

CAMPUS FREQUENCIES

The “Alternativeness” of Campus Radio Broadcasting

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A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Communication Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

July 2008

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Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-45295-0
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-45295-0

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ABSTRACT

Campus Frequencies

The “Alternativeness” of Campus Radio Broadcasting

Brian Fauteux

This thesis explores the construction of “alternativeness” on Canadian campus radio broadcasting, using the CKUT Radio-McGill program *Underground Sounds* as a case study. It is the purpose of this thesis to situate campus broadcasting within the contemporary terrestrial broadcasting environment, looking at literature that theorizes and conceptualizes ideas about what makes campus broadcasting *alternative* from other broadcast forms, and what factors influence and structure the boundaries and limitations of “alternativeness” on campus radio. Included in this topic is an examination of how terms and concepts such as “alternative,” “local,” “independent,” “community,” and “scene” are used on campus-community radio programming, and how these terms construct a broadcasting ethos that may or may not be similar to notions of the alternative/independent/local/community in music scenes and identities. The on-air treatment of these terms are juxtaposed to the way they are discussed in the popular music and cultural industries literature. As well, prominent Canadian broadcast history and policy as it relates to campus radio is a significant component of this thesis, particularly its role in shaping the structure and mandate of Canadian campus radio.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis was financially aided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Concordia's Faculty of Arts and Science and Department of Communications Studies. Thank you to each of these institutions and departments.

Thank you to Charles Acland, my thesis supervisor. Your help and guidance has been a constant source of motivation throughout the past two years (beginning with my first research paper in October 2007). I am very grateful for the conference support, which factored greatly into my experience as an MA student.

I would also like to thank the other members of my thesis committee, Andra McCartney and Leslie Shade, two individuals who have been more than helpful not only as second and third readers, but in their respective roles as my professor and as my program advisor.

Big thanks to Dallas, Mark, Peter, Jess, Dave, and Ann, the individuals of the somewhat weekly "Thesis Attack/Club" and first year's post-Monday-night outings. Your insight and humour made this process all the more enjoyable.

Thank you to my family, whose constant support is always much appreciated, and (once again) to Dallas, my partner in most things, who has been there every step of the way.

Finally, a less formal/serious (but still relevant) thanks to *The Wire*, cheap food, coffee, On Bodies, social moments during drinks, Tuesday/cheap movie nights, DVD-sharing, and the many constant group emails, for filling in the gaps.

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INTRODUCTION

My interest in campus radio broadcasting began as an undergraduate student at The University of Western Ontario. Waking up to CHRW's morning show, I found out about bands I had not yet heard of, and became informed about upcoming album releases and show dates. I soon realized that the station plays an important role in promoting Canadian bands and artists, as well as student-organized music-based events. This relationship between artist and station became even more evident upon moving to Montreal in August of 2006, and joining an already-existing band that was on the lookout for a new drummer in May 2007. Shortly after joining this band, we were interviewed on McGill's campus radio station, CKUT-FM. The band was given ample time to explain current projects, and two full songs off the group's five song EP were played. As a fairly new band with no label or industry support, this interview was a valuable method for promoting both the band and the band's music.

My experience with campus radio over the course of three or four years is quite different than my experience with public or commercial broadcasting. I not only listen to campus radio, but feel somewhat connected to the stations because of my brief involvement as a volunteer at CHRW, and because of the interview at CKUT. Following my involvement with both stations (as an avid listener and a moderate participant), I became curious as to how I could compare my experience with campus broadcasting to the literature and journalism that heralds the decline of terrestrial broadcasting¹ citing

¹ Terrestrial broadcasting here refers to radio transmitted through the air from a radio tower to an antenna, as opposed to satellite signals, podcasts, or internet radio. Although digital signals can travel through the air, this thesis is primarily concerned with "traditional" FM and AM broadcasting, and the term "terrestrial broadcasting" will hereafter refer to these forms.

problems such as concentrated ownership, repetitive playlists on commercial radio, and the effects of digital and satellite technologies on radio listenership. What is it that makes campus broadcasting different, particularly in regards to the role it plays in a local community, whether music-based, political, or cultural?

It is the purpose of this thesis to situate campus radio within the contemporary terrestrial broadcasting environment, looking at literature that theorizes and conceptualizes ideas about what makes campus and community radio different, or *alternative*, from other broadcast forms. Analyzing a campus radio station itself, this thesis also considers how a campus station defines and describes its programming, and how this fits within the station's structure and mandate. Through this analysis, I hope to draw some conclusions about the limitations and boundaries concerning the "alternativeness" of campus broadcasting, a term that is placed in quotation marks because of fluid, complex, and numerous meanings. The remainder of this introductory chapter will briefly introduce the ideas and questions that will be pursued throughout the rest of this thesis.

The contemporary Canadian broadcast environment is an intriguing site for study that poses a number of questions about the current state of terrestrial radio broadcasting. Ongoing regulatory changes to broadcast policy have dramatically altered the way in which Canadians receive radio programming. In 2005 the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (the CRTC) approved and licensed satellite radio undertakings for Canadian Satellite Radio Inc. (providing XM radio services) and SIRIUS Canada Inc. (CRTC 2005-61), services that now come standard with many new automobiles. This development is significant as time spent in vehicles accounts for a

large portion of Canadian radio listenership (Berland 230), altering the type of radio content Canadians are listening to and the way in which radio services are received. Moreover, personal technologies such as mp3 players are providing listeners with more options as to how music is distributed and consumed. Robert L. Hilliard and Michael C. Keith note the significant rate at which satellite and internet radio is growing, while terrestrial radio struggles to maintain audiences and revenue. Jody Berland adds to this discourse, explaining that Canadian radio programming “is increasingly framed by...strategies to cut costs, and to reach across ever-expanding space” (Berland 230). Interestingly, according to Berland, the size of the radio market has remained relatively stable, although FM listeners increasingly outnumber AM listeners (AM radio having a “strict 30 per cent Canadian-content [Can-Con] quota since 1971”) (Berland 234). FM stations tend to be subject to less Can-Con quotas, so the “relative decline of AM radio means less airtime for Canadian music, which spells trouble for the already marginal Canadian recording industry” (Berland 234).

Commenting on the current state of terrestrial radio broadcasting in North America, academics, journalists and writers also cite such issues as the demise of localism in radio in the wake of media consolidation and technological advancement. Nina Huntemann argues this very point. She states that “this trend is a direct result of lifted ownership caps, which paved the way for group owners to consolidate operations by cutting staff and networking content” (Huntemann 78). The 1996 Telecommunications Act in the United States is a frequently cited policy document that prompted changes in music programming. Significant reports indicate that after the Act, “radio stations were ‘beginning to sound the same coast to coast’ and that disc jockeys at

private radio stations ‘were given little discretion in what songs they could play’” (Hilliard and Keith 140). In both Canada and the United States, then, terrestrial broadcasting has been, and is, undergoing changes that affect the ability for new and emerging or independent bands and artists to receive airplay as playlists become more repetitive and centralized.

This critique sheds light on some of the general factors that influence the contemporary North American broadcast environment, but they primarily address issues affecting commercial, and to a lesser extent, public broadcasting. Campus radio, while still affected by many of the same factors that influence and shape terrestrial broadcasting as a whole, plays a much different role than that of commercial and public radio stations. For instance, campus stations typically receive funding through an academic institution or through fundraising, and their audience is usually much smaller and located near the station itself. As well, campus and community radio is subject to strict Can-Con regulations and typically has a mandate to cater programming to a local community. Because its role is quite specialized and different from that of private or public broadcasting, community media such as campus radio is often defined and discussed as “alternative” to the more dominant private and public broadcast models. Questions then arise as to what it means to be “alternative” to dominant broadcast models, and whether a specialized role or mandate exempt campus and community broadcasting from the influential factors outlined above? Because of these differences, defining campus and community broadcasting as “alternative” is arguably justifiable, but the term raises questions about what it means, connotes and signifies.

For example, multiple organizations and individuals define “community” and “alternative” media, attempting to illustrate what these terms signify. In a 1993 UNESCO report titled *Alternative Media: Linking Global and Local*, Peter Lewis highlights definitions taken from a UNESCO *World Communication Report*. According to the report, “community media” are “those media designed to encourage participation by a broad representative cross-section of socio-economic levels, organizations and minority or subcultural groups within a community” (Lewis 1993, 11-12). “Alternative media,” according to the same report, is generally “alternative” to “mainstream media,” which are defined as “the media most usually available in the area or media organized in the usual way” (Ibid. 12). Lewis does note, however, the trouble associated with defining “alternative media,” stating in particular that “yesterday’s underground alternative may today be a legal best-seller and tomorrow could be taken over by an international conglomerate” (Ibid. 12). The task of defining and describing media as “alternative” in a way that is appropriate across time and space is, evidently, difficult, as the term is connected with numerous theories and ideas as to what constitutes “alternative media.”

Defining the boundaries of alternative media is particularly complex when considering the intersection of corporate culture and counter, or “alternative,” culture. Thomas Frank’s *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* examines the intersection of business culture and counterculture during the 1960s. A poignant example from this book is Frank’s discussion of the music industry’s consistent effort to maintain familiarity with “new and evermore subversive youth movements,” incorporating underground culture into advertising and marketing

strategies (Frank 4). Individuals in the advertising business throughout the 1960s “loved rock ‘n’ roll, or at least claimed they did,” frequently referencing the musical counterculture “to demonstrate their cognizance of the hip underground” (Ibid. 113). The potential for “alternative” culture to become incorporated by “mainstream” culture exemplifies problems with defining the boundaries of what “alternative” connotes and represents, as the nature of “alternativeness” changes and is redefined by mainstream culture.

Similar tensions between the business side of the music industry and less-corporate methods of music programming, such as campus or college broadcasting, are highlighted by Holly Kruse, who points out that as early as the start of the 1980s, trade publications like *Billboard* and *The Gavin Report* acknowledged American college radio as being “central in the circulation of emerging and alternative music” (Kruse 5). Like the independent music labels of the time, college radio stations were “sites of struggle between the ideal of ‘alternative’ music institutions and the reality of major label power” (Ibid. 70). Local practices contrasted with mainstream economics and “authenticity” struggled against commercial logic (Ibid. 70). Michael Stipe of R.E.M, a band widely referred to as “alternative,” reflects on the term, claiming that the word was a good description for bands like R.E.M, but over time it became just another “category,” eventually becoming “mainstream” and “as myopic as the thing it was supposedly alternative to” (Stipe ix). Considering this, it is evident that a study of the “alternative” within Canadian campus broadcasting must incorporate a number of factors and sources in order to effectively assess what it is that constructs an “alternative” ethos in campus radio programming and structure.

Campus radio (commonly referred to as “college radio” in an American context) is easier to define in comparison to terms like “alternative,” particularly because it exists and is outlined in such documents as broadcast policy, but also in a number of books that address the subject. Such a book is *The Culture of American College Radio* by Samuel J. Sauls, which states that American college radio reflects “the current climate on campus,” and programs “alternative music that reflects the diverse lifestyles of a ‘college culture’” (Sauls 3). A further examination of what is meant by “college culture” will be a component of this paper’s analysis in an upcoming chapter, but this quote establishes a general idea about how campus radio and its programming can be perceived. The same book, however, is careful to note that such a perception is not always accurate, and that not every college or campus station follows an alternative format (Ibid. 63). Of course, such uncertainty once again illustrates the problems with defining the parameters of “alternativeness.” Nonetheless, Canadian broadcast policy does define campus-community broadcasting in a way that is sufficient for outlining the type of broadcasting that is the central focus of this thesis.

In the Canadian context, broadcast policy helps to shed light on what technically defines a campus-community broadcaster. Within the “Summary” section of the CRTC’s Public Notice 2000-12, campus radio stations are defined as “not-for-profit undertakings associated with institutions of post-secondary education. Campus radio stations rely almost exclusively on volunteers from the campus, and from the community at large, for their programming and operation” (CRTC 2000-12). This definition is advanced in paragraphs 18 to 23 of the notice, where it states that, “In the past, the term campus/community has been mistakenly interpreted as referring to both community

stations and campus stations” (Ibid.). Paragraph 20, therefore, distinguishes between the two types of campus stations: “community-based campus” and “instructional.” A community-based campus station is defined as “a campus station with programming produced primarily by volunteers who are either students or members of the community at large. The training of professional broadcasters is not the station’s primary objective” (Ibid.). An instructional station, on the other hand, “is a campus station that has the training of professional broadcasters as its primary objective” (Ibid.).

The Commission defines the role of each subtype of campus station, both community-based and instructional, within paragraph 21 of Public Notice 2000-12. The primary role of community-based campus radio stations is to broadcast *alternative* programming that is not typically heard on commercial radio, particularly Canadian music, but also in-depth spoken-word programming, community-specific programming, and special interest music. In addition to students, members of the community at large are also involved in the production and programming of community-based campus stations. Community-based campus stations also provide radio production training to volunteers, but not as their primary role, as it is for instructional stations. Instructional campus stations provide radio training to broadcasting and journalism students, although such stations must also broadcast alternative programming that is similar to that of community-based campus stations, but with “some formal educational programming” included as well (CRTC 2000-12).

Currently, there are about fifty-three campus and campus-community radio stations that are licensed by the CRTC, broadcasting as either an AM or FM station (see Appendix A). The number increases when considering closed-circuit campus stations,

high school stations, campus stations that have since become community stations, like Trent University's CFFF-FM, and campus stations that currently only broadcast on the internet, such as CJUS at the University of Saskatchewan. About nine of these Canadian campus stations first hit the airwaves in the 2000s, with most stations establishing themselves throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Many stations, however, began as closed-circuit or cable FM stations, serving a small geographic area located within, or just around, the university or college campus. Over the past twenty years or so, campus stations have grown considerably, increasing in wattage and becoming licensed by the CRTC as AM or FM radio stations. CFXU-FM at St. Francis Xavier University, for instance, first aired in 1981 in student residences only. In the 1990s the station could be heard through cable TV, and in 1999 it was broadcast on the internet. Finally, in 2002 it acquired a license to broadcast as a developmental FM station, and was granted a campus-community license in 2006 (CRTC 2006-478).

This thesis specifically focuses on community-based campus stations (such as the ones listed in Appendix A) using CKUT-FM located at McGill University in Montreal, Canada as a case study. On the station's official website it states that "CKUT provides alternative music, news and spoken word programming to the city of Montreal and surrounding areas, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year" ("About..."). The station has over 100 shows, but the focus of this thesis is on the weekly music-based program, *Underground Sounds*. The program is broadcast every Monday from 8pm until 10pm, and it plays "local indie rock" and Canadian-Content ("Show..."). The program will serve as a site of analysis for which the parameters of "alternativeness" in community-based campus broadcasting will be explored. *Underground Sounds* is the program

chosen for this analysis because of the way in which it describes itself as “local” and “indie.” The primary goal of this thesis, as briefly mentioned earlier, is to examine the ways in which “alternativeness” is constructed by the program, and how concepts and ideas of the “alternative” are used on-air, and how they relate to the way that “alternativeness” is conceptualized and discussed in popular music discourse, alternative media theory, broadcast policy and broadcast history. Throughout this analysis, the boundaries and limitations of “alternativeness” on the programming of *Underground Sounds* will be explored.

The research corpus involved in the writing of this paper includes the campus-community radio station CKUT Radio McGill and its programming, playlists, and programmed advertisements. CKUT Radio McGill is an appropriate site of research because it serves both a student population, and a local urban centre, and is a well-established station with a considerable history of just over twenty years. A thorough examination of research policy and broadcast history as it pertains to campus-community broadcasting will also be a necessary component of this methodology. Additionally, relevant theoretical and conceptual literature will make up a large part of this research corpus, such as that which addresses scene culture, alternative media theory, independent media production and ideas about what a “community” signifies.

The primary methodology utilized for the researching of CKUT-FM is a close analysis of the programming of *Underground Sounds*. A total of ten broadcasts over the course of ten weeks are included in this analysis, plus a lone broadcast from October of 2007 that falls outside the three month period that the ten broadcasts cover, but provides influential insight. Close quantitative attention is given to such things as the number of

Canadian songs played, the number of Canadian artists played, and the release dates of each song. Qualitative aspects of this analysis include the context of mentioning Montreal bands and Montreal locations (venues, record stores, etc.). Everything within the broadcast is suitable for analysis, including music, discussion, interviews, and advertisements. The ways that the broadcasts make use of key terms like “alternative,” “local,” “independent,” and “community” are of significant importance to this methodology, as are such audible components like interviews with local bands and advertisements for local venues and record stores. Furthermore, an analysis of Canadian broadcast policy and Canadian broadcast history as it relates to campus-community radio figures prominently in this thesis. Public Notice CRTC 2000-12 (*Campus radio policy*) is an example of a policy document relevant to this topic.

This thesis consists of five chapters including this introduction and a concluding chapter. Chapter One examines the theoretical and conceptual literature that pertains to campus-community broadcasting and the key terms/concepts of “alternative,” “independent,” “local,” “community,” and “scene.” The primary role of this chapter is to illustrate how these terms/concepts circulate in popular music and media studies discourse, and to get a sense of what they might signify and where major sites of contention are. This conceptual/theoretical backdrop will be necessary to frame subsequent chapters, as this chapter will narrow and specify the scope for further analysis.

The second chapter focuses on campus-community radio broadcast history and policy. Throughout this exploration of history and policy, a sense of how the aforementioned key terms are presented within historical discourse and broadcast policy

will become evident. As well, this chapter illustrates historical and policy-based factors that contribute to constructing campus and community radio broadcasting as an “alternative” medium, including a brief overview of the specific policy that structures CKUT. Essentially, this chapter will frame this topic historically, and within the relevant broadcast policy that regulates campus-community broadcasting in Canada.

Chapter Three focuses specifically on *Underground Sounds*, and how its programming constructs and contributes to ideas of the “alternative” and “alternative” broadcasting. This chapter documents the sort of artists that are frequently played on the program, and posits ideas as to what factors in to program frequency. Moreover, the importance of terms and concepts like “scene,” “local” and “independent” in relation to the program will be addressed, particularly the way that these terms enforce and perpetuate a projected notion of “alternativeness.”

The concluding chapter extends the findings from Chapter One, Two and Three, summarizing and situating the ten broadcasts within the theoretical and conceptual literature and the historical and policy-based accounts present throughout the entire thesis. Concluding remarks and questions for further research are also put forth.

The next chapter begins an analytical and discursive process that looks to examine the boundaries and limitations of “alternativeness” on campus radio broadcasting. The upcoming chapter attempts to get at what it is that makes campus broadcasting unique, and will outline concepts and ideas associated with the key terms “alternative,” “independent,” “local,” “scene,” and “community.”

CHAPTER ONE

Theories and Concepts Regarding the “Alternativeness” of Campus Radio

The role of radio broadcasting has altered and transformed multiple times throughout the past century as technologies, media companies and the interest of listeners have changed. Currently, it is often remarked that radio is marginalized in such areas as academia and policy debates, namely because newer media, quite often visual media, are favourable to consumers, as well as the academics and authors who write and research on media (Lewis and Booth xii, Hilmes). Regardless of radio’s less-than-dominant status in the contemporary media environment, various forms of terrestrial radio broadcasting continue to exist and provide necessary and sought-after services to listeners. Alternative and community media scholar Chris Atton identifies five “broad types” of radio broadcasting. These five types include: commercial radio, public service broadcasting, state radio, pirate radio, and community radio, the former two being the most prominent in the West (Atton 2004, 114). The purpose of this chapter is to contextualize campus and community radio, and situate them within the contemporary media environment and relevant literature.

Peter Lewis and Jerry Booth comment on the founding myths behind commercial and public radio. Commercial broadcasting draws upon ideas about individualism and free enterprise, whereas public service broadcasting, having “perhaps the richest myth troves of all,” draws on the “supposed shortage of frequencies” to justify “entrusting broadcasting to a monopoly controlled by professionals who diagnosed and interpreted the needs of listeners” (Lewis and Booth 1). Community broadcasting is referred to as a “third type,” of broadcasting that is divergent to commercial and public radio, and is

“listener-supported,” “public,” “free,” and “alternative” (Ibid. 2-3). The differences between these broadcast systems are continually referenced and discussed throughout the course of this thesis, but it is important to install a general understanding of how they might be perceived in relation to each other, and what terms and ideas they are associated with. Already, as evident in the above quotes, community broadcasting is theoretically situated in opposition to commercial and public radio.

Within the larger categorical umbrella of “community broadcasting” is campus, or college, radio, situated within and associated with many discussions and conceptions of community broadcasting. In Canada², as mentioned in the introduction, community-based campus radio stations are defined by the CRTC as “not-for-profit undertakings associated with institutions of post-secondary education,” that rely on volunteers from the campus, and from the community at large (CRTC 2000-12). Strictly in terms of policy, this definition is sufficient, but it also raises questions about the nature of community-based campus broadcasting, particularly when it is described as a “not-for-profit undertaking” that relies on volunteers from the campus and the local community-at-large. Evidently, campus broadcasting is not only distinct from commercial and public radio, but also community stations that might exclusively cater to a non-campus community like aboriginals, rural farmers, or urban ethnic communities. Furthermore, this quote from the CRTC illustrates ways in which campus broadcasting is different from other broadcast forms, such as not relying exclusively on profit or a paid staff. Such a structure is

² While this paper is Canadian in focus, though at times referring to American broadcast studies, it is important to note that a number of profound and influential works address community and alternative media in various parts of the world. Some works that were consulted throughout the researching of this chapter (and which will, at times, be cited) include *Community Media: A Global Introduction*, by Ellie Rennie; *Community Media*, edited by Linda K. Fuller; *A Passion for Radio*, edited by Bruce Girard; and “From Alternative Media to Citizen’s Media,” by Clemencia Rodriguez. These works are important resources to consider in conjunction with this chapter, despite generally falling outside of its geographic scope.

“alternative” to the structure of public and commercial radio, but there are many concepts and theories that relate to campus broadcasting and ideas about the “alternative” that need to be discussed and analyzed throughout this chapter, in order to properly situate Canadian campus broadcasting within the contemporary media environment.

Examining influential factors facing the contemporary North American radio broadcast environment is an effective way to situate concepts and ideas that circulate around campus and community broadcasting. For example, technological advancement and media consolidation have resulted in the decline of localism in radio, both in programming and structure (an issue that will soon be expanded in this chapter). In turn, campus and community radio are left to serve local communities and artists in ways that commercial and public radio may not be able to, or may not want to. By briefly looking at some of the factors that shape and influence the contemporary North American broadcast environment, it becomes clearer as to where campus and community are placed, and why these broadcast forms are often conceptualized as “alternative” and as serving and/or being associated with a “community.”

In the early to mid-twentieth century radio was a local medium that brought information, education, music and entertainment to the communities that housed radio stations. By the late 1920s and early 1930s, radio technology became more prevalent and a local form of communication transformed into a national phenomenon (Hilliard and Keith 1). Radio was the dominant household technology between the 1920s and 1950s, until the introduction of television pushed radio into “the background,” losing the role of the prime deliverer of news and entertainment in the home. Still, radio was considered the “most persistent and ubiquitous media companion,” despite the popularity of

television (Hilmes 1). More recently, radio has faced changes in the face of emerging digital and satellite technologies. Traditional, or terrestrial, radio broadcasting is now in competition with these new formats, and commercial radio is taking full advantage of media consolidation in order to remain competitive.

The consolidation of media companies over previous decades has exerted major changes on the structure and content of radio broadcasting. Not simply an issue of the market, government policy plays a role in determining such things as the number of radio stations a single company can own and control. In the United States deregulation slowly began with President Carter, accelerated during the Reagan years, and “reached what appeared to be the point of no return under President Bill Clinton’s administration,” resulting in less restrictions on the number of television and radio stations that could be owned locally or nationally by one company or entity (Hilliard and Keith 4). Under Clinton came the 1996 Telecommunications Act, amending the Communications Act of 1934, and facilitating media consolidation. From the fifty or so media companies that existed in 1984, there were only ten in 1996 at the time of the Act (Bagdikian). Examples of acquisitions that have taken place since 1999 include Viacom’s merger with CBS, America Online acquiring Time Warner, and Vivendi’s purchase of Seagram (Croteau and Hoynes 78-79).

Arguments in favour of the resulting media conglomeration include the idea that “by pooling the resources of many stations and thereby cutting costs, [media companies] can bring the public better programming and more efficient operations, thus serving the community more advantageously” (Hilliard and Keith 7). In contrast, complaints regarding the impact of the Act were, and are, numerous, particularly in regards to music

programming. Programming for mass audiences (in other words, commercial programming) is generally based on a limited repertoire of popular hits, and is fairly repetitive and similar between stations (Lewis and Booth 5). This similarity between stations is no doubt increased as fewer entities control more stations. Despite the fact that much of this work is American in context, media conglomeration is not simply isolated within the United States. The Canadian media industry has also been susceptible to the effects of media consolidation and conglomeration, regardless of political pressure to protect Canadian culture (Fairchild 67).

David Taras addresses the concerns explained above with a Canadian focus. Taras states that “the Canadian media system is in the midst of a profound crisis,” arguing that the public Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) is “threatened with extinction,” and that media ownership “has fallen into the hands of a small handful of individuals” (Taras 1). As of 2001, Taras explains that most Canadian media is controlled by a few companies: Bell Canada Enterprises (BCE), Rogers Communication, CanWest Global, and Quebecor (Ibid. 227). Whether Canadian media consolidation is considered a benefit (perhaps allowing for Canadian companies to compete better with larger, American companies), or discouraging (leading to less variety in the news reporting and media production), it is a certainty that Canada’s media environment has been susceptible to change as a result of technological development and media consolidation. As a medium that is facing influential pressure from emerging technology, terrestrial broadcasting is left to comply and embrace media consolidation if it is to remain current and competitive. Of course, such a choice has further implications.

One of the most significant effects of technological development and the consolidation of media companies is the decline of localism in both structure and programming. The economics of radio have “worked against localism,” with station owners having to cut back on local staff and news operations during moments of economic recession or when the competition for profits becomes more prominent (Hilliard and Keith 65). Lawrence Soley, referencing a court affidavit involving local radio, offers key reasons for what he calls, “the ‘decline in community programming’” (Ibid. 8). Soley lists “the FCC’s deregulation of radio, the consolidation of radio station ownership, the growth of satellite radio, the elimination by the FCC in 1978 of low-power community radio stations, and the decline in minority ownership” as central reasons to why local and community programming is struggling in the United States (Ibid. 8). In addition to the decline of localism in commercial broadcasting, public service broadcasting has faced similar consequences. For instance, the percentage of local programming aired by public service stations that are qualified under the Corporation for Public Broadcasting has declined significantly since the early 1970s (McCourt 102). The inability for commercial and public radio to program content for a local audience reveals an area where the role of campus and community radio broadcasting is quite necessary. Campus and community broadcasting can occupy this space, where commercial and public broadcasting fails to address the local, and perhaps this role also contributes to associating community and campus radio with the “alternative,” as it is a role that follows the opposite trajectory of mainstream radio broadcasting.

Concepts and ideas regarding campus and community radio can be framed as “alternatives” to commercial and public service broadcasting, particularly because it is a broadcast system that fills the void left by the decline of localism resulting from changing technology and media consolidation. Opposing mainstream broadcast models and trajectories, community and campus broadcasting becomes associated with broadcast politics. For example, American community stations from 1948 to 1975 saw themselves “as a clear alternative to both commercial and public broadcasting, from which they differed in both culture and politics” (Partridge 17). Listener participation is a recurring theme found in community media discourse, adding another aspect to what might make community and campus broadcasting “alternative” to other forms. Commercial and public service broadcast models typically envision audiences as “objects, to be captured for advertisers or improved and informed,” whereas community radio, on the other hand, “aspires to treat its listeners as subjects and participants” (Lewis and Booth 8). Bruce Girard emphasizes this point, stating that community radio is an alternative to commercial radio, and its “most distinguishing characteristic is its commitment to community participation at all levels” (Girard 2). A listener that volunteers and participates with a station is a distinctive characteristic that places community and campus broadcasting in ideological and political opposition to other broadcast models.

Expanding on this political and ideological opposition, Felix Guattari, in “Popular Free Radio,” argues that mass communication has been evolving in two opposite directions. Contrasting “hyper-concentrated systems controlled by the apparatus of state, or monopolies, of big political machines” are these “miniaturized systems that create the real possibility of a collective appropriation of the media” (Guattari). Community radio,

evidently, has appropriated a number of definitions that embrace the participation of listeners and community members, which further contrasts commercial and public service broadcast models. Simon Partridge offers such a definition, stating that “a community station thus came to be defined as a ‘non-profit organization, governed by a board of directors that is generally part community and part station workers (including volunteers)’” (Partridge 17). Girard provides insight that adds to this definition, claiming that when community radio succeeds, its broadcasts “are marked with a passion [that]...empower[s] listeners by encouraging and enabling their participation, not only in the radio but in the social, cultural and political processes that affect the community” (Girard 3). These astute definitions that frame community radio as opposed to, or as “alternative” to other broadcast models, are intriguing but they still leave many questions regarding the nature of “alternativeness” unanswered.

“Alternative” is the subject of many book chapters and articles that search for an appropriate definition of the word and/or concept, although, as Michael Albert notes, there “has never been widely voiced agreement about what attributes are alternative” (Albert). Chris Atton approaches a definition of the boundaries of alternative media arguing that alternative media distributes content that would otherwise not be found elsewhere. Atton states that “alternative publications are at bottom more interested in the free flow of ideas than in profit” (Atton 2002, 12). Just as campus broadcasting is laid out in broadcast policy (as being not-for-profit), Atton’s definition references a distance from profit that is central to alternative media. “Alternative” is also connected to media production, describing a process in which people are empowered through direct involvement in producing content (Ibid. 18). Conceptions of the “alternative,” thus, can

be said to concern both media content and production. Challenging this definition, however, are a number of concerns about the negligible relationship between the “alternative” and the “mainstream.” There is a two-way relationship between alternative media and the dominant society, in which ideas introduced by alternative media can modify society, but alternative media can also become modified if they are absorbed by mainstream culture (Armstrong 25). Radical and alternative media scholar John Downing illustrates this very point, using *Rolling Stone* and the *Village Voice* as an example of how a “commercially viable audience” can be discovered and appropriated by the mainstream – both magazines underwent this very transition (Downing 35). Evidently, it can be a struggle to illuminate *one* concrete example or definition of the term “alternative.” Numerous definitions exist, many of which contrast and complicate other existing definitions. The next section of this chapter narrows this discussion by looking at how “alternative” pertains to media, and more specifically, radio broadcasting.

Despite problems with *universally* defining alternative media, a number of authors and scholars who study alternative media pursue the limitations of its meaning. Writer and narrator for KPFA radio, David Armstrong, describes the difficulty of pinpointing the origin of the word “alternative” as it applies to media, but he does claim that in the early 1970s numerous grassroots media outlets began to adopt the term (Armstrong 183). He elaborates, stating that “alternative” argued for something “better,” something “positive, constructive, with an implicit message that working models of reality substantially different from mainstream culture already existed” (Ibid. 183). Dorothy Kidd justifies the use of the term “alternative media,” stating that media activists could have chosen terms such as “community-oriented, progressive, radical, or

democratic” media, but media activists have “chosen ‘alternative’ because it’s how we are often characterized and how we characterize ourselves” (Kidd). For Kidd, the term is very much about identity, an identity she associates with pride. Perhaps a projected identity or self-awareness is the easiest way to classify media as “alternative.” Even so, the range of existing media and ideas about the term suggest that there is more to the concept of “alternative” than simply self-definition.

Kidd works in community radio, but the range of media that can be considered “alternative” is quite broad. Alternative media can be said to include activist newspapers and magazines, small-press publishers, independent film, community access cable television, comics, news services and user-controlled computer networks (Armstrong 21). Recent technological development expands on this list, adding weblogs (blogs), podcasts, mobile text messages, chat rooms, and so forth. Because there is such a broad range of media that can be considered “alternative,” it is necessary to further explore concepts and ideas related to this wide spectrum of media before singling out radio broadcasting as an “alternative” medium.

In a 1993 UNESCO study titled *Alternative Media: Linking Global and Local*, a number of “alternative” media characteristics are listed. This list includes: “motive or purpose, sources of funding,...organizational structure, ‘alternative in criticizing professional practices,’ message content, relationship with audience, composition of audience, range of diffusion, [and] alternative nature of research methodology” (Lewis 2006, 29). While this range of characteristics does appear in much alternative media theory and literature, a listener-as-participant audience, and methods of production are perhaps the most salient characteristics, as they also refer back to characteristics

described earlier in this chapter. The organizational composition of alternative media outlets often strive to be democratic, with less hierarchy and more emphasis on working together (Kidd). Because of this internal structure, community participation is encouraged, as is empowering groups that struggle to find a voice or representation within the mainstream media (Armstrong 22). Content, then, is typically going to differ, or seem “alternative” in nature, because the groups and individuals producing it embrace a much different approach than that which is utilized in more “professional” or “mainstream” media outlets (Atton 2002, 18).

The second salient characteristic attributed to alternative media is “alternative” or “independent” media production. A definition of alternative media provided by Chris Atton in 2004 states, “Alternative media can be understood as those media produced outside the forces of market economics and the state. They can include the media of protest groups, dissidents, ‘fringe’ political organizations, even fans and hobbyists” (Atton 2004, 3). Again, alternative media are simply defined as that which is “alternative” to the mainstream media, but in this case, specifically in relation to the conventional method of *producing* media. However, Atton’s definition can be challenged, as it is questionable whether alternative media, or any media, can fully exist and operate outside of market economics. Nevertheless, his emphasis on production is significant. Independent production techniques often attempt to operate as far from the commercial model of producing media as possible, and Tim O’Sullivan provides two characteristics that position alternative media production in contrast to mainstream media. The first has been touched on in the previous paragraph, that of a democratic and collectivist production process. The second is a commitment to experimentation and

innovation in form and/or content (cited in Atton 2002, 15). Just as with an active audience, “independent” or “alternative” production practices are going to generate content that is different from that of conventional media outlets.

The previous paragraphs address media in general, and some of the ways in which the term “alternative” defines a wide variety of media. There are, however, specific thoughts on the “alternativeness” of radio broadcasting that are helpful in narrowing down the boundaries of alternative media theory as it applies to campus and community radio. In some broadcast literature, campus radio is a medium that is frequently discussed in relation to notions of the “alternative,” and various aspects of campus broadcasting can be considered “alternative,” such as programming, production, and station philosophy or mandate. The network of Pacifica Foundation stations is an appropriate example to begin connecting alternative concepts to radio broadcasting. Pacifica is often cited as the first listener-sponsored radio station in North America, broadcasting since 1949 (Land). Over the years, Pacifica has expanded into five stations located in New York, Berkeley, Houston, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles. Some of the characteristics that illustrate the contrast between Pacifica and commercial or public service radio stations include operation by a foundation that provides educational, not profitable programming; catering to a broad spectrum of people; “admitting a greater range of interests and a greater tolerance for a variety of opinions;” and, programming not only rock and roll, but also “opera, classical music, blues, bluegrass, jazz, electronic avant-garde music, poetry, theatre, and many other forms of art and entertainment—not as novelties, but as integral parts of its programming” (Armstrong 160). Not only do these characteristics highlight differences between two distinct broadcast models, but

they reference the style or type of programming (or content) that is heard on campus and community radio.

Music-based programming is an integral part of campus radio broadcasting (sharing airtime with spoken word, talk radio, and news casting). “Alternative” can be further conceptualized in relation to music, especially considering that the term is used to define and classify a genre of music, one that is often associated with campus and college radio broadcasting. As Will Straw explains, “alternative rock” has a “reliance on the institutional infrastructures of campus radio stations” (Straw 376). Michael Stipe, frontman for the band REM, attempts to describe alternative music in the foreword to *The A to X of Alternative Music*. Stipe notes that bands and artists like “Patti Smith, Television, Blondie, the Ramones and the Talking Heads in the US, and in the UK, Wire, Generation X, Japan, Captain Sensible, the Slits, and of course the Sex Pistols and the Clash...set the stage for Alternative,” all representing something “very powerful” (Stipe ix). Stipe also hints at some of the ideological characteristics that can be associated with alternative music. Stipe says that when REM was formed, “Alternative was exactly what rock’n’roll and punk were supposed to be, which was an attitude and an approach to what was clearly at that point a business” (Ibid.). Alternative was an “attitude” for Stipe, it “was about how to move through those sharky waters without being consumed by the business aspects of having a band, putting out records, having them distributed and being able to play to your fans” (Ibid.). Of course, as hinted at earlier in this chapter, the nature of “alternativeness” becomes complicated when bands, for instance, become successful and embrace the mainstream music industry.

In “Packaged Alternatives,” Laura Goodlad uses the example of the punk subculture in the 1980s to illustrate how the “alternative” genre of music can become appropriated by the mainstream. She notes that “alternative” became “mainstream” after it was established “in the paradoxical form of an institutionalized opposition to institutionalized culture.” By the late 1980s and early 1990s, then, “postpunk youth culture had developed the distinctly paradoxical and postmodern form of a mainstream avant-garde: a mass ‘alternative’ for the self-consciously hip” (Goodlad 137). Alternative music is a genre with tough boundaries to define, but this is most likely because various levels of success play into conceptualizing music as “alternative,” as the above critique suggests. Nevertheless, “alternative” is a genre embraced by, and connected to, campus and college radio, and an exploration of related key terms is necessary to elaborate on how a certain level of success or status is connected to the “alternative,” and why others are not.

To further examine the relationship between alternative music and campus radio, it is relevant to consider the term “independent,” a term that takes into consideration success and status in music production, distribution and performance. Quite often when an artist or group exists and works outside of the commercial or mainstream music industry, the term is used. In her study of independent music scenes, Holly Kruse notes that the word “independent” or its abbreviated version, “indie,” is “perhaps most commonly used to describe independent rock and pop labels” (Kruse 8). Independent record companies “are relatively small-scale operations that usually originate and try to operate outside—through their geographic locations and/or their locally situated practices of production and distribution—of the established mainstream organizations that

dominate the music industry” (Ibid. 34). David Hesmondhalgh’s analysis of the independent label Rough Trade elaborates on ideas associated with independent labels. Hesmondhalgh identifies “‘democratisation,’ allowing greater participation and access in media systems, as a key concept in post-punk, indie musical production” (cited in Kruse 10). This insight into independent labels is helpful in illustrating a link between the terms “independent” and “alternative” and campus radio broadcasting. Both campus radio stations and independent labels are “sites of struggle” between alternative and independent music institutions, and the more mainstream commercial music industry (Ibid. 70). An independent production ethos that comes with alternative music is also associated with the structure and mandate of community and campus radio stations (an issue that will be further elaborated on in the upcoming chapters). Essentially, both strive for independence from the mainstream music industry, establishing an ideological link between the two.

When it comes to the programming of campus or community radio stations, diversity and experimentation are often emphasized, as is the work of local artists and live broadcasts. A program format open to more diverse and experimental music is situated in opposition to “the format-bound commercial” model (Partridge 18). Along with embracing an open, diverse, and experimental approach to programming, there often comes an explicitly stated programming philosophy, which also helps campus and community stations to justify their presence on the airwaves (Sauls 39). These ideologies are found in a station’s mission statement, which is often online. Pacifica’s webpage, for instance, has an “About Pacifica” section of its page that includes a mission statement. Pacifica’s mission statement has a number of outlined ideals, one of which is “To

establish a Foundation organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any member of the foundation” (“About Pacifica”). From within this sort of approach to programming comes a welcoming of alternative music and independent labels. As Sauls notes, “the college radio station offers a true alternative to programming not commercially available or viable. The best indicator of this trend is the programming of alternative music that reflects the diverse lifestyles of a ‘college culture’” (Sauls 3).

The relationship between alternative music and campus radio is further illustrated through another term: “college music.” Kruse states that “‘college music’...became a relevant term because it could define a genre through the primary medium by which it was disseminated: college radio” (Kruse 12). Describing the sound of “college music” in the 1980s and early 1990s, Kruse says that it “brings to mind various guitar-based bands that began and in some cases remained on independent record labels,” which were generally played on “nonprofessional, non-commercial...student-run college radio stations at disparate colleges and universities” (Ibid. 6-7, 70). Although it is pertinent to note that not all college stations have always pursued an alternative music format³, the term “college music” is sometimes used interchangeably with “alternative music,” highlighting an evident link. Not only is college (or campus) radio conceptualized as an institution for disseminating alternative music, but it is also thought of as a style, or type of music that is defined in a similar way as alternative music. The musical style and the

³ Kruse notes that in the U.S. in the 1980s and 1990s, “one could find college stations with Top 40 or Contemporary Hit Radio (CHR) formats, college stations with album-oriented rock (AOR) formats, and college stations with adult contemporary (AC) formats,” (Kruse 7) although a lengthy online search of contemporary Canadian campus radio stations finds no AM or FM stations that have programming comprised solely, or primarily, of such formats.

medium in which it is disseminated are ideologically linked by key terms and concepts related to the “alternative.”

Another important issue related to this current topic is the capacity for campus broadcasting to showcase and promote alternative music, although this association can often lead to further complication of the “alternative”—particularly when the exposure generated through campus radio eventually reaches a larger audience, and, therefore, the mainstream music industry. As Sauls reiterates, the music industry has, at times, looked upon college radio “as a kind of early warning system, identifying bands that may reach mainstream audiences an album or two in the future” (Sauls 65). Sauls references the mid-1980s as the initial moment when it was discovered that college radio had the ability to expose audiences to new groups in genres like country/punk fusion, punk rock, and the ‘60s sound (Ibid. 64). Nevertheless, there is an evident link between alternative music, the independent music industry, and college radio. It seems as though alternative music is easiest to define when it is produced, distributed, and performed with an “independent” ethos. Campus radio, then, can best fulfill programming philosophies and station mandates when it plays “alternative” music that is very much “independent” or “indie” in nature. Oftentimes it is within an “independent music scene” that this music thrives, but once again, the term “scene” carries with it a number of interesting thoughts and concepts that construct its meaning.

The interactions that take place between independent record labels, alternative groups and artists, and campus radio stations can be said to take place within a “music scene.” Richard Peterson and Andy Bennett note that despite the existence of a global music industry, most music is created in a smaller, local setting. The authors define

“music scene” as a cluster “of producers, musicians, and fans collectively [sharing] their common musical tastes and collectively [distinguishing] themselves from others” (Peterson and Bennett 1). As well, the term “scene” “is commonly and loosely used by musicians and music fans, music writers and researchers to refer to a group of people who have something in common, such as a shared musical activity or taste” (Cohen 239). Kruse adds the word “indie” to “music scene,” noting that indie music scenes are “formed and maintained within particular places: within localities and within specific local sites (clubs, record stores, coffee shops, houses)” (Kruse 114). A “scene,” then, is both a geographic and a conceptual space. Geographic in the sense that cultural interactions take place within a certain local space, and conceptual in the sense that these cultural interactions are along a shared taste or interest, such as a musical style or genre.

Similarly, the term “community” deals with a conceptual and geographic space. Numerous writers and academics write about “community,” devoting introductions and chapters to outlining the various ideas and concepts that are connected to the word. According to Peter Lewis, the use of “community” in relation to media can be traced to the 1950s, when sociological interests turned toward modern urban living and its effects on traditional community relationships (Lewis 2006, 26). Community relationships, however, also evade definition, as it is unclear what constitutes a community. Is it more about the geographic location in which people interact, or is it the way in which people interact with each other, regardless of geographic location? The definite answer is unclear, but the philosopher who coined the term “beloved community,” Josiah Royce, argued that “it was not geographical location but collective ‘ideal extensions’ toward a common past (crucifixion) and anticipated future (resurrection) that creates community”

(cited in Land 137). While this definition is valuable toward providing historical insight into the concept of community, it is not particularly specific to contemporary notions of a community. Royce's ideas are described and labeled as a "communitarian ethos" that synthesizes "memory, hope, and collective practices" (Ibid.). This communitarian ethos is not specific to Royce, but part of a larger political movement that is presently active in putting forth its ideas regarding the relationship between community and politics.

In the words of Ellie Rennie, "communitarianism is a political theory that attempts to investigate liberalism's limits "by exploring the value of communities and how community benefits may be enhanced. It has also been influential in a new type of politics that has emerged in recent years which has proved important in policy development around community media" (Rennie 25). Similarly, Philip Selznick claims that the "communitarian voice" is a response to modern and postmodern anxieties (Selznick 4). The very idea that it is a "response" to "anxieties" suggests that there are a number of political ideals associated with communitarianism, ideals that are centered on the concept of a community.

Rennie and Selznick illustrate some ideals that are part of communitarianism in their respective works. Rennie, for instance, points to dissatisfaction with liberal individualism, arguing that "emphasis on individualism in liberal theory fosters an amoral, fragmented society." Communitarians, Rennie argues, "assert the primacy of the social over the individual," adding that it is through interaction between people that a society is created (Rennie 27). Some quotes from Selznick attempt to define "community" within the context of communitarianism. Selznick stresses the importance of distinguishing communities from special-purpose organizations, noting that

“communities are frameworks within which people pursue many different purposes,” and that it is from within communities that people share a common life (Selznick 16).

Elizabeth Frazer offers some challenges and critiques of the thinkers behind communitarian politics. Her critique is helpful in furthering this analysis of the term “community,” as she offers her own take on the term. She argues that “community” is first a “*value*, or an ideal,” and secondly, it is sometimes described as “a descriptive *category*, or set of variables” (Frazer 76). “Community” is also sometimes described as “an ‘*entity*,’ referring to a group of people and institutions, either on a “global scale where it is an overarching entity which encompasses other groups and other communities, or on the micro scale so that communities are thought of as among the building blocks of the wider society” (Ibid. 77-78). As well, “community” is sometimes used as “a ‘*relation*’” that “refers to a set of social and moral relations and ties that inhere between members, and between members and nonmembers” of a community (Ibid. 78). Although communitarian politics is not the most relevant site of information to consider when discussing radio broadcasting, the debate that is found within its discourse is an interesting introduction to the concept of “community,” particularly in regards to the boundaries it attempts to define.

Moving from the notion of “community” illustrated in communitarian politics, there are other ideas that address aspects of the concept of a “community.” The work of Jürgen Habermas is commonly cited in community media studies, specifically the concept of the public sphere. Kevin Howley argues that Habermas’ concept of the public sphere “provides a robust theoretical framework to examine the crucial link between democratic self-governance and communication” (Howley 19). The Habermasian

concept of the public sphere involves public engagement through which “the conflicting private wills of rational people could be brought into harmony” (Calhoun 18). The media-related relevance of Habermas’ work on the public sphere can be summarized as an ideal, the ideal of the liberal public sphere—which “is contrasted with a contemporary reality marked by a concentration of media ownership, control, and power with a related constriction of voices allowed access to our main channels of mass communication” (Fairchild 6). Nancy Fraser, arguing that Habermas’ notion of the public sphere is inadequate for critiquing the limits of democracy in late capitalist societies, expands on his ideas to make room for a multiplicity of publics, the elimination of social inequality, and so forth (Fraser). Fraser’s ideas apply better to the “community” in “community broadcasting,” as community broadcasting is very much about giving access to smaller communities, or new and emerging bands and artists that do not occupy much space within the exchange of ideas that takes place within more mainstream media. Evidently, factors such as media consolidation, and the disparity between “publics” in regards to accessing information, reinforces the commercial broadcasting/mainstream vs. community broadcasting/alternative binary.

The connection between the contrasting characteristics of commercial media and community media (and that of commercial media and alternative media) is further articulated by Howley, who defines community media as “grassroots or locally oriented media access initiatives” that express and react to dissatisfaction with commercial media form and content, and which are “committed to enhancing community relations and promoting community solidarity” (Howley 2). Furthermore, community media are sometimes expected to promote and generate social and technological change on the lives

of “disparate groups,” just as is expected with alternative media, according to alternative media theory (Ibid. 38).⁴ The “general definition of community media” offered by Rennie mirrors these characteristics. She notes that the International Association of Media and Communication Research came up with an appropriate definition that defines community media as that which ““originates, circulates and resonates from the sphere of civil society....This is the field of media communication that exists outside of the state and the market (often non-government and non-profit), yet which may interact with both”” (Rennie 4). Although this does not equate all community media with alternative media, a point that is important to stress, it does exhibit a similar confrontational reaction to mainstream or commercial media, a reaction that both alternative media theory and community media theory share.

As is explained earlier with “alternative,” “community” can be applied more specifically to media, (and even more specifically to radio broadcasting) moving from a general concept, to a concept that shapes public perception about a certain medium. The prefix “community,” according to Peter Lewis, had been used in North America during the late 1960s to refer to cable community television, signifying local community involvement in production and ownership (Lewis 2006, 17). Eventually the prefix became linked with radio broadcasting to describe “radio *by* the people *for* the people” (Ibid. 16). A community-based ethos works well for the medium of radio, as it is “arguably the most affordable, easiest to use, and by far the most ubiquitous form of

⁴ While it is probably true that much of the literature that addresses community media does so with praise, it is certainly not the case that all community media is beneficial. Benefits do include the capacity to aid and promote local arts and cultural organizations, and encourage independent and local cultural production, but community media are also often used to disseminate messages that promote intolerance, violence, and injustice, which can be hurtful and prejudice (Howley 35, 38, Harmon). The concept of “community” as it applies to media is evidently open to different interpretations, but its essence seems to promote community participation in cultural production and reception.

electronic media around the world” (Howley 258). The ubiquity of radio is also illustrated by writers and academics who describe community interaction with the medium. Partridge, for instance, claims that community radio “could be your cause, your hobby, or your job,” speaking as though participation with radio can be casual and informal, suggesting a sense of ease in terms of access (Partridge 2). Ease of access is central to community radio, especially considering that the “community or communities for whom the station exists manage the policy, make the programs, and deliberately choose to broadcast content suited to their needs” (Lewis 2006, 15). Key features of community radio are further articulated by the National Federation of Community Broadcasters. While quite dated, their 1975-published list of community radio characteristics is relevant in providing historical insight into what community radio might signify. Their list is summarized by Lewis and Booth, and includes: control by the local community, commitment to community access, “especially for those normally excluded from the mass media,” the use of volunteers, and the definition of a clear purpose or mandate (Lewis and Booth 121).

An interesting argument is made by Rennie concerning the ability for community radio to challenge the status quo, despite having content and production methods that are more akin to traditional media outlets (Rennie 23). Rennie argues that because community radio broadcasting requires allocated spectrum, and is therefore endorsed by the government “as a sphere of activity that requires attention, status and resources,” it is a more substantial example of an alternative media outlet (Ibid. 4, 23). She also notes, interestingly, that government recognition places community radio broadcasting at the intersection of the regulated and administrative broadcasting environment and “the more

random, messy, and ‘natural’ configurations of the community sphere” (Ibid. 25). The effectiveness of community radio stations is going to differ on a case by case basis, but it is interesting to note that radio’s effectiveness as an “alternative” medium is influenced by government policy and spectrum allocation.

Earlier in this chapter, it was said that one of the potential roles of community and campus broadcasting is to occupy spectrum space for the purpose of providing local programming. It is no surprise that many discussions of community media frequently employ the term “local.” In some countries in Europe, community media is often described as “local media” (Rennie 3). Lewis and Booth connect the association of community to the local or “locality” to “a nearly universal longing for the supposed certainties of a past (usually rural) society where loyalty, belief and kin provided a shield against the wickedness of the wide world (Lewis and Booth 91). As McCourt notes, however, “localism” has never been properly defined, but is rather contrasted with the national system (Mccourt 73). Again, as with “community” and “scene,” there is the question as to whether the term refers “to a tangible, delimited geographical entity or a construct constituted in social relations?” (Kruse 113). Kruse argues that these two notions of locality are inseparable, because “localities are constituted both by geographical boundaries and by networks of social relationships” (Ibid. 114). Just as with “scene” and “community,” “locality” can apply to both a geographic and a conceptual space, and just as with “alternative,” “local” is defined in opposition to a contrasting idea. In this case, “local” is contrasted with the “national,” or “global.” Thomas McCain and G. Ferrell Lowe offer a definition of “locality” that incorporates both the geographic and conceptual space, stating that a locality is ““a discrete but

nonstandardized geographic area corresponding to a relatively unique and commonly shared collection of situationally and/or culturally determined values and interests represented by the people who live there” (cited in McCourt 103). The fact that “scene,” “locality,” and “community” share similar aspects of their respective definitions suggest that the terms could be used interchangeably, all referring to a shared taste or ideology within a given geographic space.

“Local” and “locality” are helpful in addressing the conceptual parameters of campus radio, particularly because “college radio is an inherently local medium, and college...radio stations, to varying degrees, articulate their identities as constituted by locality” (Kruse 79). Furthermore, a locality involves various methods of promoting alternative music, an intertwined site in which campus radio is situated (Ibid. 81). Other components include student-produced newspapers, on-campus or nearby bars and concert venues, and so forth. A local, student-oriented community that is both a producer and listener of campus radio raises questions and ideas about student taste culture, including Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital and taste cultures.

The very fact that campus radio is produced primarily for an audience comprised of university or college students invites a brief analysis of student culture. Cultural theorist Pierre Bourdieu, in his influential work *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, argues that “one has to take account of all the characteristics of social condition which are (statistically) associated from earliest childhood with possession of high or low income and which tend to shape tastes adjusted to these conditions” (Bourdieu 177). Students, with the need to pay tuition and living costs, typically come from middle to high class background, which shapes their tastes, whether

it be in cultural works, food, fashion, and so forth. Bourdieu uses the terms “cultural capital,” “social capital,” and “economic capital” to imply differences between classes, noting that symbolic goods are incorporated by society as “the ideal weapon[s] in strategies of distinction” (Ibid. 66-69). Symbolic goods, in the case of a student music culture that consumes campus radio, can involve extensive album collections, portable music players, and the necessary fashion sense to participate in an independent music scene (a site theoretically linked to alternative music and campus radio). As well, considering the various “capital” required to be a college or university student, it is no surprise that students might prefer alternative or independent music over mainstream or commercial music. As Bourdieu notes, in terms of food consumption, children from a lower end of the social hierarchy are more likely to consume cheap, heavy, plentiful and fattening foods, as opposed to “original and exotic” foods (Ibid. 177-179). The cheap, plentiful and readily available food can be compared to commercial music, while the “original and exotic” fits well with descriptions of independent and alternative music. Student culture is also important to consider in the analysis of campus stations, as the station is located on a campus that supports and is supported by students. A campus station, then, is also supported by students (in the form of volunteers, for instance), and a student culture is going to have influence on the way that the station functions as a broadcaster, and as an identity that circulates throughout the campus.

The purpose of this chapter has been to introduce the central concepts and terms that are necessary to examine before pursuing more specific work on campus broadcasting. The contemporary media environment has been changing due to technological developments and the consolidation and conglomeration of media

companies, among other reasons. Alternatives to the commercial and public broadcasting models are few, but they do exist. Community and campus broadcasting is an example of an alternative to commercial and public broadcasting, and it is often defined and described as “alternative,” a term that is open to a multiplicity of definitions, but emphasizes access, participation, and independent methods of production and distribution. The term “community” is equally open to interpretation/definition but connotes ideas about audience participation and local cultural production. A “community,” a “scene,” and a “locality,” are all linked in the sense that they all address a conceptual and geographic space, in which campus broadcasting is situated within. A campus station in a particular conceptual and geographic space, (or “community,” or “scene,” or “locality”) is going to have concepts and ideas of “alternativeness” that apply to it, concepts and ideas that are going to be different than those which apply to other mediums in other conceptual and geographic spaces, as this chapter hopefully articulates. Defining this site of study is a necessary step before further exploring the boundaries of “alternativeness” on campus radio broadcasting. Contributing also to these “alternative” concepts and ideas that concern campus broadcasting in a particular place and time are historical and policy-based influences, which will be explored in the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

Influential Community and Campus Radio History and Policy

The development of community radio has followed different trajectories in both Canada and the United States. In the States, the Pacifica Foundation's KPFA is often cited as the first instance of listener-sponsored radio. Pacifica is said to have influenced the development of subsequent community radio stations in the U.S., American public service radio, and National Public Radio (NPR). In Canada, one of the ways in which community radio has developed is through community access to the CBC's low-power radio transmitters (LPRTs), particularly in northern aboriginal communities. Growth in the South followed such developments in the North, most prominently in Francophone communities in Quebec and on university and college campuses across the country (Fairchild 137-138). The purpose of this chapter is to provide some insight into the significant historical moments that have contributed to the development of community and campus radio in Canada, with a focus on Quebec and Montreal. As well, this chapter outlines some of the relevant broadcast policy that has factored into the development of campus and community radio, and which currently structures the way in which stations are run and programmed. An examination of this history and policy will illustrate critical influences on the structure and mandate of campus and community broadcasting, influences that no doubt contribute to constructing the "alternativeness" of campus broadcasting.

Canadian radio communication has its beginnings at the start of the twentieth century. In 1901, two federal government radio installations began operation across the Strait of Belle Isle, in northern Newfoundland. In that same year, Guglielmo Marconi

would conduct his radio experiments between Poldhu, Cornwall and St. John's, Newfoundland (Babaian 5). In these early years, debate would focus on what sort of broadcasting system Canada should develop, taking into consideration the establishment of commercial radio in the United States and public radio in Britain. By the 1920s and 1930s, a "broad consensus emerged around the view that only a public broadcasting system could meet the national objectives of Canadian broadcasting" (Raboy 48). There were three types of licenses granted in the 1920s: private commercial, public commercial, and amateur. The amateur licenses were granted to university stations and radio clubs for low-power broadcasting. University stations that emerged in the 1920s include CFRC at Queen's University in Kingston (1922), and CKUA at the University of Alberta (1927). Each station "played an important role in the development of broadcasting....both [surviving] today, the former as a campus-community station, the latter as part of a private nonprofit network" (Fairchild 132). These early university stations would often serve rural areas without access to other radio services. As early as the 1920s, then, community and campus broadcasting was serving communities that were not adequately reached by larger broadcast systems.

During the mid-1920s, farm broadcasting developed, which would influence ideas about community broadcasting. In Wingham, Ontario, 1926, Wilford Thomas 'Doc' Cruickshank constructed a radio transmitter in his hardware store that operated at two watts, serving the local community by broadcasting church services out of the church basement (Fairchild 128). The Farm Forum broadcasts, as they would later be called, represent, according to Charles Fairchild, "the first successful attempts by any broadcasting institution in North America to pursue the ideals of two-way

communication and democratic participation in media” (Ibid. 136). The Farm Forum broadcasts would continue to develop throughout the next few decades.

In 1929, the Aird Commission recommended the nationalization of radio broadcasting, and created the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC), which was responsible for creating a cross-country network of high-power radio stations. In 1936, the CRBC was replaced with the CBC (Fairchild 134). The CBC dominated Canadian broadcasting throughout the 1930s and 40s, promoting “a centralized vision of Canada” (Raboy 8), although there were small instances of community-based broadcasting in particular areas that were supported, in part, by the CBC. For instance, the Canadian Association for Adult Education “formed a bridge between the CBC and mass-membership organizations” in order to develop two program series; one calling itself the aforementioned “Farm Forum,” which “reached an *organized* listening audience of about thirty thousand, meeting weekly in groups of ten to twenty” throughout the 1940s and 50s (Ibid. 75). The CBC’s involvement was not limited to the Farm Forums, as there was a second series, called the Citizen’s Forum, broadcasting in 1943 and modeled after the Farm programs. Both Forum programs “were part of wider attempts by the CBC to build independent institutional identity that was free from political interference through strong links with other public service organizations” (Fairchild 136). The people behind the Forum programs were attempting to foster public participation in radio broadcasting, the sort of ideology behind community and campus broadcasting today.

In the early 1940s, the groundwork for the Pacifica Foundation’s first station, KPFA in Berkeley, California, would begin to take shape. Beginning in 1944, a move by

the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to reserve 20 of the 100 available channels for non-commercial use was crucial to the foundation of KPFA, which received the first non-commercial license to an institution that was neither educational nor religious (Lewis and Booth 116). KPFA would begin broadcasting in 1949, two years after its first licence application was denied in 1947. The Pacifica Foundation's mandate was rooted in the pacifist philosophies of its founders, "who set the organization to study the causes of human conflict and pursue nonviolent solutions and understanding through open dialogue and civil discussion" (Fairchild 139). Pacifica's founder, Lewis Hill, envisioned a broadcasting system that would be "supported directly by its listeners whose lives would be informed and enriched by its existence [,]....bypass the restrictions of advertising bias...and be free to broadcast the full and uncensored range of political views in America" (Fromm 1). The licensing of Pacifica would set the precedent for subsequent non-commercial stations in following years, shaping an ethos that would strive for independence from state or private influence.

In Canada, between 1958 and 1963, the Canadian television and radio broadcasting environment underwent significant change as private broadcasting established itself as the dominant form. In 1963, the Liberal government replaced the Conservatives, leaving "private broadcasting to enjoy its new spoils and begun trying to recapture the political function that the Canadian broadcasting system had been designed to serve" (Raboy 137). The 1965 Report on Canadian Broadcasting highlights the recent significance of private broadcasting, and the emphasis on reestablishing the role of public broadcasting. The report states that "private broadcasters can, and should, achieve a greater degree of common purpose, and should participate in the national objectives of

the Canadian broadcasting system to which they belong, as well as continuing to render local services to their individual communities” (Canada 1965, 12). At this time, private broadcasters catered to local communities. As private broadcasters would grow over the years, however, their focus on local programming would deteriorate, especially following media consolidation throughout the late 1980s and 1990s. In regards to the CBC, the 1965 report argues that “the simple fact—the crucial fact—which must be clearly understood is that the CBC is the *essential* element of the Canadian broadcasting system and the most important single instrument available for the development and maintenance of the unity of Canada” (Ibid. 12).

Around the same time, during the 1950s and 1960s, a number of campus radio clubs were started across the country. Despite limited budgets (funded by student councils) some stations were able to broadcast a few hours of weekly airtime on commercial or CBC radio stations. As the stations grew in popularity (both in listener interest and membership), “problems of limited listening range created problems in getting increased support and more volunteers for these stations” (“Some NCRA...”). Early campus stations and radio clubs, however, were important in setting the foundation for future campus stations, and help to justify the need for their licensing in the 1970s.

The next significant change to television and radio broadcasting policy came in the form of the 1968 Broadcasting Act. As noted retrospectively in 1986 by the Report of the Task Force in Broadcasting Policy, the 1968 Act was generated within a period when broadcasting was expanding, as was the country: “The large postwar influx of people into the cities from the country, together with the baby boom and heavy immigration, was transforming urban Canada, creating an environment in which mass

media flourished” (Canada 1986, 14-15). The relevance of the Act, however, is questionable. As Marc Raboy argues, “By the time it was adopted in 1968, the new broadcasting policy was already insufficient to deal with the technological and political climate” (Raboy 180). Ease of access to technology, and the inability for public and commercial broadcasting to cater to the vast number of voices and opinions present across Canada, required changes in broadcast policy to allocate spectrum to smaller-scale radio operations.

The content of a report conducted by Jean McNulty in 1979—researched under contract from the now-defunct Federal Department of Communications—examines a number of the political, technological and cultural factors that contributed to the development of community radio in Canada in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The report, titled *Other Voices in Broadcasting*, argues that “the origins and ideas for the development of new forms of local programming in Canada stem from ideas about social change and the democratization of society which were prevalent in the 1960s” (McNulty viii). McNulty adds that the social trends of the sixties include an examination of rights regarding access to information, and a “reaction against the view that governments had the right to retain control over information which people needed to make intelligent voting choices in referenda and elections at all levels” (Ibid. 56). In general, McNulty claims that a reaction against “big” and centralized government in the sixties helped to set the foundations for the development of community radio in Canada (Ibid. 57).

Before elaborating on community radio developments in urban areas in Southern Canada (of which is the primary focus of this thesis), it is important to first address the progress that had been made with community broadcasting in Northern Canada.

Canadian community radio has Northern roots, “growing from the radio production efforts of various First Nation’s communications societies, mostly in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, but also in Northern areas of Quebec, Ontario, and some Western provinces.” The creation of Northern community radio services grew alongside two policy initiatives that are unique to Canada. The first was the attempted integration of regional differences, and the second was the goal of total cross-country coverage (Fairchild 141). Community radio in the North also included an experiment called Radio Kenomadiwam which was created by a group of university students in 1969, under the Company for Young Canadians, who worked with the Ojibway in the Longlac region of Ontario to teach the basis of radio production. Some of the staff would later become involved with Co-op Radio in Vancouver in 1973 (Ibid. 142). Another example is CHRQ-FM, a fifty-watt station in Listuguj, Quebec, licensed to the Gespegewag Communications Society. The mandate of the station was to develop Micmac language and education media in the region (Ibid. 144). Evidently, community broadcasting in the North is tied closely to local culture, offering services that are not available through commercial or public broadcasting. A similar ethos is present in developments in Southern Canada during the 1960s and 1970s.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, ideas concerning alternative and community media within Canadian broadcast policy, particularly in urban regions of Canada, became much more pronounced. As McNulty notes, “the scale and rapidity of development of local programming has been due to the availability of government funds and other aid over the past ten years,” although “it would be wrong to conclude...that federal government and CBC initiatives have been the key ingredient in the creation of new local programming

(McNulty viii, 33). McNulty emphasizes the developments made by individuals on a local level, and illustrates that in addition to government funding, local broadcasting and programming primarily required “a lack of service at the local level in broadcasting or in all media” and “a need for alternative media programming to counter-balance the commercial media” (Ibid. viii). Evidently, local broadcasting also requires the support of a staff or volunteers, and the necessary technical broadcasting equipment. The sixties also brought with it a proliferating notion of participatory democracy and social change, especially among young, educated Canadians. The idea of participatory democracy is also cited in the emergence of new community-based initiatives in the late sixties such as the “Company of Young Canadians” and “Opportunities for Youth” (Wilkinson 7). The findings of this report exemplify how ideas about local broadcasting developed historically and politically. Such ideas are influential on the current role of community and campus broadcasting in servicing listeners on a local-scale.

A number of other perspectives offer insight into the political and cultural environment surrounding Canadian broadcasting in the late sixties and early seventies. Research conducted by Jean Ogilvie illustrates that “the 1970s spawned a more liberal (rather than conserving and preserving the nationalist vision alone) view of Canadian ‘diversity,’” and “it is possible that this idea of diversity is spearheaded by new government initiatives and policy on multiculturalism” (cited in Monk 53). Particularly, in 1971, the federal government’s multiculturalism policy set up various programs to aid cultural groups in preserving their heritage(s). This policy was beneficial in “planting the seeds of a national cultural identity that differed from the American concept of the melting pot,” although it still left much of Quebec’s political and cultural concerns

unsettled (Thomas). Government multicultural policy was significant as it was less focused on catering to a single, all-encompassing nation, but rather acknowledged Canadian multiculturalism that, in turn, also helped to foster ideas about local and community radio stations across the nation.

The political climate of Quebec during the sixties and early seventies makes for a particularly rich and interesting look into the development of community radio in Canada, as the idea of alternative media was closely tied to provincial political movements that were notably distinct from the federal agenda. For instance, in 1968, Marcel Pepin the president of the Confederation of National Trade Unions “denounced the commercial media for placing profit above the public interest, and called on the union movement and its supporters to create independent vehicles for ‘people’s’ or ‘popular’ information” (Raboy 200). The late sixties in Quebec were also a time of social and cultural change, with “a new middle class and new elites, a rising standard of living, widespread secularism, and higher levels of education among the French-speaking population” (Stiles and Lachance 11). Quebec, because of its political and cultural context in the late sixties, developed community media to serve a purpose that much of the province felt was not being served by public nor private broadcasting.

A 1971 report titled “Toward a Québec Communications Policy,” by Jean-Paul L’Allier the Minister of Communications for the Robert Bourassa government, outlines the political and cultural reasons for Quebec’s desire to control media in the province. L’Allier is careful to contextualize the document and states, “the document we are presenting today is not a White Paper....Moreover, we felt that a Quebec policy on Communications must be the result of as broad a consensus as possible” (L’Allier 1).

The report then argues that “it is up to Quebec to set up an overall communications policy....Although this policy must be coordinated with those of the other governments and consistent with the North American milieu, it must first of all be integrated to Quebec’s priorities” (Ibid. 2). Further in the report, the importance of local programming is mentioned. First, the report references page 4 of the 1969 Report of the Task Force on Federal Government Information, which says, “The lack of clear information available to all those who wish to participate in the democratic process is fast becoming one of the greatest tragedies of our time” (Ibid. 46). Secondly, it includes, as an appendix, “Quebec’s Policy on Community Cables” from May 1971, which states, “It is essential to promote local programming. It is at this level that public opinion is heard, that the daily rhythm of life is perceived and that the concerns of real life are dealt with. This is where the freedom of expression takes shape” (Ibid. Appendix, 12). Evidently, large-scale broadcast policy developed for the country as a whole required an alternative approach in order to serve the needs of provinces and the smaller towns and cities located within.

Community media development in Quebec, whether in the form of radio, television, or other media, was also tied to the establishment of the *Ministère des Communications du Québec (MCQ)* (Quebec Ministry of Communications) in 1969. The MCQ’s “mandate was to formulate and implement communications policies, supervise broadcasting networks in Quebec, and establish communications services for government departments” (Stiles and Lachance). Instrumental in “bringing community media under provincial control,” it established in 1972 the *Service du développement des media*, which “made an inventory of community media projects and brought project staff together for two meetings to discuss their work” (Ibid. 12-13). Moreover, in 1973 Quebec’s Treasury

Board put forth a subsidy program for community media. Its first year budget was about \$390,000, of which half was given to Vidéographe, a group in Montreal that used video to promote social activism (Ibid. 13). Most of the projects funded by the program were television-based, as television was thought to have greater potential than radio by the MCQ. Because of the MCQ's interest in television, some of the first instances of community radio in Quebec began without financial support from the province, such as CKRL-FM, "which was licensed as a non-commercial station and operated on funding from the Laval University community," and CINQ-FM, "a multilingual, community ethnic station in Montreal" that began broadcasting in 1972 in collaboration with Radio McGill (Ibid.13-14).

CINQ-FM, or Radio Centre-Ville as the station is still called, was established after "a long and difficult struggle with the CRTC for a license." Activists involved in the social changes that transformed Quebec society throughout the seventies were part of the station's foundation, which was eventually licensed as an "experiment" by the CRTC (as was CFRO-FM Co-Op Radio in Vancouver, developing around the same time) (Radio Centre-Ville 51). The station's licence was granted on February 27th, 1975, and it became an official station on the FM band broadcasting with 7.2 watts of power (Ibid. 50). Once established, Radio-Centre Ville began catering content to Montreal's multilingual communities, contributing "to the coexistence of individuals and different cultures within Quebec society" (Ibid. 49). The station was able to do what neither a national public broadcaster, nor a locally-oriented private broadcaster could do, which was to provide information relevant to a particular segment of the city without promoting nationalist ideology from the federal government, or be bound by the demands of

corporate advertisers, as were many stations in the private sector (although some sponsorship from the local community and non-profits was permitted on CINQ-FM). The licensing of Radio Centre-Ville is a significant step for Canadian community radio, as it helped set the foundations for other, similar developments in Quebec and across the country.

North of Quebec City, in the Saugeny sub-region, community radio was developing in the neighbouring towns of Chicoutimi and Jonquière. McNulty, toward the end of her report, discusses community radio in Chicoutimi-Jonquière, along with five other areas in Canada including, Vancouver, Kitchener-Waterloo, Inuvik, Saskatoon, and Halifax. McNulty states that in the sixties, Chicoutimi-Jonquière was a “distinct geographic, economic and social region, physically isolated...from the main centres of population in the province” (McNulty 202). The services provided by Canada’s national public broadcaster were not prominent nor relevant in the Saugeny sub-region, as the area did not envision a strong parallel to other places of similar size and population in Canada. Moreover, in Chicoutimi, citizens had access to only one FM station in the region, which in turn, was an important instigator toward the development of a local radio station. A group of professors and staff members from the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, along with journalists, businesspeople and union members, took an interest in providing radio programming for the region, and began a preliminary approach to the station that would become CHUT-FM in 1973 (Ibid. 207, 208). The station eventually went on the air in June of 1975 after CRTC approval in the previous year. At this time, notably early in the development of official status for Canadian community radio, it was required by the CRTC that the station utilize advertising revenue in order to support itself

(Ibid. 207). This stipulation would later contribute to the downfall of the Chicoutimi-based station, highlighting the tension between commercial advertising and the mandate of many local radio stations.

As the station continued to develop, it became increasingly confused as to how to serve and relate to its local community, becoming first and foremost a music station with a heavy emphasis on rock (McNulty 209). The station had problems maintaining the “20% community programming” that it claimed it would provide, and it began to have issues keeping a full staff. Furthermore, “staff members were heard to criticize certain sponsors on the air and this, combined with the sponsor’s view of some programming as ill-organized and ill-prepared, led to a drop in sponsorship revenue” (Ibid. 208, 210). Other problems and conflicts between the station’s board and staff members are cited as contributing to the station’s demise, but in August 1977, the station was informed that the MCQ would not be providing a grant for the following year and its license was soon surrendered to the CRTC (Ibid. 211). While the community media developments in Jonquière were much more successful, the Chicoutimi example illustrates some of the problems faced by local media developers in the early seventies, namely the tension between funding, advertising, and community programming.

The community media developments in Quebec are interesting as they illustrate how a particular cultural and political climate sparked alternative forms of media. Moreover, it is relevant that at the same time (and even years prior in some cases) other instances of both licensed and non-licensed community media were developing. Urban areas across the nation began to initiate community radio programs in the mid-to-late seventies, and while the government was involved in much of these developments, “a

truly national system of community access radio stations developed only gradually *into* (not *from*) a clear, well-defined policy of providing a public access alternative to the CBC and commercial media” (Fairchild 147). The developments in community media are largely due in part to the initiatives carried out by individuals, groups, and other organizations, and from this came the CBC’s Office of Community Radio, active from 1971 to 1979. The office “was not a programming unit, but a research and technical development unit geared towards providing information to those interested in applying” knowledge and skill toward the development of community radio. The Office of Community Radio also became “a central source of guidance for the development of the CRTC’s widely respected and imitated regulatory policy on community radio” (Ibid. 137). Regardless of government influence on community media (whether significant or not), by the mid-1970s government policy had begun to appreciate and adapt the initiatives made by those who practiced community media. One prominent initiative, influenced by such progress made by stations like Radio Centre-Ville, was the licensing of campus-community radio stations.

Before the mid-70s, radio existed on a number of Canadian college and university campuses, primarily as sites of technical training for students interested in media production. These stations operated at a very low wattage with a very limited range that had just enough power to serve the campus community (Wilkinson 18). Many similarities are present between non-campus community radio stations and campus-community radio stations, although with campus-community radio, a University, a university-based corporation, or a student society or government may hold the license (McNulty 115). Campus-community stations are also better able to avoid funding

complications, as they can receive money from student dollars, or general funding from the college or university. Because of this, the CRTC stated in 1975 that it “will continue to accommodate the financial needs of community access stations before those of a student station in the same location” (CRTC 1975, 5). Currently, many community-based campus stations make a strong effort to include the respective city or community in which the university or college is near, but the campus stations licensed by the CRTC in the mid-70s catered primarily to the campus, and their broadcast range was still fairly limited within campus boundaries (McNulty 116). Nevertheless, from the early-mid seventies, “‘campus-community’ radio became the dominant form of public access radio” across Canada (Fairchild 151), and its range and prominence would quickly develop in the late seventies.

On the 27th of June, 1975, the CRTC licensed two Canadian campus-community radio stations. The June ’75 decision came after the CRTC had already licensed the community stations CKWR-FM in Kitchener-Waterloo, CFRO-FM in Vancouver, and as discussed before, CINC-FM in Montreal. In “remote” areas, the CRTC had licensed community stations such as CKQN-FM at Baker Lake and CFTL-FM at Big Trout Lake. CHUT-FM Chicoutimi had also been licensed, as well as CKRL-FM Quebec—“a student station with some community involvement” (CRTC 1975, 3-4). These decisions represent significant developments in urban and rural areas, whereas the June 1975 decision pertains specifically to development in campus radio.

The June 1975 decision outlines the sort of service that these stations were to provide at the time. The first station included in the decision is a campus station based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, applied for by Jim Rogers on behalf of the Radio Operations

Committee, “a non-profit corporation without share capital” (CRTC 1975, 7). The second application was put forth by the Carleton University Student’s Association for a station in Ottawa, Ontario. Both applications were “for a broadcast license to carry on an English language FM radio station” (Ibid. 1). The CRTC decision outlines that “many of the different sectors of social life cannot find a place on the national service or the private commercial outlets. It is for this reason that the Commission has developed “new models for different voices” (Ibid. 4). The decision also defines student radio stations as “broadcasting undertakings whose structure provides for membership, direction, management, operation and programming primarily by students as members of a post-secondary academic community” (Ibid. 2). It is fairly evident that at the time of this decision, the licensing of campus-community radio is a new endeavor, as the CRTC is careful to include such working definitions and stipulations in its decision. These stipulations contribute to the “alternativeness” of campus radio, as they outline a strict mandate that is very different from the role of public or commercial broadcasting, of which campus broadcasters must follow.

The specific function of campus-community radio stations, within their respective community, is also described in the 1975 decision. The decision notes that “an intervention to the Ottawa application asked if the Commission would be prepared to license two or more student FM stations in the same locality,” to which it responds, “the public interest at this time will be best served if only one such channel is used for student broadcasting” (CRTC 1975, 2-3). In cases where both the English and French languages are present, the CRTC refines its previous statement, and says, “Where there are both English-speaking and French-speaking post-secondary educational institutions and a

sufficient number of frequencies is available in a locality, the Commission may issue two licences, one in each language, in that locality” (Ibid. 3). This particular section of the decision is significant as it highlights the way that the government was still present in restricting and defining the particular service each station was to provide, and was still very aware of its role as a regulator of Canadian airwaves.

Further stipulations of the 1975 decision include the need for campus-community stations to acknowledge community issues in its programming, and to allow for community groups outside of the campus to have a voice on the station (CRTC 1975, 6). Non-campus communities were integrated into the CRTC’s policy on campus-community radio advertising. The decision states that “the Commission is of the opinion that truly *alternative* forms of programming can best be achieved and maintained through financing other than from the sale of air time” (Ibid. 4, emphasis added). Despite this opinion, the decision recognizes the difficulty in generating funding for alternative broadcasting, and because of this, allows for promotional announcements limited to four minutes and six times per clock hour (Ibid. 6). Promotional announcements were to be regulated in the same way as was outlined for CINQ-FM in Montreal, allowing for the inclusion of the sponsor’s name, business address, business hours, and a brief description of the product or service, but without mentioning or referencing brand names. Favoured sponsors included members of the local community, and promotions could “not refer to price, quality, convenience, durability, or desirability, or contain other comparative or competitive references” (Ibid. 5). The CRTC Decision of June 27th, 1975 is a significant policy document as it signifies the CRTC’s official recognition of both community and campus-community radio, and it displays a desire to formulate a coherent set of

stipulations and requirements—a policy, in which to regulate subsequent community and campus-community radio stations in the following years.

Since 1975, broadcast policy has developed, and the number of campus stations across Canada has increased. The most recent policy that structures the way in which campus radio stations are currently licensed was updated on January 28th, 2000, when the CRTC issued a new policy directed at campus radio in Canada. This policy is found in Public Notice CRTC 2000-12 (hereafter referred to as P.N. 2000-12), and is titled *Campus radio policy*. Within *Campus radio policy* the Commission outlines a revised policy for campus radio stations, proposing significant amendments that influence and structure the way that all campus radio stations are licensed. This policy is significant as a station must adhere to its stipulations if it is to maintain a licence, and it determines the way a station is structured and the type of programming it plays. Of course, a campus station itself has some input regarding its own structure, and the type of programming it plays, just as long as it meets policy stipulations. Outlining current campus radio policy is helpful in illustrating how Canadian campus radio stations are influenced by government policy, and how this policy contributes to setting the boundaries of what campus stations are able to program, and what type of listener they are to cater their programming to.

Campus radio policy has its background in, and has evolved out of, prior policy documents. For instance, it concludes a review that was announced in Public Notice CRTC 1997-105, and it replaces Public Notice CRTC 1992-38, titled *Policies for Community and Campus Radio*, which had been in effect as the campus radio policy since 1992. It is important to note that both community and campus stations were

grouped together within the goals 1992's community and campus radio policy. The Commission states that "there are many similarities between the two," and a major goal in the development of this policy, "which will apply to community and campus stations operating on both the AM and FM bands, has been to ensure that community and campus stations have the necessary flexibility to respond to the needs of listeners in their communities while ensuring...a programming alternative" (CRTC 1992-38). Both community radio and campus radio, however, are separately defined within this document and their respective roles are thoroughly laid out. This contrasting tendency to group together or to separate community and campus radio is said to "reflect the different environments in which Canadian campus and community stations operate: one essentially reflects the situation in Quebec, where community radio is well developed, and the other represents...elsewhere in Canada," where community radio is less prevalent (Ibid.). Considering this, campus radio policy is outlined following that of community radio, using the sub-definitions of "campus station," "campus/community," and "instructional." According to the time in which this policy document was current, a "campus station" is defined as a station "owned or controlled by a not-for-profit organization associated with a post-secondary educational institution." The two types of campus stations are defined separately in this document. A "campus/community station" has programming "produced by volunteers who are either students or members of the community at large," while an "instructional" station has "the training of professional broadcasters as its primary objective" (Ibid.).

The next significant policy document following 1992's community and campus radio policy is Public Notice CRTC 1997-105, *An agenda for reviewing the*

Commission's policies for radio. Its relevance is evident in the introductory paragraphs of *Campus radio policy*, where it is noted that P.N. 2000-12 was initiated by the Commission's "plans to review all of its policies for radio in light of the evolving communications environment"—which were announced in Public Notice CRTC 1997-105. Within this agenda, the Commission states that a "consultative process" involving campus broadcasters (as well as commercial radio, other types of not-for-profit radio, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) would be initiated. This consultative process was finished in the fall of 1998. Following the agenda is the Commission's proposed policy for campus radio, found in Public Notice CRTC 1999-30, *Call for comments on a proposed new policy for campus radio*, which generates comments, opinions and ideas that contribute to the policy outlined in P.N. 2000-12 (CRTC 2000-12). This document is significant as it illustrates the various perspectives and opinions that were voiced throughout the consultative process concerning the campus radio policy that is to follow.

The Commission received a total of 43 comments concerning the proposed policies for campus radio, generated after February 18th 1999, the date of Public Notice CRTC 1999-30. These comments come from groups such as the National Campus and Community Radio Association (NCRA), the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB), the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN), and various other interested parties and individuals. *Campus radio policy* states that most comments were "generally supportive" of the proposed policies, and that "several parties addressed the Commission's proposed policies regarding the structure of the boards of directors of campus stations, and the Canadian content requirements for music in genres where the availability of Canadian selections is low (CRTC 2000-12). It is also stated in

Campus radio policy that the Commission's primary goal of the revised policies in P.N. 2000-12 is "to ensure diversity within the broadcasting system, while providing greater flexibility to the campus radio sector through the introduction of streamlined regulatory and administrative requirements" (Ibid.). Relevant and significant revised policies are soon briefly explored, alongside some of the comments and concerns that are raised by the aforementioned parties between the issuing of Public Notice CRTC 1999-30 and 2000-12.

The proposed policy revisions that alter the licensing and structure of campus radio stations are numerous, many of which deal with the general programming structure of all campus stations. For instance, the revised policy states that at least 25% of weekly broadcast programming must be spoken word programming. Also, for English-language community-based stations, no more than 10% of weekly musical selections should be hits (no more than 30% for instructional stations). For French-language stations, however, "in the absence of effective tools to define French-language hits, the Commission will not place a limit on the number of hits such stations may broadcast in each broadcast week" (CRTC 2000-12). The revised policy and proposed amendments also emphasize "the means to ensure that the programming of campus stations offers an alternative to that provided by other types of stations;" "Canadian music and local talent development;" "the structure of the boards of directors of campus stations;" and finally, "policies respecting advertising aired on campus stations" (Ibid.). Furthermore, the revised policy "provides more flexibility to campus radio stations by streamlining the various regulatory and administrative requirements to which they are subject" (Ibid.). Such stipulations, such as the restriction on the amount of "hits" that an English-language station can

program, are strong examples of the way in which “alternativeness” can be traced back to policy. The Commission is wary of the way it allocates radio spectrum, ensuring that licenced campus stations do not compete with commercial radio stations. Commercial musical “hits” cannot be prominently programmed, but rather, “alternatives” are required.

Throughout *Campus Radio Policy*, the relationship between campus radio stations and “alternative” programming is quite apparent, and it is further reflected in policy revisions that deal with Canadian content regulations and programming directed to culturally-diverse audiences. For instance, paragraph 14 of the document states that the “Commission believes that a healthy and vibrant not-for-profit sector is essential to fulfill the goals of the Act,”⁵ and that “Campus stations play a unique and valuable role in the communities they serve” (CRTC 2000-12). Paragraph 15 mentions the cultural diversity that is evident in many Canadian communities, stating that “campus stations serving those centres [are] in a position to make a strong contribution to the reflection of that cultural diversity, especially by providing exposure to new and developing artists from minority cultural groups” (Ibid.). This acknowledgment of cultural diversity continues in paragraph 17, where the Commission states that campus stations in areas without an already existing ethnic station are allowed to provide up to 40% third-language programming without the Commission’s approval. A similar approach is taken by the Commission when considering all campus and community licence applications, as noted by P.N. 2000-12 when it states that the Commission “examines closely the applicant’s

⁵ Section 3(1)(b) of Canada’s *Broadcasting Act* (the Act) states that the Canadian broadcasting system should operate “primarily in the English and French languages” and should be comprised of “public, private and community elements”. Canadian Campus radio is an important element of community broadcasting, and as P.N. 2000-12 highlights, “the primary purpose of such stations is to offer programming that is different in style and substance from the programming offered by other types of radio stations” (CRTC 2000-12). P.N. 2000-12, therefore, puts forth a policy that maintains and promotes the essence of the Act.

plans to provide programming that would increase diversity in the market, and that [it] would differ from that provided by any other existing campus or community station in the market” (Ibid.). Emphasizing “diversity in the market” is a recurring aspect of campus broadcast policy that factors into the “alternativeness” of campus broadcasting. Campus stations are pushed toward programming the “diverse” or the “alternative,” keeping the needs of local community and cultural groups in mind.

In terms of alternative programming and diversity, the proposed amendments outlined in P.N. 2000-12 change the minimum levels of Canadian content that must be programmed by campus radio stations. Canadian content is discussed in paragraphs 33 to 48 of *Campus radio policy*, including the Commission’s intention to “propose amendments to the regulations that would increase, from 30% to 35%, the minimum level of Canadian content for category 2 musical selections that campus stations are required to broadcast over the broadcast week” (CRTC 2000-12). For category 3 music, the Commission also notes the intention “to propose amendments to the regulations increasing the minimum level of Canadian content for category 3 musical selections from 10% to 12 % over the broadcast week” (Ibid.). Category 2 is “Popular Music,” which includes four subcategories: 21: Pop, rock and dance; 22: Country and country-oriented; 23: Acoustic; and, 24: Easy listening. Category 3 is “Special Interest Music,” and includes five subcategories: 31: Concert; 32: Folk and folk-oriented; 33: World beat and international; 34: Jazz and blues; and, 35: Non-classic religious.⁶

⁶ Categories 1, 4 and 5 are non-musical categories. Category 1 is “Spoken Word” programming, Category 4 is “Musical Production,” with such subcategories as 41: Musical themes, bridges and stingers; and 42: Technical tests, and Category 5 is “Advertising,” with such subcategories as 51: Commercial announcement and 52: Sponsor identification (CRTC 2000-14).

The comments put forth by various parties regarding the proposed policy amendments provide an interesting perspective on how the proposed changes affect different groups and individuals. In an e-mail addressing Public Notice CRTC 1999-30, the NCRA expresses support for an increase in Canadian content category 2 to 35%, but does not support the proposed increase in category 3 music because “many small stations have real difficulty getting enough servicing in this area to fulfill even the current requirements” (Cote 1-2). SOCAN also supports the proposal to increase minimum levels of Canadian content in category 2 from 30% to 35%, and, unlike the NCRA, also supports an increase in category 3 from 10% to 12% (Rock 2). SOCAN, in contrast to the NCRA, says that they do not agree with the fact that ““Campus stations *appear* to have difficulty finding Canadian material in certain genres,”” and states that, “Further empirical study of this issue is required” (Ibid.; emphasis original). The Canadian Association of Broadcasters also supports the increase in Canadian content for both category 2 and category 3 musical selections (CAB Radio Board 3). The significance of both intended regulatory amendments will be revisited upon examining the licensing of CKUT-FM, but Canadian content is an area in which most parties are in favour of maintaining and increasing. This, of course, means that Canadian groups and artists are a critical part of campus and community radio programming, which bodes well for Canadian artists, but also for the groups and organizations that represent the interests of Canadian groups and artists, like SOCAN.

Boards of directors of campus stations, specifically their structure, are also thoroughly addressed in the proposed policy amendments found in *Campus radio policy*. The former policy “generally expected that a majority of the board of directors of a

campus station would come from the student body, faculty, administration and other groups closely associated with the educational institution” (CRTC 2000-12). The revised policy, however, promotes a balanced representation from the student body, members from the associated college or university, station volunteers, and from the community at large. Furthermore, the revised policy encourages members of boards of directors to hold positions with terms of more than one year. The Commission notes in paragraph 57 of *Campus radio policy* that “Each licensee will be asked at the time of renewal whether the structure of its board complies with this policy,” and also states that “Licensees that are not in compliance with the policy will be asked to provide detailed plans regarding how they intend to bring the composition of their boards of directors into conformity with the policy” (Ibid.).

Again, the NCRA expresses dissatisfaction with the way that board structures are addressed within the proposed policy. The NCRA argues that board structure policy should only allow “organizations whose specific mandate is to hold and operate a licence” to sit on a board of directors, and they state that, “Radio societies should be autonomous; no outside organization (such as a student union or university administration) should hold a controlling interest in the radio society through appointed board members” (Cote 5). CAB is more supportive of the Commission’s proposals, noting that they “agree with representatives of the campus radio community on the importance of having balanced representation on station boards” (CAB Radio Board 4). The NCRA’s concerns do not alter the Commission’s proposed amendments to restructure the board of directors for campus radio stations, but their concerns highlight a significant tension in campus broadcasting policy. On one hand, organizations such as a

student union can be helpful in providing necessary resources to the station, but as NCRA argues, this might affect the station's autonomy.

The limits of "alternativeness" are questioned by this tension. A station could perhaps become more diverse by allowing the board to include members from outside the campus community, but this inclusiveness could also lead to conflicting ideas about how a station should be run. The upcoming analysis of *Underground Sounds* will provide more insight into this issue, taking into consideration CKUT's board structure, and the sort of programming it disseminates.

Other significant revisions in P.N. 2000-12 concern advertising, local talent development, and the Commission's streamlined regulatory approach. Paragraph 58 pertains to the removal of all stipulations regarding "restricted" advertising, and states that "Campus stations will henceforth be permitted, in each broadcast week, to broadcast 504 minutes of advertising of all types under Category 5, with a maximum of 4 minutes of advertising in any hour" (CRTC 2000-12; emphasis removed). The Commission's reasoning for this revision is that it feels it will help campus stations increase funding and revenue. Additionally, in *Campus radio policy*, the Commission makes note of Canadian local talent initiatives, stating that they "are expected, and should be described in licence applications" (Ibid.). Lastly, paragraphs 71 to 75 of P.N. 2000-12 illustrate the Commission's "Streamlined regulatory approach," which is introduced in paragraph 71. This streamlined regulatory approach includes the removal of the need for applicants to complete a "Promise of Performance," but asks applicants to submit a proposed program schedule. Such components of the Commission's streamlined regulatory approach contribute to the primary goal of this revised campus radio policy, which is to create

“simple, effective and easily-measured requirements” in order “to ensure diversity within the broadcasting system, while providing greater flexibility to the campus radio sector” (Ibid.). Interestingly, the Commission is helping to facilitate the licence renewal process for campus stations, suggesting a less-formal process that helps campus stations to retain a different, certainly less-professional, structure than that of public or commercial radio.

This summary of *Campus radio policy* does not include mention of every policy revision and proposed amendment included in P.N. 2000-12, but it does include the relevant policy revisions and proposals that are significantly reflected in subsequent licences and licence renewals of campus radio stations, such as that of CKUT-FM. The specific revisions and proposals are also those that have the most influence in the areas that contribute to the way a campus station might be perceived by the listener, such as the specific programming a station must play.

Many campus radio stations have been licensed since the revised policy was set out in Public Notice CRTC 2000-12. One station that has had two licence renewals since *Campus radio policy* came into effect is CKUT-FM—the campus station at the center of this thesis paper. As paragraph 10 of P.N. 2000-12 notes, “Licensees whose licences expire after August 2000 are invited to file applications requesting licence amendments that would bring them in line with the revised policy...The amendments would take effect on the date these applications are approved by the Commission” (CRTC 2000-12). Furthermore, paragraph 24 states, “the Programming requirements contained in the Commission’s revised policy and discussed in this section will generally be imposed by condition of licence (Ibid.). The following section looks at how CKUT was brought in line with the revised policy in 2001, and briefly discusses its licence renewal in 2007.

Decision CRTC 2001-101, *Licence Renewal for CKUT-FM* was issued by the Commission on February 21st, 2001, quite soon after *Campus radio policy* came into effect. The renewal states that, “The Commission *renews* the licence for community-based campus radio programming undertaking CKUT-FM Montréal, from 1 March 2001 to 31 August 2007, subject to conditions specified in the licence to be issued” (CRTC 2001-101; emphasis original). The general conditions set out in CKUT Radio McGill’s *Licence to carry on a Campus radio programming* include maintaining 25% of weekly programming devoted to spoken work programming, and at least two-thirds of weekly programming must be produced by the station.

In terms of programming, CKUT “has committed to meet the new regulatory requirements with respect to the percentage of Canadian musical selections from category 2 (35%) and category 3 (12%),” as set out in paragraph 4 of Decision CRTC 2001-101. As well, Paragraph 3 of the Decision states that CKUT has proposed to devote 12 hours per week to French-language programming. This stipulation is a result of “the significant role played by campus stations in serving the needs of the communities resident within their service areas,” for instance the high population of French-language citizens in CKUT’s service area (Decision CRTC 2001-101). Such stipulations are significant, as the licence is granted assuming the station will cater to specific local communities, and serve a niche that other broadcast forms do not.

CKUT’s approach to third-language programming is interesting, as CKUT does not specifically propose a structured account of how third-language, multi-language, and multi-cultural groups are served by the station. In a fax addressed to Administrative Assistant Rufo Valencia—sent by the Commission’s Senior Licensing Analyst for the

Atlantic and Quebec Region, Denise Moore, on June 5th 2000—“ethnic programming” is addressed. Moore questions the blank page that was submitted by Valencia, which is intended for acknowledging any ethnic programming. Despite submitting this blank page, CKUT submitted a program schedule that contains a number of shows that seem to represent “ethnic and/or third-language programming.” Moore, therefore, asks Valencia, “Do any of these programs constitute ethnic and/or third-language programming...?”, and if not, “please offer the rationale for not designating any of these programs as either ethnic and/or third-language programming” (Moore 2). Valencia responds on June 23rd of 2000, and says that the station does not propose to broadcast any ethnic programming because, although the station directs programs to “culturally or racially distinct groups,” none of its programmes are “directed exclusively to any of these groups” (Valencia 1). Valencia then gives the example of “Latin Music Monday,” which is broadcast in English, French, and Spanish, and is directed to Montreal’s Latin American community, but “also aims to build support for Latin American cultures and issues of concern in the broader community” (Valencia 1). Valencia’s justification explains the exemption of third-language and multi-language programming in the Decision, but nevertheless illustrates the station’s commitment to alternative programming, in this case, “ethnic programming”—an important stipulation of *Campus radio policy*.

CKUT Radio McGill addresses its board of directors and its commitment to local talent development within both *CKUT Radio McGill: CRTC Licence Renewal Application 2000*, and in Decision CRTC 2001-101. Paragraph 2 of the Decision states that, “The renewal of this licence follows the new *Campus radio policy*,” which includes the Commission’s revised expectations concerning “the structure and continuity of the

board of directors.” Schedule 3:1 of the Licence Renewal Application addresses the structure of CKUT’s board of directors, stating that, “Since its inception Radio McGill has made a constant effort to include a balance[d] representation of all its members within the composition of the Board of Directors,” including “students, volunteers, communities and the University” (*CKUT Radio McGill...3:1/1*). It is evident, from this quote that CKUT is in compliance with P.N. 2000-12, specifically the revisions concerning balanced representation on a campus station’s board of directors. Schedule 5:1 of the same document addresses CKUT Radio McGill’s commitment to local talent development, a commitment that intends to “assist in the development of vibrant and marginalized artists who may be overlooked by other broadcast media” (*Ibid. 5:1/1*). Programming is the primary area of support for local talent development, including “a number of shows which feature a strong local presence,” such as *Underground Sounds*—defined here as a two-hour music-based show that plays 100% Canadian content “the majority of which is local” (*Ibid. 5:1/1*). This document further mentions local events and shows put on by the station, and references CKUT’s commitment to local talent development. As paragraph 5 of Decision CRTC 2001-101 states, “The Commission expects the licensee to implement initiatives set out in its plan for Canadian talent development.” The station’s commitment to local talent development, along with the acknowledgement of the other aforementioned conditions of licence and regulations, as determined by *Campus radio policy*, establish CKUT’s eligibility for licence renewal in 2001. A strong commitment to local talent development is also a key factor in determining the role that CKUT plays in promoting and disseminating not only Canadian, but Montreal-based musical groups and artists.

In August of 2007, CKUT was once again up for licence renewal. *Decision CRTC 2007-305* is the document that outlines the stipulations for the renewal, and will be valid until August 31, 2014 assuming no major issues arise that might terminate or suspend the licence. Essentially, the document is fairly succinct, although a few issues are noted. For example, an intervention took place during the licence renewal process. The Center for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR) had intervened because of a broadcast from 2004 that included an interview with “a musical artist allegedly known for his song lyrics advocating hate, violence and discrimination against gays and lesbians” (CRTC 2007-305). CRARR asked for the Commission to ensure CKUT provided a copy of its policies and procedures as part of its licence renewal. Radio McGill’s reply was that it did not receive listener complaints, and the station provided the Commission with the requested documents, noting that the station’s “mandate, policies and statement of principles all uphold a clear anti-discrimination, anti-oppression principle” (Ibid.). The Commission reminded CKUT that programming must follow the Broadcasting Act, particularly section 3(b), which states that a station shall not broadcast abusive comments that can expose a group or individual to “hatred or contempt on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age or mental or physical disability” (Ibid.). That considered, the Commission renewed CKUT-FM Radio McGill’s application for a license renewal for the period of September 1st, 2007 until August 31st, 2014, subject to conditions listed in Public Notice 2000-156, *New licence form for campus radio stations*, and the condition that “the licensee shall devote, in each broadcast week, 12% or more of its musical selections from content category 3 (Special Interest Music) to Canadian selections broadcast in their entirety” (Ibid.).

This intervention illustrates an interesting complication with providing “alternative” programming. With “alternative” programming, there is a greater chance that content is going to offend or displease some listeners, particularly when program hosts are able to select and choose some of the songs that are played. As noted above, however, government and station policy do attempt to regulate content to the extent that harmful or hateful programming does not reach listeners. A limitation of “alternativeness” on campus broadcasting, therefore, is that which is offensive or rooted in hatred and contempt. In fact, the policy stipulations outlined above create certain boundaries or limitations of what can or cannot be programmed on campus broadcasting. These limitations include avoiding programming that is too commercial, or too popular, and, as the intervention exemplifies, programming that is too far from the mainstream.

The selected Canadian broadcast history that is discussed throughout this chapter helps to further contextualize the “alternativeness” of campus and community broadcasting, and is also pertinent in framing the boundaries of campus radio programming. Over the years, community broadcasting has been thought of as an “experiment” by the government and the CBC, although it has played an important role to the various communities it serves. Throughout broadcast history discourse, community radio is framed as broadcasting that is different, or alternative, to the more common and ubiquitous commercial and public broadcasting. The same can be said for Canadian broadcast policy. As outlined in this chapter, *Campus radio policy* specifically associates campus and community-based broadcasting with the “alternative,” stating that it is the role of such broadcasters to program content that can not be heard otherwise on other broadcasters. It is within this framework of policy and history that the following

chapter continues this discussion, taking a closer look at the programming of
Underground Sounds.

CHAPTER THREE

Sounds from the Underground: “Alternativeness” and *Underground Sounds*

On October 22nd, 2007, a particularly interesting interview was featured on *Underground Sounds*. It was an interview that exemplifies the way that *Underground Sounds* itself (as a campus/community radio program) contrasts the programming and structure of commercial/mainstream radio, and the way that the program sets up boundaries around the type of music and the sort of artist that it plays. The interview was pre-recorded, from September 2003, and was between host Agata De Santis and Halifax-born musician Joel Plaskett. Perhaps the most striking moment in the interview is when Agata asks about Plaskett’s favourite Canadian indie bands or singer/songwriters. Plaskett, with ease, mentions The Constantines. While thinking about some others, however, he hesitates about mentioning certain artists because they might not be considered “indie,” and therefore do not specifically pertain to Agata’s question. For instance, before mentioning Ron Sexsmith, Plaskett says, “You know, I don’t know if he qualifies as indie? I guess he is, sort of....He’s certainly not, like, major label, you know, in the kind of way that you’d normally associate it” (*Underground....*, Oct. 22, 2007, 00:90:50). Again, this tension arises when Plaskett mentions Montreal-native Sam Roberts. Plaskett states, “He’s major label, but I think Sam Roberts has a lot of great songs.” To which Agata replies, “I think we wanna keep him indie, but we can’t.” Plaskett, replies, “he’s blowin’ up, but there’s nothing’ wrong with that though” (*Ibid.* 00:91:20). The musician, in this case, is not overly concerned about gaining popularity or maintaining “indie credibility,” but the station’s on-air personality is well aware of her program’s mandate, and the sort of music and artists that it features and promotes. This

discussion between Agata and Plaskett reflects upon ideas stated earlier about the construction of “alternativeness” on campus/community radio. For instance, Kruse notes that “In the face of the perceived ‘selling out’ and downward trajectory of the music, participants may employ a series of tactics in an effort to continually define the music and its culture in opposition to dominant musical practices” (Kruse 6). Informed by the interesting content of this interview from October, 2007, this chapter analyzes CKUT and *Underground Sounds*, and discusses ways in which it constructs its identity, paying particular attention to the ways that “alternativeness” is projected, and what the limitations of “alternativeness” might be.

In November 1987, CFRM was licensed by the CRTC, establishing itself on the FM dial and taking on the call letters CKUT. A brief historical note found on CKUT’s current funding drive-devoted website includes an excerpt written by Patrick Hamou, editor of CKUT’s one-time programming guide and magazine. The excerpt, also from November 1987, states that “the local alternative music scene will be unearthed....And our definition of alternative is not limited to rock music but also encompasses classical, jazz, calypso, reggae, funk, blues and even Indian sitar music. A veritable smorgasbord of tunes” (“The Past...”).⁷ The online note continues, referencing the present and noting that things have not changed all that much. New policies and procedures are in effect, “but the spirit of the station has remained—we do it for the love, we do it because we care about the city we live in, we do it because we want to encourage creative and vibrant communities...” (Ibid.). The statement ends on an ideological note, informing readers

⁷ This quote arguably contributes to an identity that emphasizes “openness” and “diversity.” And while each genre is quite different and can be heard throughout the day on CKUT, the quote mirrors an ideology found in alternative and “indie” music, one that values music that is influenced by a broad range of styles and genres. For example, is “Indian sitar music” a genre, or a term used to diversify CKUT’s projected identity and programming?

that CKUT's programming makes up about a quarter million hours of "independent freeform broadcast programming: no playlists, no corporate sponsorships, no traffic reports, no political pundits, no ads for home security, no marketing demographic. It's the real deal and definitely worth supporting" (Ibid.). The station's mandate is stated and reiterated throughout the various sites that compose CKUT's online component. An explicit awareness of how the station's identity is circulated in public forums is no doubt evident, and there are a variety of factors pertaining to both station structure and station programming that factor in this projected identity.

Online, CKUT states that it currently broadcasts at a frequency of 90.3 FM, and is located at 3647 University Street, in the McGill University Campus. The station defines itself as "a non-profit, campus-community radio station...[that] provides alternative music, news and spoken word programming to the city of Montreal and surrounding areas, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year" ("About..."). Its online description boasts over 200 volunteers at any one time, working at the station alongside a staff of coordinators to program and manage the station, operating "on a collective management system that includes volunteers in decision-making" (Ibid.). The large number of volunteers not only suggests various levels of involvement—from individuals stopping by the station a few times a year, devoted show hosts putting in weekly hours, production volunteers, volunteer news reporters, and so forth—but also illustrates the station's awareness of promoting and projecting inclusiveness when it comes to volunteers.

The station's volunteers and staff fall into departmental categories that include: programming, production, sales, and fundraising. There are also three committees that "assemble to discuss and debate everything from the meaning of 'alternative' media to

who will fix the downstairs toilet” (“About...”). The three committees consist of: the Steering Committee, the station’s executive body comprised of both staff members and volunteer representatives, but also welcomes members from the community and station volunteers to attend meetings; the Programming Committee, which reviews and schedules on-air activities and is comprised of elected volunteers; and the Board of Directors, which deals with the annual budget, community outreach, and the “bigger picture” of the station, and can be made up of McGill students, faculty and administrative persons, CKUT volunteers, staff and people from the Montreal community (Ibid.). Nowhere does the description or mandate mention government or corporate involvement. Obviously, as Chapter Two highlights, government policy is very much a part of a campus station, but such policy is less important in the projected image of the station. It is more important for the station to focus its attention on accounting for the various sectors of the campus and city-wide community that contribute to and work at the station, in order to appear as a “community” broadcaster that offers “alternative” programming.

By constructing and projecting such a mandate and station image, a relationship to the theories and concepts of “alternative” and “community” is evident. In the “Frequently Asked Questions” section of CKUT’s Funding Drive website, a need for listener donations is explicitly laid out, utilizing the “community”-oriented station mandate to highlight the need for funds (which come from the listening community). The FAQ notes that CKUT does not receive any corporate funding, meaning that “the station is not controlled or influenced by commercial interests in any way,” but also that station revenue must come from membership fees, annual funding drives, and advertising that is done with “local and grassroots initiatives” (“Frequently...”). Goals of the station

include balancing out the media landscape by covering music, news, and culture that is not always covered by mainstream media outlets, and supporting “social equality and a spirit of inclusiveness and cooperation by reaching out and offering a voice to the concerns of marginalized citizens and groups. One of the main functions of the station is to provide access to the skills, techniques, and equipment necessary [for] radio broadcasting” (Ibid.). As well, it states that CKUT welcomes experimentation through its diverse programming. Donations made to the station help to pay for renting station facilities, renting the transmitter tower, purchasing and maintaining broadcasting and recording equipment, and to pay staff members to run the station and train volunteers (Ibid.). These quotes begin to show the move from stated objectives in the mandate, to the way that the station is run and structured. Because there is no corporate funding, the listener-community must support the station, but in return, station volunteers receive necessary training to present broadcast content that is “alternative” to that of other radio stations in the same area.

The station’s mandate and objectives are also present on the web pages that describe the various programs that make up CKUT’s weekly schedule, exemplifying an ideological link between station structure and programming. For example, *Off the Hour* is CKUT’s community news program that airs weekdays between 5pm and 6pm. The program’s online description states that *Off the Hour* is a “corporate-free news zone that reflects our community because it is made by our community” (“Community...”). The program’s mandate is to cover issues and current/public affairs in the Montreal community with an “alternative” scope, and it fits within the station’s corporate-free mandate. The program also serves as a learning and skill sharing environment for groups

and individuals interested in learning how to produce and program news stories (Ibid.), which is central in allowing volunteers to present “alternative” views in news reporting.

Another significant aspect of CKUT’s program grid that exemplifies an “alternative” approach to its overall programming is the wide variety of musical, culture, social and political programs that are aired. Such programs include: *The Lion’s Den*, playing “African-American beats;” *Off the Hook*, “Montreal’s underground and independent hip hop source;” *Drastic Plastic*, programming “profiles in punk courage;” *Made in Brazil*, broadcasting music and discussion from, and related to, Brazil; *Native Solidarity News*, a program that seeks to educate and mobilize “Quebecers in support of first nations world wide;” and, *The Montreal Sessions*, where a different local artist hosts each month, sharing work, “their favourite sounds, and interviews with locals in the know” (“CKUT Show...”). Of course, these examples only make up a small fraction of the extensive programs heard on CKUT, but they are helpful in exemplifying the diverse array of programming at CKUT, of which *Underground Sounds* is situated within (see Appendix E). As well, because each program is quite different from the next, the concept of “alternativeness” can apply to different levels of programming. On the one hand, the entire program grid can be considered “alternative” in the way that it juxtaposes styles, genres, cultures and languages to construct a week’s worth of programming that is unlike a week’s worth of programming on a different radio station. On the other hand, within the smaller demographic of individuals that listen to Canadian or “alternative” music, the concept of “alternativeness” can be explored in relation to one show like *Underground Sounds*, which programs “alternative” and “independent” music.

In regards to the latter—that is, a more specific exploration of the “alternative” as it applies to one program in particular—this discussion now moves toward a closer analysis of *Underground Sounds* and its programming of “local indie rock and [C]an-con” (“CKUT Show...”). The show is hosted and produced by Agata De Santis, as it has been for the past twelve years. Agata has spent these twelve years interviewing “hundreds of independent musicians from Montreal and across Canada. She is a big fan of the live radio interview format for its unpredictability and candor” (“Redefining...”). This emphasis on “local indie rock” and unpredictability helps to describe *Underground Sounds* in a way that is consistent with the aforementioned station mandate, illustrating the “alternativeness” of the program as constructed by CKUT. The program fits within the station’s goals, such as covering music that is not programmed by mainstream outlets, and the fits within such descriptive quotes, like the previously stated “we do it because we care about the city we live in” (“The Past...”). *Underground Sounds* plays an important role within the station’s program grid, by profiling local, independent music, exemplifying the station’s “love” for the city and emphasis on non-commercial music. Although Agata’s show is distinct and unique in its own way, playing an important role within CKUT’s overall program grid, it is part of a larger network of Canadian campus radio shows that program Canadian alternative or independent music.

Broadcasting from Carleton University, CKCU 93.1 FM is home to programs such as *Unclassifiable* and *Crimes Against Music*. *Unclassifiable* is an hour long show on Tuesdays from 2pm to 3pm that programs “indie and alternative rock and experimental electronica” (“CKCU Shows: Unclassifiable”). *Crimes Against Music* is also an hour-long show on Fridays from 7pm to 8pm, which is described by the host as

“sixty minutes of rock and related sounds from outside the mainstream,” particularly groups and artists that are “making an interesting racket in the Nation’s Capital” (“CKUT Shows: Crimes...”). From The University of Toronto, CIUT 89.5 FM is broadcast. The station is home to programs such as *Blissful Thunder*, which airs on Thursdays from noon to 2pm, and is self-described as “playing the best in indie and alternative music” (“About Blissful...”). In Halifax, Nova Scotia, CKDU 88.1 FM broadcasts from Dalhousie University. Both *Downbeat for Danger* and *Far Away, So Close* program “indie rock,” and *Rabble Radio* features music “from new Canadian musicians” (“CKDU...”). At Simon Fraser University, *Jumbalaya* and *The Undie Scene* are part of the schedule grid at CJSF 90.1 FM. *Jumbalaya* broadcasts at various times throughout the week, playing “newly-released and independently-produced music from CJSF’s Playlist,” and *The Undie Scene*, exposes listeners to Vancouver’s live music scene, playing “underground” and “Indie” music (“Program Guide”). Lastly, from the Students’ Union Building at the University of Alberta, CJSR 88.5 FM is broadcast. The show *Get Some West* plays “eclectic music from Edmonton, Alberta, and Western Canada” (“CJSR Programs”). Broadcasting from 11am to 1pm on Tuesdays, *Get Some West* welcomes independent performers, stating, “If you’re a performer from Western Canada, send us a CD or drop one off at the station. We’ll probably play it” (“CJSR Programs”). Regardless of whether this is always the case, *Get Some West*’s online mandate once again highlights the importance of inclusiveness on Canadian campus radio, particularly towards independent Canadian artists.

The programs listed above are to illustrate *some* of the many shows that are similar to *Underground Sounds* and are broadcast from Canadian campus-community

stations on the FM dial. As well, the ways in which these shows are self-described is similar to *Underground Sounds*' description, utilizing "Canada," "local," and "indie" to define the show's parameters. Although this thesis is concerned specifically with CKUT and *Underground Sounds*, it is interesting to know that similar analyses can be done at stations across the country, and that this analysis is not strictly specific to CKUT, or Montreal, or *Underground Sounds*.

Inspired by the aforementioned October 2007 broadcast, a total of ten programs spanning two to three months (from February 18th, 2008 to April 21st, 2008) contribute to a research corpus that attempts to gain a strong understanding of the show's programming. A number of interesting aspects of the show are prevalent throughout these ten broadcasts, but a certain few stand out. Particularly, a handful of artists are featured prominently throughout the ten weeks. This frequency can be attributed to factors such as an upcoming album release or a show date, as well as station mandate and policy-related factors such as the artist or group being from Canada, or having representation by an independent record label. The ten broadcasts also illustrate a strong relationship between CKUT and *Underground Sounds*, and the Montreal music scene. Elaborating on these findings helps to illustrate the programming of *Underground Sounds*, and provide insight as to why the programming is the way it is.

An approximate tally of artists programmed on the show throughout the ten broadcasts finds that around one hundred different artists and groups make up the total music programming. About fifteen artists, however, are heard five times or more, and five artists are programmed seven times or more (see Appendix B). The five most frequent artists include: Bonjour Brumaire, Amanda Mabro, Katie Moore, Julie Doiron,

and David Martel. A brief description of three of these five artists is helpful in illustrating the type of music, or genres, heard on the station, and in exhibiting connections to Montreal and/or Canada, as well as the level of “success” that artists played on the program have typically achieved.

Bonjour Brumaire, currently based in Montreal, has both English and French speaking members. On the band’s online biography, they are described as a “young band” playing “indie rock [that] still speaks to the heart of pop’s golden age with a refreshingly uncontrived message” (“Bonjour...”). The band released their debut album, *De La Nature Des Foules* on April 1st, 2008. Amanda Mabro is “a Montreal native” who “has taken years to hone a sound that is truly like no other, fusing the smooth and sultry vocal styling of the jazz greats, and the mysterious, sassy and theatrical flare of German and French Cabaret” (“About Me”). Amanda’s online bio also notes that she was awarded a FACTOR demo grant, influencing her decision to remain in Montreal, pursue her musical career, and release her debut record, *Superwoman in the Making* (Ibid.). Lastly, Katie Moore is also based in Montreal, and recently released an album called *The Only Thing Worse* in September of 2007. Moore is labeled “an alt-country crooner, an angel-voiced folk darling and even a seductive songstress,” who got her start playing at Montreal venues such as Barfly and the Wheel Club (“Media”). Moore is involved with other Montreal-based bands, such as Socalled, Timber!, and Yonder Hill (Ibid.).

Part of the reason that these artists are featured prominently on *Underground Sounds* is because they comply with policy regulations, as well as the station’s mandate. As noted in Chapter Two, CKUT is committed to programming at least 35% Canadian Content over each broadcast week, and is committed to local talent development. All

three artists described above are based in Montreal, and therefore adhere to policy regulations that concern Canadian Content and local talent development. As well, each artist released an album within the last six to eight months. *De La Nature Des Foules* is on Indica Records, a Canadian label based in Montreal, founded in 1997, and with a mandate to “develop, produce and promote young talent from Canada and introduce new young international bands” (“Indica”). Amanda Mabro’s newest EP, released in March 2008 and titled *Red Rows* is tied to the indie label Bitchin’ Empire, which has almost no online presence whatsoever. Katie Moore’s *The Only Thing Worse* is on Borealis Records, a label specializing in Canadian Folk music. Borealis’ homepage notes that it “was formed in 1996 to answer a need in Canada’s musical spectrum: to create an artist-friendly home for Folk and Roots music” (“Borealis...”). The webpage is complete with a mandate, which states that the label records only Canadian artists, searches for artists from all of Canada’s regions, promotes ethical artist agreements that are more generous than the industry standard, and presents diverse musical styles that are “under the Folk and Roots umbrella,” such as “Celtic, Blues, Singer/songwriters, Political/Topical, Traditional, Bluegrass, World, etc.” (Ibid.). Based on the ways that these three labels are described, it is safe to say that they fit within ideas about “independent” production and distribution. There is a clear emphasis on promoting new, Canadian talent, and catering to musical styles or genres that are not always, or do not wish to be, commercially viable (such as Folk and/or Francophone music). Such labels are important to campus broadcasting as they share a similar “independent” ethos, and campus stations can look to these labels for Canadian artists to program. Programming these artists not only fulfills Can-Con stipulations, but also works well with the “corporate-free” station mandate.

Another significant reason as to why certain artists are played more frequently over a set period of time is an upcoming show date, or an upcoming or recently released album. An upcoming show or album often coincides with an interview spot on *Underground Sounds*. For instance, Bonjour Brumaire, Amanda Mabro, Katie Moore, and Julie Doiron are interviewed at some point during the ten week study. As it will be noted, these interviews support and promote Montreal-based artists. In his PhD dissertation, Geoffrey Stahl argues that local media “constructs and supports a sense of connectivity, an imagined community, in its representation and promotion of local musical life” (Stahl 69). Interviews with Amanda Mabro, Katie Moore, and Bonjour Brumaire—three artists/bands with an upcoming or recently released album—articulate the ways in which *Underground Sounds* supports and constructs connectivity to the local music scene.

On the third week’s broadcast Amanda Mabro is interviewed, introduced early in the show as “Montreal’s own Amanda Mabro.” Agata notes that Amanda has a new CD out, which will be officially launched “this Friday night at The Cabaret” (*Underground...*, March 3rd, 2008, 00:21:08). The dialogue between Agata and Amanda is quite friendly and informal, suggesting perhaps that the two are familiar with each other. Songs from Amanda’s *Red Rows* EP are played throughout the interview, and Agata asks Amanda where the EP can currently be purchased. Amanda responds, saying that “at the moment, people can get it directly from me, and then it will be in stores in the coming months” (Ibid. 00:80:42). This interview is significant as it exemplifies the relaxed, informal, and inclusive interview environment of *Underground Sounds*, but it also exemplifies a connection between interviewee, artist, and audience. Amanda is informing listeners

through the interview that her album is currently only available through her, and that this is an acceptable way of acquiring the product. A store or online commercial site is not required, just interaction with the artist herself.

During the same broadcast, an interview between Agata and Katie Moore is played before the interview with Amanda Mabro. Moore's interview is pre-recorded, taking place at the Montreal International Music Initiative (MIMI) awards on March 1st, 2008 at Montreal venue Lion d'Or (see Appendix C). Agata introduces Katie as "a nominee tonight and a winner," as she is a member of Socalled, a group that won a MIMI for best song of the year (*Underground...*, March 3rd, 2008, 00:30:34). The interview soon moves to questions about genre, and discusses the way that Katie has been labeled "alt-country." Agata asks Katie about how she responds when asked about her style of music. Katie answers, "I just say folk music, I guess, because it encompasses almost everything...so I don't know, it's a really hard one to answer" (Ibid. 00:32:28). Later, Agata follows up on this question, asking, "Do you think it's hipper that you add the 'alt' to the country, like 'alternative-country,' does that make it hipper, in the minds of the masses not the country fans?" (Ibid. 00:34:34). Jokingly, Moore responds, "'alt' makes everything hipper, and so does the control button on the keyboard, and the apple button. No, I don't know, maybe. 'Alt' is always cool" (Ibid. 00:34:35). Each question is interesting in its own way. Katie answers the first with a statement that suggests comfort in being able to group a variety of genres and styles under "Folk." The second question, on the other hand, seems to attempt to tease out the effects of specifying a genre, such as "alt-country." Moore's answer avoids placing her music within this specific genre, but it is interesting that the "alternative" side of "alt-country" is of concern to Agata and

Underground Sounds, particularly the way in which an inclusion of “alternative” might add “hipness” to an arguably un-hip genre, like country.

The interview with Katie Moore also highlights an interesting link between station and artist, because, as Agata mentions in the interview, Katie used to be a host at CKUT. Katie says, “Yeah, I did the *Montreal Sessions*, Tuesday afternoons with a different artist every month and that was really fun” (*Underground...*, March 3rd, 2008, 00:33:18). Working at the station, Katie Moore connects the Montreal music scene to CKUT, a topic that will be expanded on in upcoming paragraphs.

On March 17th, 2008, the fifth of the ten broadcasts, Youri and Nathan from Bonjour Brumaire are interviewed on *Underground Sounds*. Agata introduces them as “two members of local band Bonjour Brumaire,” labelling them a “fairly new band on the scene” (*Underground...*, March 17th, 2008, 00:37:22). Youri and Nathan emphasize the relatively “new” status of the band, noting that “the random kid on the street doesn’t know about us” (Ibid. 00:38:40), and that they had only played about seven shows by the time they entered the studio last November (Ibid. 00:39:05). A significant part of this interview is when Youri and Nathan mention that they are university students, and that they are playing less shows in April and May “because of school and exams” (Ibid. 00:50:48). The band members also go into great detail about the venue that is to host their upcoming album release party. The show is at Le Social, which, as the band members note, is “definitely not a show bar, it’s a mansion, it’s an old mansion that they gutted and kept all the nice woodwork, kept all the wooden floors, kept all the ambiance, but just stuck in a couple of bars and speakers...fit[s] our band perfectly” (Ibid. 00:49:46). This elaborate description of the venue is relevant, as it exemplifies the relationship

between *Underground Sounds* and CKUT, the local artist, and the local venue. Before the interview ends, Nathan mentions the funding drive sign on the wall of the station, stating “Hey, you plug me, I plug you,” in reciprocity to the numerous times that Agata mentions *De La Nature Des Foules* throughout the interview (Ibid. 00:58:14). Nathans’s statement suggests that the band is appreciative of the exposure given by *Underground Sounds*.

These three interviews are all significant examples of what can result from Montreal-based artists having a relationship with a Montreal-based campus radio station. The interviews are lengthy accounts of what the artists are currently up to, and they highlight their upcoming involvement in the city. Recently-released songs are played and upcoming concert dates are plugged. As well, the station and the program require these artists to stop in for interviews and have their music played, specifically artists that have independent or no label support. The program, the station, the artist, and the host are all members of the same music scene, interacting in a geographic locality, benefiting from the different roles each participant plays.

An interview is not the only way for an artist to be frequently programmed on *Underground Sounds*, as simply having an upcoming show or new album can result in frequent airtime. Oftentimes when such artists are played, Agata mentions the album or the show, offering some promotion for the band or artist. For instance, during the March 24th broadcast, Agata says, “Hayden’s got a new album out, it is called *In Field and Town*, off of Hardwood Records, and we’re going to hear a very lovely track called “Did I Wake Up Beside You?” (*Underground...*, March 24th, 2008, 00:74:48). Hayden is played approximately five times over the ten week period (see Appendix B), and almost

every time, if not every time, the track played is “Did I Wake Up Beside You?” As a Canadian artist with a new album, Hayden is a common artist heard on *Underground Sounds*, exemplifying once again how Canadian artists are featured and promoted on Canadian campus radio.

Another interesting aspect of the station’s programming concerns the role of the program host. The above discussion of the programming heard on *Underground Sounds* is particularly specific to Agata De Santis herself. This idea is based primarily on two broadcasts in particular, in which Agata is away, and a host named Vanessa fills in. Vanessa is the host for the second and the tenth broadcasts, (February 25th and April 21st), and her shows are considerably different than the eight shows that Agata hosts. Almost the entire roster of bands and artists Vanessa plays are different than what is heard on the other eight shows. Vanessa’s programming tends to be more on the heavy side, favouring punk, hard rock and industrial. Examples of bands played are Alexisonfire, Cancer Bats, Die Mannequin, and Protest the Hero (all of which are from Ontario and play either punk, hardcore, hard rock, or some combination of the three). As well, on each of Vanessa’s programs, an industrial set is featured. On the February 25th broadcast, for example, she notes, “We’re just getting a little bit of a taste of industrial music here in Canada....So, if you’re into that, or if you have any suggestions for other industrial bands that are right here in Canada, you can, of course email us...” (*Underground...*, Feb. 25th, 2008, 00:77:20). Because Vanessa’s shows are so different, Agata’s role in constructing the sound of *Underground Sounds*, and the listener’s expectations of the show, are evident. Agata, as the show’s regular host, evidently has input into the show’s programming, as long as it fits the station’s mandate and CRTC policy. Because of this,

her own tastes, experience, and her role in the Montreal music scene play an important part in constructing the identity of *Underground Sounds*. While Vanessa's programming still fits within the overall mandate of *Underground Sounds*, (it is still Canadian, for instance) it does not put as much emphasis on Montreal-based music. This contrast between hosts suggests a level of host-autonomy, at least as much as is possible within policy and station mandate stipulations. It also suggests that the host factors in to the limitations of "alternativeness." With Vanessa, favourable bands and genres come from a wider geographic range in Canada, and are typically heavier sounding bands than those that Agata plays. On the other hand, with Agata's shows, preferred artists and genres tend to be those that are current within the Montreal music scene at the time.

Agata's role as host and voice/personality of the program is well-established and enforced at the beginning of each broadcast that she hosts when introducing the show and saying, "Good evening everyone and welcome to another edition of *Underground Sounds* here on CKUT 90.3 Fm. My name is Agata De Santis and I'll be with you 'til 10pm tonight playing Canadian independent music, as we do here every Monday evening" (*Underground...*, Feb. 18th, 2008. 00:01:23). Agata's introduction is unique to her role as host and producer (echoing the suggestion of host-autonomy mentioned above) and explains the content of the show, grouping the terms "Canadian" and "independent" to set specific program boundaries. Agata evidently has a large role in the show's identity, a role that is not only dictated by her on-air personality and radio skills (as is with many commercial and public radio hosts), but also her musical tastes and experience within the Montreal music scene.

The role of the host and producer in constructing the program's content illuminates a notion of individuality that figures into the "alternativeness" of the program. Because there is such a difference between Agata and Vanessa's programming, it can be argued that both the station and the program promote, or allow for, individualistic behaviour, despite the evident community-oriented ethos. For instance, each host is not bound by specific directions in which the show must follow, aside from policy and station mandate. Rather, each host is able to bring her individual personality to the show, having some autonomy as to the genres, bands and artists that are played. Individualism is not present in Chapter One's conceptual and theoretical overview, although this study of *Underground Sounds* highlights the role of individualism within Montreal's music scene and/or community. CKUT hosts and volunteers undergo the necessary training in order to broadcast radio programming, enabling each individual to host or produce his or her own show. This individualism or autonomy allows for a wide range of ideas and tastes to be broadcast over the station, which, in turn, better serves a "community" audience by providing a diverse array of content that reflects the diversity of a community or locality (Higgins 1-2). Of course, this diverse array of content is much more evident when considering the whole of CKUT's program grid, of which *Underground Sounds* is a smaller component of. Within the specific context of *Underground Sounds*, however, the individual host, who is primarily Agata, plays an important role as an individual who connects the radio program to the Montreal music scene.

The ten week analysis of *Underground Sounds* illustrates a number of ways in which Agata and her show are part of the music scene in Montreal, and the various social

and cultural communities in the city. Throughout the ten broadcasts, the terms “local” and “scene” are used more frequently than “community,” and oftentimes, “local” and “scene” are grouped together (see Appendix D). For example, during the first broadcast, Director of Communications for the MIMI Awards, Sébastien Charest is a guest on the program, and he is asked about the history and the role of the MIMI Awards within the Montreal music scene. Charest informs Agata that the first MIMI Awards took place before “everyone would see each other in the local scene,” and its purpose was to “get everyone together in the same room” (*Underground...*, Feb. 18th, 2008, 00:85:25).

Earlier in the same broadcast, Agata and Sébastien discuss the “scene,” but use “Montreal” as a prefix instead of “local” to refer to the same scene, illustrating that the “local scene” connotes the same meaning as the “Montreal scene” (Ibid. 00:43:56). The “local” or “Montreal” scene is specifically associated with music production, distribution and performance. In the same conversation, Agata mentions the twenty artists nominated for the 2008 MIMI Awards, and says that “if you know the top twenty, you know the scene. At least this year, it might change next year” (Ibid. 00:87:18). A particular knowledge of up-and-coming artists in Montreal illustrates participation in the local scene. Again, in the same conversation, “Montreal” is equated with a particular sound when Sébastien refers to Bonjour Brumaire, stating that “this band is the new Montreal *sound*, it is where Montreal is right now” (Ibid. 01:02:34, emphasis added). This quote further demonstrates how the “local scene” and “Montreal scene” represent the same geographic and conceptual space, which is associated with independent music production, distribution and performance.

Another term grouped with “scene” is “indie.” During the third broadcast, Agata talks with one of the MIMI hosts, Dave Cool, about the seven groups or artists that won a MIMI award, referring to Dave as someone who knows “the indie scene” (*Underground...*, March 3rd, 2008, 00:40:22). Agata asks Dave, “What do you think of the seven winners?,” to which he replies, “...there was a mix between the two solitudes of English Montreal and French Montreal, which is important...the two, you know, sides of the industry are inter-mixing more often, which I think is wonderful, because coming up through the scene, it was always so divided (Ibid. 00:40:40). This conversation is significant because it equates the local scene with an “indie” or “independent” ethos, and once again uses the city of Montreal to describe the sound of the scene itself.

Interestingly, according to the ten broadcasts, the concept of “scene” is closely tied to music production, distribution, and performance. The “scene” is also “local,” and the “local” is the city of “Montreal.” Furthermore, through the various groupings of these terms, the current local scene (the city of Montreal) has a particular sound, one that is mixing French and English groups and individuals. According to Dave Cool, this is a good thing.

The term “community” is used considerably less than the term “scene” or “local,” although it does surface a few times. Based on the ten broadcasts, “community” does not have as specific a meaning as “scene,” but seems to connote ideas about a group of individuals coming together to achieve a common goal, to identify with a particular cause, or to find some essence of representation. Two times in which the term “community” is heard is during the first broadcast (see Appendix D), during an advertisement for “Canada’s sixth annual homelessness marathon,” a co-presentation

between CKUT and Montreal's Native Friendship Centre (*Underground...*, Feb. 18th, 2008, 00:37:50). The advertisement notes that the marathon features "fourteen hours of people-powered radio broadcasting live from the streets of Montreal" that are transmitted nationally over thirty sister campus-community radio stations (Ibid.). The advertisement ends with the line: "From CKUT 90.3 FM, your campus-community radio home-base" (Ibid.). In this case, "community" is grouped with CKUT, something that is surprisingly not common across the ten broadcasts. Arguably, the term "community" is important in this advertisement because it deals with mobilizing a group of people in order to accomplish a politically-motivated goal. In order for the homelessness marathon to achieve success, communities across the country must work together in order to broadcast topic-specific content. It is interesting that despite being a campus-community radio station, the term "community" is not used frequently during *Underground Sounds*. Perhaps this is because the show is most concerned with programming Canadian independent music, so terms like "scene," "local," and "indie" figure more prominently. CKUT's community news program, *Off the Hour*, may use the term more often, emphasizing more specific ideas and concepts associated with "community." This may be because CKUT's news show relies on a group of people to produce and report on political-motivated news stories. A locally-situated "scene" in Montreal, however, is not motivated exclusively by politics. Rather, emphasis is put on the way the people, artists, institutions and cultural spaces come together in order to produce, distribute and perform independent music.

Underground Sounds does not just *talk* about the local indie scene in Montreal, but it plays a dynamic and significant role within it, as is also evident in the earlier

discussion of the on-air interviews with Mabro, Moore and Bonjour Brumaire. Referring back to Agata's interview with Sébastien Charest, the position of *Underground Sounds* within the Montreal music scene is quite prominent. Charest is on the program to promote not only the MIMI awards, but the twenty up-and-coming Montreal artists that are nominated for awards, specifically the "best song" category. As Agata notes, "the songs we're playing are actually the songs that were nominated for the best song category" (*Underground...*, Feb. 18th, 2008, 00:56:42). Not only is the program showcasing Montreal artists to Montreal listeners, but Agata and Sébastien are on the jury to pick the MIMI winners (Ibid. 00:55:36). Furthermore, their conversation enters the realm of the promotional when Agata asks Charest who he thinks the big artists to look out for in 2008/2009 are. Charest answers, "David Martel," explaining that "he's the kind of guy you want to hang out with" (Ibid. 01:02:30). The same question is brought up during Agata's interview with Dave Cool, to which Dave answers, "One Name: David Martel...and Plants and Animals' new album is also incredible" (*Underground...*, March 3rd, 2008, 00:42:56). As an important institutional site in the scene, CKUT fosters interaction between different "musical worlds," or in this case, different members of the Montreal music scene, enabling "certain local knowledge to be transferred" (Stahl 197). Evidently, *Underground Sounds* is a vehicle for prominent members of Montreal's indie music scene to voice (authoritative and/or "credible") opinions about up-and-coming groups and artists. "Alternative," thus, is further limited by the opinions of such prominent "scene" personalities.

The significance of *Underground Sounds* in the Montreal scene is also evident towards the end of each broadcast, when Agata runs through show and concert listings

(many of which are CKUT co-presentations). Characteristic of each show and concert listing are numerous bands and multiple Montreal venues such as Divan Orange, Club Lambi, and La Tulipe (see Appendix C). The program relays information about Montreal venues, acting as an important node in the city's cultural sites, promoting not only bands and artists, but local venues as well. On the eighth broadcast, for example, numerous bands and venues are mentioned, including: AIDS Wolf and Japanther at La Sala Rosa, Grand Theft Bus at Black Dot, Creature at Foufounes Electriques, and Torngat at Zoobizarre (*Underground...*, April 7th, 2008, 01:14:20). As Stahl notes, both community radio and cultural sites such as "extra-musical spaces such as cafes and restaurants" are "often seen as secondary to the preferred reading of the scene as a phenomenon based primarily around performance," but are nonetheless "vital to the continued functioning of the scene" (Stahl 74). Again, the term "scene" represents a network of people and spaces, as opposed to a "community." "Community" is no doubt important to the station as a whole, but *Underground Sounds* is first and foremost concerned with the local scene.

University and college culture also functions within the Montreal music scene, and more specifically, the role that *Underground Sounds* plays within this scene. Reflecting on a drop in show and concert listings during the March 31st broadcast, Agata states, "Unfortunately, this time of year, things start to slow down a bit as university and college crowds head into finals and term papers and that kind of thing" (*Underground...*, March 31st, 2008, 01:05:45). The connection between the station, the university/students, and the scene is even more apparent during the aforementioned interview with Bonjour Brumaire. In the interview, after describing the venue Le Social, Nathan and Youri acknowledge the band's student life, noting, "We are going to have less shows in April

and May because of schools and exams, obviously” (*Underground...*, March 17th, 2008, 00:50:48). This quote is interesting because it highlights the role of academic institutions in Montreal’s music scene. CKUT is tied to the academic institution of McGill University, emphasizing again the influence both McGill and CKUT can have on the city’s music scene. Many individuals involved in cultural production in the city, for instance, are college or university students. These same students are either exposed to CKUT, simply by spending time on-campus, or perhaps they are volunteers at the station, participating with one of many active institutions in the Montreal scene.

University or college students, and their respective campus, can also be said to constitute a “community,” one that is bound by an association to the academic institution, and one that is important to CKUT. The ten broadcasts of *Underground Sounds*, however, never specify listenership as campus-based, but rather an amalgamation of campus and city. It is this larger idea of a student “community” that the station creates a big part of its programming for, but also relies heavily upon. During the fifth broadcast, this reliance is illustrated in the form of promotional messages regarding CKUT’s upcoming funding drive. Agata says towards the end of the broadcast, “For all you fans, supporters of CKUT out there, our annual funding drive is coming up....It’s that time of year when we turn to you and ask for your help to support us, to keep us going for another year” (*Underground...*, March 17th, 2008, 00:92:24). The specifics of the funding drive are elaborated on during the following week’s broadcast (March 24th, 2008). The goal of the drive is to raise \$50, 000 over the course of a ten day funding drive, and requires listeners to call in or go online to donate as much as they can. Agata informs listeners that “no matter what you donate, as a thank you we give you a gift...In

terms of *Underground Sounds*, there's a lot of CDs available by Canadian artists that are donated to us by the artists themselves, by the labels, by the distributors" (*Underground...*, March 24th, 2008, 00:88:48). Referring again to the earlier discussion of "community" ideals on campus and community broadcasting, the funding drive is an interesting example of the important role of listeners in terms of campus and community programming. This idea of a "community" is bound by the common goal of helping to fund the station, in return for programming that reflects the needs and interests of the local community, or in the case of *Underground Sounds*, the local/Montreal music scene. Moreover, the fact that this campus and city-wide listening "community" helps fund the station illustrates another way that programming is constructed, as the station must cater programming to the very people that support and help fund the station.

A further interesting aspect of *Underground Sounds*' programming is the online component of the show. In a number of broadcasts, the internet is referenced, whether it is an artist's Myspace page, the Myspace page of the program, or CKUT's official webpage. For example, Agata notes during the seventh broadcast, "go visit us at www.ckut.ca, we've got information on upcoming specials, and sort of highlights of different programs that are happening in the near future on CKUT..." (*Underground...*, March 31st, 2008, 00:40:35). The entire roster of CKUT programs are also available as archival downloads, spanning about three months' worth of recent programming. Listeners are also encouraged to email the host with concerns, suggestions, requests, and questions, a variation on the traditional method of calling into a radio station. During the first of the two shows hosted by Vanessa, she asks listeners to call in to suggest Canadian industrial bands after completing an industrial set. Vanessa says, "So, if you're into that,

or if you have any suggestions for other industrial bands that are right here in Canada, you can, of course, email us at undergroundsounds@ckut.ca” (*Underground...*, Feb. 25th, 2008, 00:77:54). The online component of the show is intriguing, as it displays an additional method that CKUT uses to connect to its listeners. The online component of the station seems to enhance the effectiveness of the program in connecting to the scene or the community, rather than taking away from the station in the form of internet broadcasting replacing or threatening the station’s terrestrial broadcasting. Connecting to the local scene or community is one of the numerous ways in which the programming of CKUT, specifically *Underground Sounds* can be conceptualized as a station or a program that employs an ethos or ideals that are very much concerned with involving and embracing the local scene and/or community.

Throughout the ten broadcasts of *Underground Sounds* featured in this chapter, a particular broadcasting and programming style or ethos is evident. Influenced and shaped by station mandate and policy, *Underground Sounds* creates and constructs “alternative” programming that is multifaceted with concepts and ideas that employ such terms as “scene,” “independent,” and “local.” A number of groups and artists contribute to the ten weeks of *Underground Sounds*’ programming. Just over one hundred different bands/artists are programmed over the ten week period, although some much more than others. Artists that tend to be featured frequently usually have an upcoming concert or an upcoming or recent album release. Interviews with Amanda Mabro, Katie Moore, and Bonjour Brumaire all mention upcoming shows and albums, and each artist is one of the five most frequently heard during the ten broadcasts (see Appendix B). As well, these three artists are located in Montreal and are represented by local and/or independent

record labels such as Indica and Borealis, which make it their mandate to promote artists and genres that are not always commercially viable, such as folk and francophone/indie. Interviews with prominent artists within the Montreal scene exemplify the role of *Underground Sounds* as an institution that fosters important connections within the local indie scene. The show is a vehicle for artists to promote themselves, and introduce themselves to Montreal-based listeners. Of course, the host, Agata De Santis, plays an important role in establishing and supporting these connections, particularly because it was found that the host exercises a lot of freedom as to what artists and interviews are played on the show (despite CRTC and station mandate restrictions). This notion of autonomy, as mentioned earlier, is exemplified by the extreme differences in Agata's programming and the programming of Vanessa, the fill-in host for two of the ten broadcasts.

Both Agata and *Underground Sounds* function within the local scene by interviewing its prominent members, such as Dave Cool and Sébastien Charest, and by featuring prominent events in the scene/community, such as the MIMI Awards. Show listings also expose listeners to sites of musical performance in Montreal, promoting upcoming shows and concerts that often feature the very groups and artists that are played by the show. A connection to the campus and city-wide community is also evident by the programming, particularly through mentioning the funding drive, which requires listeners from the community to donate money to help keep not only *Underground Sounds*, but CKUT itself financially sound. The internet supports this community connection, whether to help listeners donate, to provide listeners with downloadable show archives, or to enable listeners to email music requests.

Underground Sounds is not just a terrestrial radio broadcaster programming independent and local Canadian music, but an important part of a music scene that embraces independence from the commercial model of producing, distributing and performing music. The findings summarized in the above paragraphs highlight ways that *Underground Sounds* and campus radio programming is unique in relation to many commercial and public radio programs within Canada's contemporary media environment. "Alternative," as explored through CKUT and the programming of *Underground Sounds* is an idea closely tied to the concept of a "local," "independent" music scene. Broadcasting, in this case, does not serve the purpose of increasing album sales for Top 40 artists, nor does it seek to educate a public through state-sponsored talk shows or informative programming. *Underground Sounds* is a prominent institutional node within a music scene that emphasizes new and emerging artists, or artists that remain independent from the playlists of commercial radio stations. The boundaries of "alternativeness," in this case, are perhaps linked to what is considered current, appropriate, and "alternative" in the minds of the groups and individuals that partake in constructing the ideals of the Montreal local music scene.

CONCLUSION

In a changing and evolving contemporary broadcast media environment, campus radio is a distinct medium with a myriad of factors influencing and shaping its structure and content. Campus radio is written into government policy and is allocated radio spectrum—a regulated and limited resource—and the role of campus radio involves distributing content intended for a local audience. As David Hesmondhalgh argues, “Audiences of millions of people regularly consume cultural products made by relatively small numbers of people. Nearly all of us are symbol makers, but very few of us are media producers” (Hesmondhalgh 1). In the case of campus radio broadcasting, however, practically anyone can be a media producer by volunteering with the station as producers, news gatherers, show hosts, and so forth. This inclusiveness is one reason that campus radio broadcasting is often conceptualized as an “alternative” medium.

Taken together, the past three chapters illustrate the various ways in which campus radio broadcasting can be conceptualized as “alternative.” Chapter One provides an overview of the theoretical and conceptual literature that aids in theoretically framing the “alternativeness” of campus radio broadcasting. Definitions of “alternative” are numerous, but it helps to look at how the term is used in relation to “media,” specifically broadcast media. Key terms, like “scene,” “local,” and “community” are necessary words that specify this discussion by defining a particular conceptual and geographic space in which to map concepts of “alternativeness.” Within this time and place, other terms and ideas, like an independent production ethos, can be added, moving closer to a site in which “alternativeness” can be explored. In the concern of this thesis, this

particular site is the campus-community broadcaster CKUT in the city of Montreal during the mid-to-late 2000s. Having framed this theoretical and conceptual site, a further exploration of “alternativeness” can be pursued. Because this site involves a broadcaster, radio history and policy is a critical factor in this analysis.

The boundaries and limitations of “alternativeness” on campus broadcasting are further specified by broadcast history and policy. Developing alongside public and commercial radio, Canadian community and campus broadcasting had to pinpoint a specific niche in which to cater programming to. Because the radio spectrum is limited, it is of necessary relevance to stress this point. Campus and community broadcasting in Canada cannot compete with other radio stations within the same area. Hence, programming must follow certain guidelines and stipulations to ensure a certain level of “alternativeness” in comparison to other radio stations within the same area. Policy further specifies the role of campus broadcasting, in terms of both structure and programming. Canadian campus radio policy factors into such areas as the profit-free nature of campus broadcasting, and the strong emphasis on local programming. Local talent development, for instance, is one area stressed in CKUT’s 2001 licence renewal. As illustrated earlier, the boundaries of campus radio programming are also evident within broadcast policy, as exemplified by the intervention in CKUT’s 2007 renewal. Programming must be diverse, and alternative in the sense that it differs from commercial and public stations in the same area, but government and station policy also restrict certain types of programming—namely that which is racist, sexist, hateful, harmful, and so forth. This exploration of “alternativeness” on campus broadcasting is now further

specified by attributing the historical factors that shape campus broadcasting, and the policy stipulations that influence station mandate, structure and programming.

Within this theoretical, historical, and policy-based framework is the CKUT program *Underground Sounds*, a radio program disseminating Canadian independent music. The program not only broadcasts Montreal-based musicians, through interviews and music programming, but is also an important institutional node within the Montreal music scene. Prominent scene participants, alongside host Agata De Santis, offer insight into the scene, reflecting on the groups and artists featured on the show. This results in a station that promotes Canadian artists with a tendency towards independent methods of producing, promoting and performing music. These artists, then, become quite established within the program's playlists, and contribute largely to the stations "alternative" identity.

Moving from Chapter One's theoretical and conceptual overview, to Chapter Three's analysis of *Underground Sounds*, a few concluding statements can be made about the relationship between how "alternativeness" is conceptualized and how it is constructed on-air. Chapter One explores the way in which campus and community radio is positioned in opposition to commercial radio, specifically by linking campus and community radio to local programming (Hilliard and Keith). As the study of *Underground Sounds* illustrates, the content of the radio broadcasts frequently discuss the local music scene, plugging shows and concerts and playing artists from Montreal. There is evidently a link between the way that alternative radio is associated with the local in conceptual and theoretical literature and the way that *Underground Sounds* constructs "alternativeness" through emphasizing the local independent scene. As a local,

community broadcaster, campus radio is an *alternative* to other broadcast forms, particularly because it is less affected (or not affected at all) by the influential factors that are changing terrestrial broadcasting, such as technological advancement and media conglomeration.

Chapter One also briefly introduces the idea that community media is considered “alternative,” in part, because its producers identify as “alternative” (Kidd). Chapter Three adequately reflects this idea, as it highlights the way that the program and the program’s host continually define the show’s boundaries in the show’s introduction, within the content of interviews, and in the way the show’s music is described. Agata’s individual personality plays a role in the construction of “alternativeness” on campus radio, as her identity contributes to the way the show is received by listeners. As mentioned before, she begins each show by stating her name, and telling listeners that she will be playing Canadian independent music throughout the night (*Underground...*, Feb. 18th, 2008. 00:01:23). The introduction connects Agata to the music-based programming, emphasizing the prominent link between her identity and the show’s content.

Multiple factors combine to construct the “alternativeness” of *Underground Sounds* and CKUT, including Agata’s individual identity, an emphasis on local programming, and the numerous other facets discussed and explored throughout this thesis. One such important component intrinsic to conceptualizing campus radio as “alternative” is the student demographic that not only listens to the station, but also produces content through volunteering with the station. Chapter One briefly introduces Bourdieu’s thoughts on symbolic goods, cultural capital, and class distinction. These thoughts can be taken further, following Chapter Three’s analysis of *Underground*

Sounds. Bourdieu argues that, “nothing more clearly affirms one’s ‘class’, nothing more infallibly classifies, than tastes in music,” and, “there is no more ‘classifactory’ practice than concert-going or playing a ‘noble’ instrument” (Bourdieu 18). And while the genres and styles of music differ between Bourdieu’s analysis and the analysis presented here, some similar and important connections can be made. Student culture is composed of a particular economic, social and cultural capital, one that often prefers that which is not the mainstream, but rather, an alternative to the mainstream. Perhaps campus broadcasting is a more “noble” broadcaster than commercial radio in the opinions of student listeners. Student music fans, arguably, are more likely to favour the genres and styles of music programmed by campus radio and shows like *Underground Sounds*—music that is “independent,” “local,” and distant/distinct from the mainstream. Student listeners of *Underground Sounds* can identify with Agata, the bands she interviews, and the music she plays. Student culture certainly factors in the construction of “alternativeness” on campus radio broadcasting, as many students partake in music production and concert-going that reflects the genres and styles of music programmed by shows like *Underground Sounds*. Many individual students are also members of the Montreal music scene, exemplified by the interview with Bonjour Brumaire (a band with individuals that are students in Montreal), and each individual is a distinct contributor to the Montreal scene and/or community.

The concluding remarks of Chapter Three specifically pertain to the local Montreal scene, and the way in which *Underground Sounds* functions within the scene. How distinct, however, is the relationship between CKUT, *Underground Sounds* and Montreal? It seems as though local independent music scenes in other Canadian cities

would have a similar relationship to their respective campus broadcaster, considering influential factors such as broadcast policy and history are predominantly the same from city to city. As earlier paragraphs in Chapter Three illustrate, radio programs with similar descriptions and mandates to *Underground Sounds* can be heard on campus stations across the country. Considering this, such programs no doubt feature local artists with recently released albums or upcoming shows. Of course, this assumption requires further analysis in order to properly articulate, but as the show description for Simon Fraser's CJSF program *The Undie Scene* states, "Expose yourself to Vancouver's live music scene" ("Program Guide"). This description exemplifies a notable similarity and connection to the programming of *Underground Sounds*, particularly in the way that it emphasizes the connection between the program and the city's music scene.

Apart from probable similarities to other campus radio stations and independent music scenes, a close analysis of *Underground Sounds* highlights some of the limitations and boundaries of "alternativeness" on campus radio. Interestingly, new albums and upcoming concert dates factor into setting the limitations of "alternativeness." This is not always the case, as the differences between Vanessa and Agata's programming exemplifies, but it is certainly the case most of the time. Being of "current relevance," thus, significantly shapes the way that the "alternativeness" of *Underground Sounds* is perceived by listeners. Artists must be producing or performing music that embraces independence from the mainstream music industry in order to be featured on the show. "Alternativeness," therefore, is ironically somewhat similar to mainstream broadcast and industry practices in the sense that these artists need a current cultural product in circulation in order to be prominently featured in the show's programming. Moreover,

subtle promotion and marketing is palpable during the friendly interview segments featured on the program. As Chapter Three illustrates, both Amanda Mabro and Bonjour Brumaire are quite informal and chummy with Agata, promoting the station while she promotes the artists. An inclusive and sociable interview segment does not sound like a typical commercial radio interview, and it is certainly evidence of the program's relevance within the Montreal music scene, but it does echo commercial radio's emphasis on promoting music to listeners. As well, such a format is arguably more effective as a promotion technique, considering that many listeners (student listeners that identify with both Agata and the program's "alternative" or "independent" identity) appreciate the informal nature of Agata's interviews, and might be more easily swayed by the way in which such a format promotes a cultural product—a cultural product produced with an independent ethos that reflects the broadcast ethos of campus radio. What distinguishes this practice from the mainstream broadcast and music industry, however, is the fact that the cultural product in question is local and independent.

Local programming and non-profit ideals are significant factors that help campus and community broadcasters to be somewhat exempt from the influential factors facing terrestrial broadcasting that are discussed earlier in this thesis. This is primarily because campus and community broadcasters cater to local communities, and are funded and written into government policy to do so. Thus, streamlined and centralized playlists are not the sort of thing that campus and community radio will be pressured into programming and disseminating. In regards to new technological developments, campus broadcasting has embraced technologies such as internet broadcasting and social networking sites to expand its presence in the local scene, connecting to its community of

listeners through the internet. The internet also allows for the station to receive funding donations and for listeners to communicate music requests, as exhibited by the analysis in Chapter Three.

The relationship between the internet, CKUT, and the Montreal music scene is an interesting topic for future research. How has public perception of the radio station changed since the station began archiving its programming online? Are listeners frequently downloading and listening to archived shows, or are they only utilizing this feature if they miss a favourite show?

Additional further questions are raised by the discussion and analysis present throughout this thesis. For instance, how do other Canadian campus stations define and project their programming? Chapter Three points to programs similar to *Underground Sounds* that exist across the country, but, as this thesis exemplifies, the particular locality in which a station exists can be quite influential on station programming. The existence or non-existence of other stations in the area can structure campus programming, as such programming is licenced with a mandate to provide local programming that is different or *alternative* to other stations in the same geographic area. Therefore, are these similar Canadian campus stations programming music and content that is very similar to *Underground Sounds*, or just somewhat similar, or not at all?

As well, how do other Canadian music scenes function in relation to their campus radio stations? Do other stations play as prominent of a role in the local music scene as CKUT and *Underground Sounds* do? Also, what is the different between music scenes that have a campus radio station and music scenes that do not? Are there other institutional nodes that play a similar role to that of campus radio in music scenes that do

not have such a station? Perhaps there are compelling similarities between this analysis of *Underground Sounds* and websites, blogs, ‘zines and record stores.

Another interesting question concerns the time-specific relevance of this analysis. As Chapter One argues, defining and exploring alternative media is best done in relation to a specific medium within a specific time and place. Therefore, the “alternativeness” of *Underground Sounds* is no doubt going to change as time moves on, and as government broadcast policy changes. As well, different artists and genres may become more prominent in the Montreal music scene, altering the type of programming that *Underground Sounds* plays. How long, then, will this analysis be relevant for, and how long will the artists and individuals referenced in this thesis be current in the Montreal music scene? Because of this question, this analysis hopes to also be relevant as a potential framework for conducting similar studies of other Canadian campus stations now and in the following years.

An additional question related to the questionable nature of “alternativeness” as it applies to musical artists and groups, concerns the career trajectory of many of the artists featured and heard during the ten week analysis of *Underground Sounds*. Do artists move from campus radio to commercial or public radio in some sort of traceable pattern? How many artists move from being prominently featured on campus programming to generating more success and becoming a common name on commercial radio? Are there artists that remain on campus radio for years at a time, and is this stability always specific to remaining local and independent? These questions are helpful in addressing some of the concerns raised throughout this paper in regards to the intersection of commercial and alternative culture.

These questions for future analysis and consideration can be helpful in taking the findings of this thesis one step further. This thesis highlights the various factors that influence the perceived “alternativeness” of campus radio broadcasting.

“Alternativeness” is a term most easily used when projecting an identity or an ideal, an ideal that situates itself away from the mainstream. This thesis, however, illustrates the numerous ways in which “alternativeness” is limited, by such factors as government policy, station mandate, and market logic (in regards to the importance of a current circulating cultural product). Such limiting factors reflect upon the reality of radio broadcasting, a reality that involves regulation and the need to provide programming for a specific type of listener. This is not to say that campus radio broadcasting should not be labeled and conceptualized as an “alternative” medium. It certainly can be—particularly in relation to the current terrestrial broadcasting environment that is bound by media consolidation and the interest of advertisers—but its projected “alternativeness” does not always account for the limitations and boundaries that encompass a broadcast reality.

APPENDIX A

Chart data is current as of June 2008, and includes only campus and campus-community stations with a current AM or FM licence.

Call Sign	Frequency	First Air Date	Location	University/College
CFAK-FM	88.3 FM	?	Sherbrooke, QC	Université de Sherbrooke
CFBU-FM	103.7 FM	1979 (at 20 watts) 1997 (FM)	St. Catharines, ON	Brock University
CFBX-FM	92.5 FM	1980s (closed-circuit) 2001 (FM)	Kamloops, BC	Thompson Rivers University
CFMH-FM	107.3 FM	2001 (on 92.5 FM) 2007 (on 107.3 FM)	Saint John, NB	University of New Brunswick at Saint John
CFML-FM	107.9 FM	1982 (on cable FM at 104.5) 2006 (on 107.9 FM)	Burnaby, BC	British Columbia Institute of Technology
CFMU-FM	93.3 FM	1978 (in mono at 25 watts) early 1990s (166 watts)	Hamilton, ON	McMaster University
CFOU-FM	89.1 FM	?	Trois-Rivières, QC	Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières
CFRC-FM	101.9 FM	1923 (AM) 1954 (FM)	Kingston, ON	Queen's University
CFRE-FM	91.9 FM	1970	Mississauga, ON	University of Toronto at Mississauga
CFRU-FM	93.3 FM	1969 (as <i>Radio Gryphon</i>) 1973 (as CFRU)	Guelph, ON	University of Guelph
CFUR-FM	88.7 FM	2001	Prince George, BC	University of Northern British Columbia
CFUV-FM	101.9 FM	1984 (at 49.4 watts on 105.1 FM) 1989 (at 2290 watts on 101.9 FM)	Victoria, BC	University of Victoria
CFXU-FM	92.5 FM	1981 (in student residences) 1990s (through cable TV) 1999 (on the internet) 2002 (FM)	Antigonish, NS	St. Francis Xavier University
CHLY-FM	101.7 FM	2001	Nanaimo, BC	Malaspina University College
CHMA-FM	106.9 FM	1974 (on AM 690) 1984 (on 106.9 FM)	Sackville, NB	Mount Allison University
CHMR-FM	93.5 FM	1987 2006 (digital cable)	St. John's, NL	Memorial University of Newfoundland
CHRW-FM	94.9 FM	1981 (on 94.7 FM at 50 watts) 2003 (on 94.9 at 6000 watts)	London, ON	University of Western Ontario
CHRY-FM	105.5 FM	1986	Toronto, ON	York University
CHSR-FM	97.9 FM	1981	Fredericton, NB	University of New Brunswick
CHUO-FM	89.1 FM	1984 (cable/closed-circuit) 1991 (FM)	Ottawa, ON	University of Ottawa
CHYZ-FM	94.3 FM	1991 (cable/closed-circuit) 1997 (FM) 2000 (FM + internet)	Quebec City, QC	Université Laval

CILU-FM	102.7 FM	2005	Thunder Bay, ON	Lakehead University
CIOI-FM	101.5 FM	1975 (as CHMR on cable FM) 1998 (FM)	Hamilton, ON	Mohawk College
CISM-FM	89.3 FM	1985 (closed-circuit) 1991 (FM)		
CITR-FM	101.9 FM	1969 (closed-circuit) 1975 (off-campus on cable) 1982 (FM)	Vancouver, BC	University of British Columbia
CIUT-FM	89.5 FM	1966 (as <i>Radio Varisty</i> , closed-circuit) 1987 (FM)	Toronto, ON	University of Toronto
CIVL-FM	88.5 FM	2006	Abbotsford, BC	University College of the Fraser Valley
CIXX-FM	106.9 FM	1978	London, ON	Fanshawe College
CJAM-FM	91.5 FM	1974 (on AM 660, carrier current) 1983 (FM)	Windsor, ON	University of Windsor
CJIQ-FM	88.3 FM	2001	Kitchener, ON	Conestoga College
CJJJ-FM	106.5 FM	2003	Brandon, MB	Assiniboine Community College
CJLO	1690 AM	1998 (over the internet) 2007 (AM)	Montreal, QC	Concordia University
CJLX-FM	91.3 FM	1992 (on 92.3 FM) 2005 (on 91.3 FM)	Belleville, ON	Loyalist College
CJMQ-FM	88.9 FM	1995	Sherbrooke, QC	Bishop's University
CJSF-FM	90.1 FM	1974 (as SFCRS) 1980 (AM) 1985 (cable FM) 2001 (FM)	Burnaby, BC	Simon Fraser University
CJSR-FM	88.5 FM	1984	Edmonton, AB	University of Alberta
CJSW-FM	90.9 FM	1955 (closed-circuit, campus only) 1985 (FM)	Calgary, AB	University of Calgary
CJUM-FM	101.5 FM	1998	Winnipeg, MB	University of Manitoba
CKCU-FM	93.1 FM	1975	Ottawa, ON	Carleton University
CKDJ-FM	107.9 FM	1972 (as CBRT on closed-circuit) 1994 (on 96.9 FM) 2003 (on 107.9 FM)	Ottawa, ON	Algonquin College
CKDU-FM	88.1 FM	1985	Halifax, NS	Dalhousie University
CKHC-FM	96.9 FM	2004	Toronto, ON	Humber College
CKIC-FM	92.9 FM	2004	Winnipeg, MB	Red River College
CKLN-FM	88.1 FM	1983	Toronto, ON	Ryerson University
CKLU-FM	96.7 FM	1984 (closed-circuit) 1986 (cable FM) 1997 (FM)	Sudbury, ON	Laurentian University
CKMO	900 AM	1993	Victoria, BC	Camosun College
CKMS-FM	100.3 FM	1977 (on 94.5 FM) 1992 (100.3 FM)	Waterloo, ON	University of Waterloo
CKRG-FM	89.9 FM	1977-80 (cable only) 1985 (campus only, no license) 1990 (AM) 1998 (FM)	Toronto, ON	Glendon College
CKUM-FM	93.5 FM	1971	Moncton, NB	Université de Moncton
CKUT-FM	90.3 FM	1989	Montreal, QC	McGill University
CKUW-FM	95.9 FM	1968 (closed circuit)	Winnipeg, MB	University of Winnipeg

CKXU-FM	88.3 FM	1999 (FM) 1972 (AM) 1988 (cable FM) 2004 (FM)	Lethbridge, AB	University of Lethbridge
CRNC-FM	90.1 FM	?	Welland, ON	Niagara College

APPENDIX B

**Number of times artists
are programmed during
the ten broadcasts
featured in this thesis:**

Approximately 10 Plays:

*Bonjour Brumaire

Approximately 8 Plays:

*Amanda Mabro

*Katie Moore

Approximately 7 Plays:

*Julie Doiron

David Martel

Approximately 6 Plays:

Hollerado

Joel Plaskett Emergency

Me, Mom, and Morgentaler

Great Lake Swimmers

Approximately 5 Plays:

Matt Lipscombe

Lil' Andy and Karaoke Cowboy

Wintersleep

Peter Elkas

Destroy all Dreamers

Hayden

Oh Susana

Approximately 4 Plays:

United Steel Workers of Montreal

Trip the Off

Alexisonfire

Femme Generation

Mike Evin

The Echo Hunters

The Dears

*Grand Theft Bus

Approximately 3 Plays:

Plants and Animals

The Flatliners

Die Mannequin

Destroyer

Les Handclaps

Bullmoose

Snailhouse

Caribou

Danko Jones

Creature

Jakalope

Bionic

Approximately 2 Plays:

Krista L.L. Muir

Socalled

Miracle Fortress

The Besnard Lakes

Torngat

Tokyo Police Club

National Parks

Sessions

Rufus Wainwright

Jason Bajada

Martha Wainwright

Pony Up

Jason Collett

Lesbians on Ecstasy

The Reason

Tele

Cancer Bats

Approximately 1 Play:

Ghislain Poirier

We Are Wolves

O Linea

Dirty Tricks

Gatineau

Jim Bryson

Mahjorbidet

Misteur Valaire

Famous Lovers

The Line Atlantic

Metric

Hot Springs

*Fugitives

OK Giraffe

One Night Band

GrimSkunk

Immaculate Machine

Jenn Grant

Arcade Fire

Malajube

Corneille

Fuck Buttons

*Ron Sexsmith

Dan Brick

Peter Katz

Bob Walsh

Paul Cargnello

AIDS Wolf

Japanther

Run Chico Run

Broadcaster

Major Maker

Protest the Hero

Death Boat

Skinny Puppy

Tribal Machine

Ill Scarlet

Thornley

*-Artist is interviewed at
some point during the ten
broadcasts

APPENDIX C

Locations mentioned during the ten broadcasts:

In order of most frequently mentioned to least (from top of left column to bottom of right column):

Le Divan Orange – 4234 St-Laurent

Cabaret Music Hall – 2111 St-Laurent

Lion d'Or – 1676 Ontario E.

Club Lambi – 4465 St-Laurent

La Sala Rosa – 4848 St-Laurent

Le Social – 1445 Bishop

Café Campus – 57 Prince Arthur E.

Saints Showbar – 30 Ste-Catherine O.

Zoobizarre – 6388 St-Hubert

Centre St-Ambroise – 5080-A St-Ambroise

La Tulipe – 4530 Papineau

Casa del Popolo – 4873 St-Laurent

Black Dot – 2035 St-Laurent (now closed)

Club Soda – 1225 St-Laurent

Foufounes Electriques – 87 Ste-Catherine E.

Barfly – 4062-A St-Laurent

The Pound – 377 Richmond

Le National – 1220 Ste-Catherine E.

The Yellow Door – 3625 Aylmer

L'Olympia – 1004 Ste-Catherine E.

L'Absynthe – 1738 St-Denis

The Eastern Bloc – 7240 Clark

SAT – 1195 St-Laurent

APPENDIX D

Frequency of key terms heard throughout the ten broadcasts:

Broadcast 1 (B1) = February 18, 2008	Broadcast 6 (B6) = March 24, 2008
Broadcast 2 (B2) = February 25, 2008	Broadcast 7 (B7) = March 31, 2008
Broadcast 3 (B3) = March 3, 2008	Broadcast 8 (B8) = April 7, 2008
Broadcast 4 (B4) = March 10, 2008	Broadcast 9 (B9) = April 14, 2008
Broadcast 5 (B5) = March 17, 2008	Broadcast 10 (B10) = April 21, 2008

Key Terms	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10
Community	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Local	2	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	1	0
Alternative	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Independent/Indie	3	0	3	2	2	4	1	2	1	0
Montreal	19	11	14	11	16	16	9	12	9	9
Canada/Canadian	3	7	6	5	1	21	2	3	1	0
McGill	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
University	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0
Campus	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scene	4	0	4	1	10	8	0	2	0	0

APPENDIX E

Source: <http://secure.ckut.ca/cgi-bin/ckut-grid.pl>
(June 2008)



Monday							
07:00	the monday morning after	the tuesday morning after	the wednesday morning after	lendemain de la veille	the friday morning after (website)	adventures in music cont'd	mind, soul and spirit
08:00						quebec-acadie en musique	
09:00	latin music mondays / made in brazil	basabasa soukous soukous soundz	where's the beat (website)	folk directions (website)	jazz amuck	john abbott on air / anything goes	latin time
10:00							
10:30							international radio report (website)
11:00	All Things McGill	ecolibrum	Shtettl on the Shortwave	under the olive tree	souverains anonymes / prison radio	samedi midi	dobbin's den (website)
11:30	free radicals (website)		xx files		legal ease		
12:00	world skip the beat	victorious and invincible	if you got ears	venus	butcher's noon time cuts	modular systems / future classic radio	
13:00							
14:00	let's get baked	voko/voice of korea (website)	caravan	movement museum	sigaw ng bayan	funky revolutions	the goods
15:00	new shit	the montreal sessions	the lion's den	positive vibes	aackk!	west indian rhythms	bhum bhum time
16:00							

17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	20:30	21:00	22:00	23:00	00:00	01:00	02:00	03:00	04:00	06:00
queer corps (A)	native solidarity news (website) (A)	health on earth (A)	hersay (A)	amandla (A)	grey matters (website) (A)	listening to latin america (A)	cafe (A)						bollywood dhama (A)
	dykes on mykes / lesbosons (A)	soul perspectives (A)		dromotele (website) (A)		masters at work (A)							biocross rambling (A)
	underground sounds (A)	health on earth (A)	jazz euphorium (A)		macondo (A)								country classics (A)
		hotel du blues (A)		chaud pour le mont-stone / francois et les exercices (A)		sounds of steel / freekick (website) (A)							cha cha che in (A)
	drastic plastic (A)		roots rock rebel (website) (A)	entertainment through pain (A)	the weekend groove (A)	skewing the waves (A)							groove garden (A)
	the hydra's tail (A)	harvey christ radio hour (website) / esl (A)		entertainment through pain (cont) (A)	we funk (website) (A)	stereo phobic (A)							sound of soul (A)
	pirate's of libes (A)	the theme team / reality attack (A)	off the hook (A)										
	rock n'roll radio (A)			no, i'm iron man: the story of dikembe mutombo (A)	pure pop for twisted people (A)	turn the tide / soca sessions (A)							roots rock reggae (A)
	beyond the horizon (A)	right train (A)											
	wombest tables (A)			afro nautico (A)	an even keel (A)	your radio is broken (A)							
	new born reggae ting (A)	full circle (A)		the explosion's show (A)	heavy rotation (A)	adventures in music (A)							headline beat space (A)

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