the interests of, [your] audience?
- What's missing from commercial or national broadcasts in [your] area – how does [your station] fill the gaps?
- How does community radio help communities to construct or maintain their identities? How important is it to see yourself / your community / your history (also culture, language, etc) reflected in your local media?
- How important is community building? What does 'community building' mean to [you]? How does [your radio station] help to foster this?
- What's changed for [your radio station] over the years? How does your location affect your broadcasts & make-up?
- Whose voices are heard on [your radio station]? Who are your announcers and producers? Who is listening?

- What regulations are you obliged to follow to run your radio station? (i.e. CRTC regulations, OFCOM regulations, or pirate?)
- What is a "community station" to you?
- Is there a power and responsibility in producing radio for your community?
- What are the challenges in setting up and organising a community station?
- What about the impermanence of radio? Do you do any archiving, rebroadcasting, or podcasting? How has a presence on the internet (e.g. website, podcast, bulletin board…) affected [your radio station]?
- What are the connections between community radio and podcasting/internet broadcasting? What use is community radio making of new technologies?
- For Féile FM and Raidió Fáilte: How have things changed since they've recently (2006) begun broadcasting full-time? (Féile FM used to operate twice-yearly month-long broadcasts, and Raidió Fáilte operated for years as a pirate station.) Are they better known now in (and outside of) their communities? Have their listeners changed: are there more listeners, have they diversified? Has their (broadcast & volunteer) community changed at all?

Appendix B: Sample consent form

<u>Community Radio Research Project Consent Form</u>

Participant contact information:

Name: _____ Signature: _____
Radio station (if applicable): _____
Telephone: _____ Email address: _____
Mailing address: _____

I _____ agree to participate in audio-recorded interview(s)
for a thesis project on community radio in Newfoundland and Labrador and Northern Ireland, to
be used by Erin McKee, Master of Women's Studies candidate, as academic research material.

I would like my comments to remain anonymous or confidential:
      [ ] yes [ ] no [ ] doesn't matter

Any written correspondence or audio-recorded materials will be used by Erin McKee for
purposes of this research project only (i.e. sharing information via dissemination of research
findings, presentations, and written papers) unless indicated otherwise.

Please note that, if requested, all reasonable attempt will be made to obscure or alter identifying
details of participants for confidentiality purposes. While anonymity can be requested, I
understand that it cannot be guaranteed by the researcher in all circumstances (e.g. in the event
that family or friends may be able to deduce my identity.)

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study and/or have my comments
withdrawn so long as notice is given to the researcher, Erin McKee, no later than May 1st 2010. I
understand that after this point withdrawal may not be possible as the research may already be
completed and submitted to the university.

The proposal for this research has been approved by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in
Human Research at Memorial University. If you have ethical concerns about the research (such
as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson
of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 737-8368.

Questions regarding this research may be directed to:

Erin McKee (researcher)   Elizabeth Yeoman
Master of Women's Studies Candidate   Graduate Supervisor
Department of Women's Studies   Department of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland   Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NL Canada A1B 3X8   St. John's, NL Canada A1B 3X8
(709) 764-2967   (709) 737-3411
emckee@mun.ca   eyeoman@mun.ca

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

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Appendix C: Sample emails sent to potential participants

This email was sent to staff at Féile FM:

Hi there,

I'm researching a Master's thesis on community radio. I visited last week and spoke with [the Volunteer Coordinator] about both Féile FM and the Queen's University Belfast station, and he mentioned that it may be possible to sit in with someone during their show in the next couple of weeks. Would this still be possible? Also, I was hoping that [the Station Manager] would consider an interview as well. I'm available within the next two weeks (I'm away from the 19th unfortunately) and if either of you or any other volunteers would be willing to sit down with me during this time and speak to me about Féile and radio in West Belfast I'd really appreciate it!

If any of the above is possible, please let me know: you can reach me either at this email address or [cell phone number].

Thank you,

-- Erin McKee
   Master of Women's Studies Candidate
   Memorial University of Newfoundland
   emckee@mun.ca

Another sample email, sent to an organisation I visited but who did not participate in this study:

Hi there,

I'm a Master of Women's Studies Candidate from Newfoundland, Canada researching a Master's thesis on community radio, and while I've visited both Raidió Fáilte and Féile FM for interviews thus far, I'd also be interested in speaking to people from the Falls Rd. Women's Centre (or other organisations) about community organising in West Belfast. I was told that your centre was recently on-air on Féile's community program.) If someone (or many!) would be willing to do an interview with me I'd really appreciate it.

I was given this email address when I dropped by last week; if it would be possible for me to come by for a visit, that would be wonderful. Unfortunately I've only a couple of weeks left in Belfast -- I leave on the 19th.

If someone could get in touch with me, that would be great. You can reach me either at this email address or [cell phone number].

Thank you,

-- Erin McKee
   Master of Women's Studies Candidate
   Memorial University of Newfoundland
   emckee@mun.ca

The following email was distributed more widely, to several community radios in Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as community radio researchers and organisers:

Hi there,

I'm a Masters of Women's Studies candidate at MUN doing research on community radio in Newfoundland and Labrador and Northern Ireland. I'm looking to interview people involved in community radio stations or community media for a thesis project. Would you or someone you know be interested in participating?

An interview could be as long or as short as you'd like, and could be conducted by telephone or via the Internet (i.e. email, Skype, MSN) if not in person (I'm in St. John's). I'm particularly interested in ideas about radio and empowerment, and using community media as a tool for community development, identity, and self-representation.

If this sounds interesting, and you'd like to be like to be interviewed, please get in touch!

Thank you,

-- Erin McKee, emckee@mun.ca
   [home and cell phone number], St. John's, NL
   Master of Women's Studies Candidate
   Memorial University of Newfoundland