RADIO, COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY IN SOUTH AFRICA: A RHIZOMATIC STUDY
OF BUSH RADIO IN CAPE TOWN

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This dissertation entitled
RADIO, COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY IN SOUTH AFRICA: A RHIZOMATIC STUDY
OF BUSH RADIO IN CAPE TOWN

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This dissertation deals with community radio in South Africa, before and after democratic elections in 1994. Adopting a case study approach and drawing on ethnographic methodology, the dissertation outlines the history of Bush Radio, the oldest community radio project in Africa.

To demonstrate how Bush Radio creates community, this dissertation focuses on several cases within Bush Radio. The use of hip-hop for social change is explored. Framed within theories of entertainment-education and behavior change, the dissertation explores specific programs on-air and outreach programs offered by the station. This dissertation also looks at kwai to music, a new hybrid musical form that emerged in South Africa post-apartheid. In particularly, the dissertation argues that Bush Radio uses kwai to music in the consolidation of a black identity in South Africa. Programs targeting children and youth are also discussed, and the dissertation argues that Bush Radio offers a space for the creation of a generation consciousness in the post-apartheid era. Finally, the dissertation looks at how Bush Radio creates and maintains a gay community through its program In the Pink.
Rooted in cultural studies, this dissertation draws on the theory of rhizomatics espoused by Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, arguing for new, creative theorizations of alternative media. Furthermore, this dissertation uses Victor Turner’s communitas and Pierre Bourdieu’s habitus to deconstruct the community in community radio.

In particular, I argue that Bush Radio is not so much an organization as it is an organism, held together by a complex set of interlinked structures, with the concept of “community” pulsating as its central life-force. A kind of “body without organs” (Haraway, 1989), Bush Radio has no real essence – it is both the embodiment of community radio at its best – and its antithesis. Bush Radio is not a “bush” radio, geographically or figuratively. It sports state of the art digital equipment and a relatively sophisticated organizational structure, yet it is still deeply connected to the various communities it serves.

Approved: Jenny Nelson
Associate Professor, Telecommunications
Acknowledgements

This dissertation is for my late father, Jonas (Jonie) Frederick Bosch, who, named a “true revolutionary fighter for freedom” by his comrades, has always been my inspiration in all I do. Also for my mom, Evelyn Rosie Bosch, who prepared me for this endeavor by teaching me to read when I was three years old, as well as for her constant love and support throughout this process.

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Above all, this dissertation is for all the past and present staff of Bush Radio and for members of all community radio stations around the world. May you draw inspiration from this story of the “little station that could and did.” Special thanks go to Zane Ibrahim, Adrian Louw and Brenda Leonard for their assistance and support during the fieldwork periods. Thanks also to Juanita Williams for looking up and sending me information via email when I was in the U.S.

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Figure 1. Map of South Africa showing internal boundaries before (below) and after (above) apartheid. From www.maps.com
Figure 2. Map of the Western Cape, showing areas mentioned in the dissertation.
Abridged Timeline of South African History

1652 Dutch settlement
1806 British take control
1899-1902 Anglo-Boer War/ South African War
1910 Union of South Africa formed
1912 South African Native National Congress (later the African National Congress, or ANC) founded
1913 Land Act brings about massive African land dispossession.
1923 The Urban Areas Act ensures permanent urban segregation.
1948 Daniel F. Malan's National Party wins all-white elections, apartheid created
1950 The National Party officially bans the Communist Party.
The Group Areas Act formally establishes townships for black-only dwelling, with residents renting from white landowners.
1960 Most African colonies are granted independence
Sharpeville Massacre leads to death and injury of hundreds of African pass protesters; First State of Emergency declared.
1961 Independence from the Commonwealth
1969 The UN General Assembly adopts resolution 2396, prohibits cultural, educational, and sports exchanges with South Africa.
1976 Soweto Riots
UDF established.
1986 Economic sanctions
1990  President F.W. de Klerk announces the unbanning the ANC; Nelson Mandela released from Victor Verster Prison on February 11.

1991  CODESA – All Party Talks  
Apartheid laws abolished

1993  Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk share the Nobel Peace Prize.

1994  First democratic elections, ANC wins with over 60% of the vote; Nelson Mandela inaugurated as president.

1996  President Mandela signs a new Constitution for the Republic of South Africa after its certification by the Constitutional Court.

1999  After a new round of elections, Thabo Mbeki replaces Nelson Mandela as president. Executive Deputy President Jacob Zuma sworn in one day later.
Preface

My earliest memories of growing up in apartheid South Africa are of our township council-owned house in Cape Town, rented because my parents refused to buy a house in an area designated for blacks, in protest against the Group Areas Act. Townships are economically deprived areas far from the city center, where black South Africans were forced to live during apartheid. The Group Areas Act of 1950 assigned specific geographic areas or neighborhoods to be exclusively occupied by certain racial groups. Many black, so-called non-white South Africans were forcibly removed from areas that were re-zoned for white occupation only. In Cape Town for example, thousands of people were moved from the District Six suburb along the mountainside in the city, to the desolate sandy Cape Flats area miles away, where both I, and later, community radio station Bush Radio, were born.

Apartheid ("apartness" in Afrikaans) was the official policy of racial segregation introduced by the National Party government in 1948. Under this policy South Africans were divided into four racial groups - White, Coloured, Indian, Black - with different rules, and decreasing levels of "civilization" accorded to each. Khoisan (derogatorily referred to as Bushmen) slaves, created Afrikaans when attempting to learn the Dutch spoken by their masters. White Afrikaners appropriated Afrikaans after
their defeat in the Boer War (1899-1902), making it their national language (Barnard, 1992). The development of Afrikaans has also been attributed to Dutch who moved into the interior, losing touch with both their homeland and linguistic changes in their mother tongue. Today Afrikaans is a language independent of Dutch, and is the third most spoken language in South Africa, though English is the country’s unofficial lingua franca.

I vividly remember being woken up many times by the boots of the infamous Special Branch (secret police) against our front door in the middle of the night. Often an entire squad, outfitted in camouflage gear, would arrive to cordon off our neighborhood and to arrest my father for his political activities as a trade unionist and member of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM). Launched in 1942, the NEUM was a body that aimed to unite members of the three main black apartheid ethnic groups – Africans, Coloureds and Indians. Many members came from the Workers Party of South Africa (WPSA), a small group of Cape Town based Trotskyists who stressed the centrality of the land question and the demand for the vote.

Through sleepy eyes I’d watch my older brother bundle up the worst of the banned literature from the rows of books in our back room, and hide it in the long grass in the backyard. The Minister of the Interior banned items under the Publications and Entertainments Act of 1963, which stated that a publication could
be banned if it was "undesirable", which included being detrimental to the order of the state. Thousands of books, newspapers, and other publications were banned in South Africa between 1950 and 1990. My father would leave in the patrol car, escorted by one or two caspirs – heavy yellow armored police vehicles, used most often by riot control units.

A visitor once chatted with my father across our front gate – both of them seated on our wooden kitchen chairs with faded paint flecks, carrying on an animated conversation as though nothing was amiss. My father’s friend could not cross the boundary of the property because my father was under house arrest and to do so would constitute a so-called illegal gathering. When I was nine years old my father called a local police officer to escort us to my violin lesson in the leafy whites-only suburb of Rondebosch. Under house arrest, he could not legally move across the boundaries of our property without an escort.

Under the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950, being under house arrest was one of many restrictions that constituted banning orders. For my father this meant that he could leave the house for work between 7am and 7pm, and was confined home on weekends. Banned individuals were not allowed to meet with more than one person at a time other than family members, hold office in any organization, speak publicly, write for, or be quoted in any publication. Banned individuals were also barred from certain
areas, buildings, and institutions, such as law courts, schools, and newspaper offices.

This was my introduction to resistance, politics, and life. At that time, resistance was understood as activities that included making public political speeches, handing out subversive leaflets or participating in street protests and marches. In fact, when one talks of resistance in South Africa during apartheid (1948 to 1994), the activities associated with political organizations come to mind. These included street protests and public clashes between police and protesters during which teargas, rubber bullets, or even live ammunition was fired on crowds armed with stones. Other examples of resistance that come to mind are the planned attacks against government buildings carried out by Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the military wing of the African National Congress. More peaceful forms of resistance included boycotts of supermarket chains or stayaways, which involved masses of people simultaneously staying away from work or school, with the noticeable absence of pedestrians and motorists in the city centers intended as an indication of mass discontent.

Born in 1976, the year of the notorious Soweto Riots, I was part of what could be called a lost generation - old enough to have a sense of the country’s injustices and a deep understanding of politics, yet too young to have participated in any kind of
political action. The Soweto Riots refer to a march on June 16 1976, when thousands of children protesting the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in black schools, were fired on and killed by police.

By the time I entered high school in 1988, the culture of student boycotts, stayaways and street protests had evaporated. At this stage the apartheid system was already beginning to collapse economically and politically. The move toward democracy and the eventual collapse of apartheid occurred as the inevitable result of an interplay between several key factors, which can be summarized as follows:

1) Internal: the apartheid system began to unravel economically and become less sustainable; and increased insurrection and protests within the country by a unified black population made it "ungovernable."

2) Regional: South Africa was losing its economic and military domination of the region as a result of political change, particularly in Namibia, Angola and Mozambique; and,

3) International: Events in the global arena, such as the end of the Cold War, as well as the ideological failure and international condemnation of apartheid through, among others, economic sanctions.

By the time I reached the University of Cape Town in 1993, I channeled pent-up revolutionary fervor into the campus
newspaper, Varsity. After segregated coloured elementary and high school education, this was my first experience in an integrated environment. The term “coloured” is an apartheid designation to refer to people of mixed race origin, resulting from slavery at the Cape and reflecting the cultural influences of North Africa, indigenous groups, Malay, Italian, British and Dutch. The designation is controversial, and though some use it with pride, many others use the term in inverted commas or prefixed by “so-called,” preferring to consider themselves under the broader designation of black. Of South Africa’s 43 million, 9% are coloured and are concentrated mostly in the Western Cape region, primarily in Cape Town, capital of the Western Cape and legislative capital of South Africa. This dissertation acknowledges the limitations of the term “coloured” and uses it henceforth without the inverted commas or the prefix “so-called”, in the interests of simplicity.

At the campus newspaper we called each other “com” (short for comrade), we read Ché Guevara, Marx, Trotsky, and we wrote articles with headlines like “This is not America” and “Who killed Kurt Cobain.” We once called for the student body to boycott the elections of the student representative council, claiming that they were rigged by the administration. We were always fighting injustice, real or perceived. We claimed media as our tool of resistance, in much the same way as older siblings
and parents had used stones and petrol bombs. However, some resistance had also taken place in the media during apartheid. Community media (print and video) flourished in the 1980s, providing an alternative source of information to the state controlled South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC).

My relationship with Bush Radio started unexpectedly in 1995, on one of Cape Town’s notorious speeding, overcrowded 15-seat minibus taxis, traveling home from classes at the University of Cape Town. Carrying my copy of *Varsity* hot off the press sparked a conversation about student and community media with another passenger, late Ghanaian freelance journalist James Brew, who recruited me to join his production team. Brew was the producer of a current affairs magazine program called *African Rhythm*, which aired Saturday afternoons at 5pm. At this time community radio in South Africa was still relatively new and I had not yet heard Bush Radio on the airwaves. In fact, the station had only just been granted its first broadcast license. I joined Brew’s production team as a curious print journalist, and learned to edit and cue inserts dubbed from cassette onto 16-inch reel-to-reel tape, holding a combination of locally recorded interviews and clips from international news sources.

Only a few weeks later, I became the presenter of *African Rhythm*, because the person Brew had in mind didn’t show up for work that day! Of course this was a rather disastrous situation,
which later improved with Brew’s coaching and practice. I sometimes facilitate training courses with program integrator Adrian Louw in a volunteer capacity, and when new trainees are impressed with my knowledge of radio production, Louw still teases me about how nervous I was the very first time I had to run the control desk in the studio, admitting that he was very worried that I would not turn out to be a viable recruit.

A few months later, Brew was out of town working on a story and I started to produce the program. Soon I was no longer coming in only on Saturdays, but during the week as well, to set up interviews and edit my inserts. I could no longer remember a time when I had not heard of Bush Radio or when I was unable to operate the on-air studio or splice tape. Bush Radio had become an integral part of my life, an escape from studies at the university and an opportunity to expand my journalism experience from print to broadcasting.

After graduation I went to work for a local film company while continuing to volunteer at Bush Radio as the producer of *African Rhythm*. When my contract with the film company ended, station director, Zane Ibrahim, offered me a full-time position as trainee program manager. I accepted, eager to transform my hobby into a career. I stayed at Bush Radio for three years and later became Program Coordinator, as well as continuing to work
as a producer and presenter on a number of other programs, most notably, a one-hour afternoon talk show called Backchat.

With this personal account, this is where this dissertation begins, and where, rhizomatically, it will end. What follows is a snapshot of community and identity issues in South Africa, portrayed through this ethnographic account of the story of Bush Radio in Cape Town.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Community radio station Bush Radio is nestled at the foot of Table Mountain in Cape Town. When a child goes missing, broadcasts are immediately interrupted with urgent calls to the public until the child is found. On Mondays Positive Living takes radio into the high schools with its outside broadcast unit, facilitating frank discussions about sex and HIV. The continent’s only gay talk show airs on Thursdays, and on Saturdays, children as young as 5 years old broadcast from the on-air studio. During the recent war in Iraq, Bush Radio printed several hundred T-shirts sporting the eye-catching slogan “Bush Against War”, and organized anti-war protest marches in the city center. As station director Zane Ibrahim said,

When the war started, Bush Radio had to immediately inform the people of the townships how this war is going to affect them, their lives – gasoline, petrol will go up, every foodstuff, imports would go up, so they had to be informed, so they could make informed decisions about how they feel about the war. When President Bush gave the world a 48-hour ultimatum we decided to give him an ultimatum for peace, and we suspended all our programming for 48 hours, and played John Lennon’s “Give Peace a Chance” 576 times, again and again. We had T-Shirts printed “Bush Against War”, so this is the kind of things we do (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, 07/03).
Bush Radio also has a range of awards under its belt. The station earned a silver medal from the New York Radio Festival for its YAA (Youth Against AIDS) 2000 project and was awarded the prestigious Prince Claus Award for development from the Prince Claus Fund in the Netherlands. Ibrahim received an honorable token of appreciation from the 8th World Conference of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) in Kathmandu, Nepal in 2003 and most recently an Excellence Award from the Peninsula Technikon for its training of journalism students.

1 Pentech is a post-high school technical college, which offers vocational based certificate and diploma courses.
Justification for the study

The emergence of community radio in the late 1990s, in radical opposition to both state-owned and commercial media, represents a radical shift in the country’s media industry. There is a wealth of literature on the alternative press in apartheid South Africa, but the activities of community radio, before and after 1994, have not been adequately documented. There is a developed body of literature on broadcasting in South Africa during apartheid, but there is a clear gap in this literature. Although there are many case study descriptions of community radio stations around the world, there is only one published book of case studies of stations in South Africa (Siemering et al, 1998). While we know that many stations were licensed after the end of apartheid in 1994, there is no indication of the activities or successes of these stations. Furthermore, the literature does not provide any connections between the changed relationship between government and mainstream media after democracy, and how community media functions in this changed terrain.

Previous literature has documented and described community radio projects, but none, except for Huesca (1996) have explored how participation is constructed or enacted in any theoretically systematic way. This study is concerned with how Bush Radio functions to create participation. While it is important to
consider the programming of a station, it is equally important to consider how that programming is created i.e. a study “behind the scenes” may lead to increased understanding of community radio.

Schramm (1964) observes that local media are important for social and economic development because they are familiar with the needs of local areas and allow access to the media. Similarly, Moemeka (1994) observes that media infrastructure should allow people to actively participate in media activities, so that content is relevant to their media needs and aspirations. For example, people should be allowed to participate in the hands-on production of radio materials, and have a say in the content of materials that are aired or published. Community participation is thus understood as meaningful action on the part of local citizens in a medium otherwise dominated by commercial and corporate interests.

It is thus important to explore the operation of community radio in South Africa in order to understand its function and role in the building of a democratic South Africa. Research in this area may also help to legitimize community radio stations, which encounter resistance from commercial stations who perceive them as competition for advertising revenue and listenership.

The Cassette Education Trust (CASET), which later became Bush Radio, was not the only media space of resistance in South Africa in the 1980s. There were many other spaces of resistance
including theater, women’s and labor movements, and community media initiatives such as the Community Video Education Trust (CVET) and the Film and Allied Workers’ Union (FAWU). Bush Radio was chosen as a case study because it is the oldest community radio project in the country. Bush Radio conducts training workshops for other community stations and represents an “industry standard.”

Furthermore, Bush Radio represents a remarkable example of the potential of community radio, having won many awards, as mentioned above. In 1999 acclaimed linguist and social commentator Noam Chomsky came to Bush Radio for a 30-minute visit, which turned into four hours. Upon his return, he sent the station an email message, which is currently posted on the Bush Radio bulletin board. It states, “I have traveled to many countries and have participated in radio programs everywhere. Bush Radio is arguably the most important radio station I have ever visited.” It is thus worth exploring this particular station further to investigate its success, and to explore the potential of such a participatory communication project for the development of the community media sector countrywide, within the contested context of community and identity in South Africa.
Research questions

Using Marks’ (2001) framework for understanding social movements, this dissertation aims to answer the following research questions:

- What political structures and objective social conditions gave rise to Bush Radio?
- How has Bush Radio transformed over time?
- Who are the people that make up Bush Radio and what is their collective and individual consciousness and identity?
- How has the nature of community changed over time and who is the community that Bush Radio speaks to?
- Does Bush Radio play a role in building community?
- Does Bush Radio achieve what it sets out to achieve?

Organization of the dissertation

The remainder of this dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter 2 describes the methodology used in this dissertation and discusses how the ethnography was carried out at Bush Radio, as well as challenges encountered in the field. This chapter contextualizes the interviews that form an essential part of the later chapters, and which are woven throughout the dissertation. Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive history of Bush Radio based on oral accounts from the founders, as well as from current staff members. Several sources of historical data including minutes
from meetings, internal reports, newsletters, the web site, newspaper articles and funding applications were also used in this chapter. The story of Bush Radio is situated within the context of the history of broadcasting in South Africa, particularly the emergence of community media within the political struggle against apartheid, and its advancement after democratic reform in 1994.

Chapter 4 deconstructs the term community in the case of community radio in general and Bush Radio in particular. This chapter draws on Turner’s (1969) concepts of liminality and communitas, as well as Bourdieu’s (1977) concept of habitus, suggesting that the term community may represent a more fluid and multi-dimensional space than the rhetoric on development communication suggests. This chapter also provides a brief look at the way people in Cape Town self-identify in terms of racial community. Furthermore, the habitus of Cape Town, the city in which Bush Radio is located, will also be explored. This is based on the premise that space is constitutive not only of relations of power, but also of the needs, demands and actions of urban protest movements (Pile & Keith, 1997).

Chapter 5 provides an outline of how alternative media and community radio have been theorized, and offers an alternative perspective based on the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix
Guattari (1987) on rhizomes, and feminist scholar Donna Haraway’s (1989, 1991, 1994) writings on the cyborg. This chapter argues that community radio follows horizontal, rhizomatic patterns, growing more like the grass than the trees. Moreover, Haraway’s theoretical use of the metaphor of the cyborg is particularly relevant, since community radio is comprised of many, sometimes seemingly incompatible, parts.

Chapter 6 provides a description of Bush Radio’s Children’s Resource Education Workshop (CREW), an innovative project that trains children aged 5-18 to produce and present radio diaries and on-air programs. This chapter also outlines the Alkemy project, (alternative curriculum for mentoring youth), within the context of the education system in South Africa, using Paulo Freire’s theories of conscientization and alternative education.

Chapter 7 describes Bush Radio’s approaches to HIV/AIDS, particularly the entertainment-education (e-e) HIV-Hop project, which uses hip hop to effect social change; as well as the Youth Against Aids Project (YAA 2000). This chapter explores e-e as the combination of entertainment and education in a deliberate attempt to positively change audience members’ knowledge, attitudes and behaviors with respect to a specific issue. Chapter 8 deals with Bush Radio’s use of kwaito music to build community. Kwaito is a hybrid musical form associated with black identity that emerged after democratic elections in 1994. This chapter
outlines how kwaito builds community by becoming a site for the articulation of variable identities. This chapter approaches musical genres as cultural texts, capable of generating multiple meanings, and thus becoming sites of complex identity formation.

Chapter 9 deals with gay-lesbian-bisexual-transexual (GLBT) uses of radio with a focus on *In the Pink*, the continent’s only radio program produced for and by the GLBT community. The gay community in South Africa, particularly in Cape Town, succeeded in building a powerful independent community at spatial, economic, cultural and political levels. This chapter will explore how the creation of an additional space of resistance, radio, impacts upon the larger struggle for gay liberation; and results in the consolidation of a GLBT community.

Chapter 10 provides conclusions and thoughts on community radio in South Africa and Bush Radio’s role in terms of identity, community and culture, with particular reference to the research questions of this study and to general studies of community radio.

The dissertation may be read in much the same way Deleuze recommended that one should read *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, i.e. as you would listen to a record, not approaching it as a closed book that you must take or leave. Like a music recording, this text may have chapters that can be skipped, or others that
can be read and re-read. Nothing will be lost if chapters are read out of sequence.

Each chapter has its own trajectories, which are meant to eventually converge at one juncture (the conclusion), through a number of connecting routes (the themes of identity and community). In other words, this dissertation is not the final word on anything, but should rather be perceived as an open system (Deleuze, 1995), unpredictable, often discontinuous and always incomplete.

**Conclusion**

This dissertation highlights the importance of media as direct catalysts on political, economic and social processes. Media are no longer merely conduits for governments, political parties or citizens, but “emerge in modern polyarchies as an autonomous power center in reciprocal competition with other power centers” (Jacobs, 2003; Swanson & Mancini, 1996). Bush Radio is approached as one of many spaces of resistance in South Africa.

Drawing on an ethnographic methodology, this dissertation further argues that Bush Radio provides a mirror image for struggles of community and identity in a post-apartheid Cape Town. In short, this dissertation is about identity construction in South Africa through the eyes of one community radio station in Cape Town. It argues for rethinking old theoretical
conceptualizations of community radio and for more theoretically creative, rhizomatic approaches to community radio.

Nuttall & Michael (2000) use the term creolisation to refer to the process in post-apartheid South Africa “whereby individuals of different cultures, languages and religions are thrown together and invent a new language, creole, a new culture and a new social organization” (p.6). However, this doesn’t take place in a space devoid of continuing power struggles. The most recent Census statistics (2003) show that South African society reflects economic inequalities that coincide with the racial divides of the past. For example, while there is a small burgeoning black bourgeoisie, the majority of the working class is black. As Wasserman & Jacobs (2003) point out, inequalities from the past hamper cross-cultural movement. Therefore, I cannot adopt a simplistic approach to identity construction in South Africa. As Stuart Hall (1994) says, cultural identities are involved in a process of becoming, rather than a state of being.

Much of the writing on South African politics comes from a structural political economy perspective, which assumes that there are no spaces outside of power relations from which to resist oppression. However, Pile and Keith (1997) suggest that power relations might produce discontinuous spaces, through which resistance might transgress or move between. Spaces of resistance are thus both disconnected from, but also in some ways connected
to, spaces of oppression. In this way, community radio represents one form of resistance that moved and continues to move between the authoritative spaces of the political and broadcast landscape. As Bhabha (1990) argues, people occupy spaces, and resistance may occur in any of these spaces, but also “beyond” or “in-between” them. This dissertation is the story of Bush Radio as a discontinuous space of resistance, beyond and between traditional resistance. In particular, I argue that Bush Radio is not so much an organization as it is an organism, held together by a complex set of interlinked structures, with the concept of community pulsating as its central life-force. A kind of “body without organs” (Haraway, 1989), Bush Radio has no real essence – it is both the embodiment of community radio at its best – and its antithesis. Bush Radio is not a “bush” radio, geographically or figuratively. It sports state of the art digital equipment and a relatively sophisticated organizational structure, yet it is still deeply connected to the various communities it serves.
Chapter 2: The rhizomatic methodology

Introduction

The previous chapter explained my relationship to the research setting, providing some details about my personal agendas and why I chose Bush Radio as a case study. It also provided a basic introduction to Bush Radio, described the justification for my study, listed the research questions, provided an outline of the organization of the dissertation chapters, and summarized my conclusions.

This chapter takes further my personal connections to Bush Radio, outlines my methodological choices and challenges, and serves as an introduction to the interviews that I quote at length throughout the dissertation. Firstly, my choice of a qualitative ethnographic methodology will be explained. I will then describe how I went about doing the ethnography, explaining what challenges I faced while attempting to do this rhizomatically.

Choice of methodology

When I left Bush Radio for graduate studies on a Fulbright scholarship at Ohio University in 1999, I was eager to explore the theoretical aspects of the environment I had experienced first hand. Studies in Communication and Development provided an excellent introduction to social change and development theory,
and an opportunity to study and participate in community radio in Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago. But it was only when I entered the doctoral program in Mass Communication that I began to recognize Bush Radio as a potential subject for serious academic study.

I had witnessed other students from Europe and the United States spend time at the station while I worked there, with the intention of writing research papers about it or as extensions of their academic programs. But I had never considered writing about the radio station where I had learned everything I knew about community radio and development. I became more and more interested in community radio’s role in South Africa after apartheid, and as the oldest community radio project in the country, Bush Radio seemed a logical choice.

As mentioned earlier, Bush Radio has won many international awards, and is considered by other radio stations as one of the leading and most developed community radio stations in the continent, both in terms of technical infrastructure and organizational development. The station frequently receives requests from other community radio stations around the country for placements for their staff, in order for them to learn specific skills in areas such as news or production. Bush Radio also plays a leading role in organizations such as the National Community Radio Forum (NCRF) and the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), as founding members of both organizations.
Attending a NAB meeting in August 2003, I was invited to speak on the future of community radio over the next ten years, and Ibrahim delivered a workshop on financial sustainability for community radio stations.

Given my extensive involvement in the organization that I was proposing to study, reflexive or narrative ethnography seemed a logical methodological choice. In reflexive ethnographies the researcher’s personal experiences are critical to illuminate the culture under study. Reflexive ethnographies range on a continuum - from starting research from one’s own perspective, to confessional ethnographies as described by Van Maanen (1990), where the researcher’s stories of doing the research become the main focus (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). My research leans towards the former method, explicated further in this chapter. I used “traditional” ethnographic methods to carry out the study; and Tedlock’s (1991) approach of narrative ethnography, to incorporate my experiences into the ethnographic description and analysis of Bush Radio, with the emphasis on the “ethnographic dialogue or encounter” between myself and members of the group being studied (p.178).
Why ethnography?

A qualitative ethnographic approach was essential. As O’Connor (2001) says, anthropologists have generally paid little attention to radio, even though the subaltern populations that are most usually their subjects usually listen to the radio. In general, the field of communication studies has had an ambiguous relationship with ethnography. Participant observation has been used to study the production of newspapers and TV shows, but cultural studies has been more receptive to ethnographic methods. As a few anthropologists became interested in the use of radio and TV by aboriginal people, there is some overlap between their writing and cultural studies, e.g., the work of Eric Michaels (1994) in Australia.

Theory and methodology are strongly intertwined, as the former informs the latter, and vice versa. A researcher’s theoretical framework informs choice of methodology and the specifics of carrying out the chosen methodology. One obvious example is the use of grounded theory and the accompanying constant comparative method. Another example may be an emphasis on semiotics or hermeneutics informed by an attention to culture as a system of signs and texts. In Women’s Words: The feminist practice of oral history, oral narratives are presented as an ideal means for gathering information central to understanding women’s lives and viewpoints.
In fact, doing ethnography demands a convergence of theory and practice. Approaching community radio from a critical perspective, using the rhizome and cyborg as key theoretical constructs, presents particular methodological challenges, which are discussed below.

The methodology outlined

The methodology of this study thus consisted primarily of an ethnography of Bush Radio, with the researcher as instrument and reflective heuristic device. In other words, this study takes note of the shift in the 1970s from an emphasis on participant observation to the “observation of participation”, and to concerns with power and praxis and the epistemological doubt associated with the crisis of representation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Morley and Geertz (in Murphy, 1999) assert that the value in ethnographic methods “lies precisely in their ability to help us ‘make things out’ in the context of their occurrence - in helping to understand...media consumption practices as they are embedded in the context of everyday life” (p.208). Ethnography sets aside the notion that behavior is rule governed or motivated by shared values and expectations, and maintains that social structures are locally produced, sustained and experienced (Holstein and Gubrium, 1999).

As Huesca (1996) points out in his study of the reporteros populares (people’s reporters) in Latin America, ethnography is a
useful way of explaining how participation is enacted and constructed. Much of the literature on communication, participation, and democracy, has been useful for documenting and justifying the move to create more inclusive media systems, but few have pointed out how this participation occurs. This construction of participation is of theoretical and practical importance given the growing interest in revitalizing the relationship between communication, democracy, the public sphere and social change (Huesca, 1996). In order to achieve this, Huesca moves beyond a prescriptive ethnography to concentrate on the field encounter between the researcher and subjects, emphasizing dialogue. In this approach, dialogue is posited as a way of guiding contact that implicates the researcher’s role in constructing knowledge, undercuts the researcher’s “contemplative gaze” and exposes subject-object vulnerability.

Similarly, Hocheimer (1993) moves beyond merely describing community radio stations, and points out that such media structures should be more closely examined. He says inevitable problems need to be addressed where these newly conceptualized media come into being, and as more people start producing information for themselves. Inherent in the difficulties of attempting to establish and maintain democratic media is the problem of defining what constitutes a “communicative democracy” and how to realize one in practice (p.174). Hocheimer raises
other potential problems such as: 1) Whether a station exercises any form of gate-keeping or whether it should be a conduit for all who step before the microphone (or perhaps both); 2) What happens when power, or people become entrenched, and when the interest or agendas of newcomers are at odds with those of the founders; and 3) Whether a station functions to serve its constituent community segments and whether the community acts as resources for the station.

These were the same issues I was interested in exploring at Bush Radio, since intended practices may not always translate into reality. In particular, I was interested in exploring the fact that the station always claims to serve “the community.” At first skeptical of this, through a deconstruction of the concept community, I came to realize that Bush Radio serves fragmented communities while simultaneously building bridges between them. But as Agar (1980) says, people do not always do what they say they do. Despite unified mission statements, leadership and personal conflict may affect the function of a community radio station. Since this study was concerned with these very issues, ethnography seemed to be a suitable methodology to effectively uncover the workings of Bush Radio.

As Fay Akindes (1999, 1) points out in Rhizomatic ethnography in Hawai’i, the rhizome invites an understanding of methodology as lived experience and auto-ethnography as both
process and product. Auto-ethnography is rhizomatic since it blurs the line between subject and object, researcher and research participants in the “mirror of fieldwork.” As Akindes says, her research study constituted a multi-dimensional, dynamic, shifting rhizome with multiple entry-points. My approach is similar, with different entry points into Bush Radio, guided by divergent theories out of different disciplines. I approached the study rhizomatically, by working at the station, reading about it, asking others about it; and studying it both from Cape Town and from afar. Similarly, while this dissertation is guided largely by the rhizomatic theoretical approaches of Deleuze and Guattari, it draws on a range of theories from different disciplines. In all the chapters I draw extensively on literature and theory from the fields of education, history, political science and sociology. Theories of political economy, behavior change, entertainment-education, critical consciousness, and queer theory, are some of the specific theories used rhizomatically in the dissertation.
“Doing” the ethnography

My initial foray into fieldwork was when I was a novice to both Bush Radio and ethnography (1995-1999). Fieldwork was carried out between June 10th and August 31st 2002 while working at the station as a producer of Abantu Abakhulu (The Aged in the Xhosa language), an eight-part, 30-minute series, dealing with health and social issues relevant to the elderly and aging.

This dissertation also drew on experiences working at the station as a full time programmer during June 1997 and June 1999; and during work at the station in a voluntary capacity during November – December 2000, and July-September 2001. Most recently, I spent three months at the station during June – August 2003. During these times I presented programs, facilitated training programs, assisted with scheduling, wrote and edited jingles, studio engineered for some evening programs like In the Pink, and facilitated a training course. The primary data-gathering methods during these periods were participant observation and in-depth interviews.
Figure 4. Me (left), helping with training during August 2003. Picture from the Bush Radio files.

**Theoretical and methodological diversity**

A rhizomatic methodological approach dictated the kind of theoretical diversity I argued for in the previous chapter. Different disciplines and diverse theories were used. Drawing on sociology for explanations of the social world, history to explain linkages and connections, and political science to explain dynamics of power and economics, made for integrated understandings and dynamic conclusions. New insights are possible when one casts aside the traditional shackles of mass communication theory.

Similarly, a rhizomatic approach prescribes methodological flexibility. One cannot approach the research study saying, “this is an ethnography and therefore I will do participant research
step by step as outlined in a textbook.” The process of data collection will generate connections, just as the rhizome does.

The researcher has to be open to new directions and be prepared to diverge from the original methodological blueprint. One example of this was my expectation that in-depth interviews and participant observations would be sufficient. Instead I found myself considering several sources of historical data as well, including minutes from meetings, public and internal reports, newsletters, and the website and funding applications, kept on the Bush Radio premises. I also used the newspaper archives at the South African National Library in Cape Town to find articles written about Bush Radio.

**The Interviews**

In-depth interviews were carried out with those involved in the formation of the station, as well as current managers and staff members. All full-time employees were interviewed. Most volunteer presenters and producers were interviewed as well, though these interviews were harder to set up because they had to be conducted after hours, during their free time. I conducted twenty open-ended interviews using a combination of structured and unstructured interview questions.

Interviews took place at the radio station and were recorded in private, primarily in the station’s meeting room and library. With the interviewees’ permission, the interviews were
recorded using a field recorder and lasted for an average of about an hour. These interviews were frequently supplemented with “on the job” interviews, since I found it useful to “interview” someone while they were going about their daily tasks. Frequently these informal conversations were more useful as people seemed to find it easier to talk when not pressured to do so through the formal interview environment. These “on the job” interviews were not recorded.

I would sometimes chat with listeners when they came into the station to pick up prizes won on the air. Listeners were always willing to share their thoughts on the station every time that I approached them. As part of my job as a studio engineer, I also sometimes had to note down the names and telephone numbers of callers who then had to be called back later to claim prizes. With the permission of the show’s producers, I would then later call these listeners up, identify myself as a researcher and Bush Radio volunteer, and ask for their opinions on the programs they had called in to. On one occasion a listener continued a conversation through email. In this particular instance, I was contacting the listener for views on the outside produced program Workers’ World, which deals with labor issues. However, I received a range of thoughts on the station in general.

The interview process is another example of how the rhizomatic approach influenced my methodology. In approaching the
research process from this rhizomatic perspective, interviews were considered not as records of facts, but as social texts, records of social interaction situated within the context of class relations in the larger society. Furthermore, the process of conducting interviews could not be approached in a linear fashion, where the interviewer asks the questions, and dutifully records the interviewees’ responses. Instead, this relationship had to be broken down. As the rhizome suggests unstable boundaries that bleed into each other, so the gap between researcher and researched must be narrowed. A rhizomatic approach could not adopt the traditional linear model. This meant that the interviews were approached as dialogues, and not as linear conversations. Two-way conversations that included the interviewee asking me questions too, or me asking them what I should ask them next, yielded more interesting results.

Many people found it difficult to be on the “other side” of the microphone. Everyone at the station is accustomed to conducting interviews and did not slip into the role of interviewee that easily. Many are accomplished interviewers and found it hard to be interviewed when they were accustomed to being on the other end of a microphone, in control and asking the questions.

In a similar manner, I found myself in an awkward situation, since my first training and experience in doing
interviews had been first as a print, and later as a radio journalist. When I found myself across a table or at the other end of a microphone from a journalist, I may have felt a need to “perform” or to show off my skills as a radio interviewer. I first realized this when I listened back to the first interviews, which sounded more like material for broadcast than useful material to answer my research questions.

This is why on the job interviews in a more relaxed “non-interview” situation seemed a good compromise. For example, I would often go into the music library and chat with the music producers while they were filing away CDs; or I would go into the on-air studio during an insert or recorded interview and talk to the presenter about their program or about Bush Radio in general. If I had not listened back to the interviews shortly after they were recorded, I would not have recognized or been able to correct my errors. This use of the constant comparative method means that my data collection, analysis, and theory were related reciprocally (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Instead of proving one specific theory I set out to observe the setting over time and to develop a number of theoretical approaches grounded in the data.

I found that my rapport with the organization, as the result of having worked there, facilitated interviews considerably. Staff members were briefed on my research during a staff meeting, and everyone was asked to make time for my
interviews. I also found that my personal relationships with staff members helped because they were much more open in conversation during the interviews. Even though our conversations were tape-recorded, people appeared comfortable talking with me and frequently referred to shared experiences.

To some extent this may also have been a limitation, because I found that I had to constantly push interviewees for greater detail. Because they assumed that there was a shared understanding about Bush Radio, they frequently omitted what they believed to be minor details or facts that they assumed I was already aware of (Jackson, 1987). This was also a personal limitation – i.e., because I was already familiar with the organization, I had to guard against asking questions based only on my own experiences there, or my own pre-conceived understandings of the station, lest they limit my conclusions. It is for this reason that I carried out participant observation during the first few weeks of fieldwork, before drafting interview questions, based on notes from these observations. Participant observation was thus used to generate the basic interview questions.

Furthermore, because Bush Radio has won many awards, staff members are accustomed to being interviewed frequently by the local and international press. The station has even been the site of several films and documentaries, including an MTV documentary.
featuring the hip-hop show. I was concerned that this, together
with my familiarity with some of the interviewees, could lead to
stock positive responses or what Spradley (1979) describes as
“translation competence,” i.e., the undesirable tendency of
informants to provide “prepackaged, partyline and extra-emic
answers to questions” (Agar, 1986).

Another issue that arose during the conducting of
interviews was the ownership of these interviews. At some point I
became involved in a discussion with some staff members about how
poorly organized the Bush Radio archives are and how it is
necessary to record a history of the organization. One person
suggested that my interviews could fill this gap and that I
should make them available to be burnt onto CD and kept in the
archive for future reference. Another concern someone raised was
that many of the people whom I planned to interview may not be
alive in the next decade and that their interviews are important
pieces of oral history. At first this seemed an excellent idea –
a way for me to complete my research and also to give back
something concrete to the station, in the form of contributing
toward an oral history archive. However, once I actually started
the interviews, I quickly changed my mind as I heard material
that could be considered confidential. For example, material in
which interviewees make personal comments on each other may not
be appropriate for such an archive.
Observations

Observation notes were taken at the end of each workday. These field notes were based on the format outlined by Spradley (1979), who recommends three different types of field notes: the condensed account (verbatim), the expanded account recorded after each field session, and a field work journal that contains experiences, ideas, fears, mistakes, problems and breakthroughs that arise during field work. In other words, notes fell into two categories: a section strictly for observations and direct quotes; and a section that recorded reflections, passing thoughts and first impressions and responses. Entries differentiated between categories of data, e.g. what people literally said, descriptions of social contexts and the researcher’s hypotheses about the situation (Agar, 1986).

At first these entries were difficult to write. I returned home from work at the radio station around 6pm and would sit down to write notes later that evening. The transition between radio staff member, interviewer/chat participant and academic observer was difficult. One solution to this problem was for me to record all the mundane details. When I read through these later, the importance of seemingly insignificant events became more apparent.
**Historical Data**

I also considered several sources of historical data, including minutes from meetings, public and internal reports, newsletters, the web site and funding applications. The station’s administrator and various staff members made this data available, allowing me to borrow reports and other documents. Again, this reflects my relationship with the organization. My privileged position as insider made this possible, as outsiders are not allowed access to documents such as minutes of staff meetings.

I used the newspaper archives at the South African Library to find articles written about Bush Radio in the local press. I also listened to audio recordings produced by CASET, and listened constantly to the radio station while in Cape Town, as well as to recorded programs from the periods when I was in the US. I was also constantly in touch with the station during the periods I was outside South Africa, and received emails keeping me abreast of new developments. These were both personal emails as well as listserv type mailings.

**Insider/ outsider dilemmas**

While I did not consciously set out to conduct a native ethnography, at some point during my research I realized I was doing exactly that. My knowledge of, and interaction with the field, had made me part of the field. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) describe native ethnography as third and fourth world researchers
who share a history of colonialism or subjugation, including subjugation by ethnographers who have made them the subjects of their work.

As mentioned above, many people have passed through Bush Radio to do research on the station, but the station has never seen the products of this work. These researchers descend on the station with tape recorders, cameras and notebooks then vanish, presumably back to their first world locations, to write up their notes. Neither the notes nor the final product of their academic tourism ever makes it back to Cape Town. Many people have told Bush Radio that the station, or some aspect thereof, is the subject of their theses, but there is no evidence that they were ever completed.

This raises the issue of the origins of ethnography as a methodology for studying the colonized Other, often replicating the existing status quo by reinscribing the continued oppression of groups of people. Though the politics of representation, this increasingly raises issues of who is able to speak on behalf of whom.

As those who used to be the natives have become scholars in their own right, often studying their communities and nations, the lines between participant and observer, friend and stranger, aboriginal and alien are no longer so easily drawn. We now have a notable group of ‘minority’ anthropologists with a range of ambivalent connections to the abandoned and reclaimed ‘homelands’ in which they work. The importance of this ‘native anthropology’ has helped to bring about a fundamental shift – the shift toward viewing
identification rather than difference, as the key defining image of anthropological theory and practice (Behar, 1996, p.28).

Everyone was thus enthusiastic when I arrived in June 2002 with the news that I too was making Bush Radio the subject of my research. The organization seemed to think that finally someone would write something with which they could share ownership. While I was working at the station, a workshop facilitator visiting from the United States brought in an article on Bush Radio that appeared in The Journal of Radio Studies (Olorunnisola, 2002). Anthony Olorunnisola wrote extensively on Bush Radio though he did not visit the station or interview any staff. Shortly thereafter, the station director sent an email to several people, including myself, saying that since we have direct access to the organization, we should correct this kind of work by writing and publishing in our capacity as Bush Radio staff or volunteers.

One evening during a casual conversation after work, one staff member said to me, “I can’t wait to read your thesis.” The station director has said to me many times that I should write a book on Bush Radio or that my thesis should be published as a book. I am being held responsible for telling the story that no one else has told. I am being trusted to produce a tangible product from my interviews as no one else has done. At some point during the research, I was motivated by Louw’s words, “I can’t
wait to read your thesis." I kept thinking that if he wants to read my thesis, I have to write it first! Of course my next thought was, “do I really want him to read my thesis? Will he like what he reads?”

This raises many ethical issues in terms of how much is disclosed in the final report. When I started the research process I came in from a very critical perspective, almost certain that Bush Radio would be unprepared for my inevitable criticisms of the organization. I had had the benefit of three years abroad in graduate school and I returned bursting with ideas about how the organization should be transformed from my vantage point of theoretical superiority. However, what I found was something completely different. The more time I spent at the station, the more I struggled to find the flaws. Every single day I spent at Bush Radio during the research period, something would happen to make me say “wow.” Furthermore, my relationship with Bush Radio will not end when I finish the research. Since I will live in Cape Town after graduation I also plan to return to the organization in a voluntary capacity; or I may take up an offer to return to the station full-time in 2004 as station manager. As a result, decisions about what to include in the final report become increasingly important.

My dual positionality as insider and outsider, academic researcher and member, was advantageous, yet problematic. Adler
and Adler (1987) coined the term "complete member" to refer to this problematic. While no longer employed by the station, I was always introduced to outsiders as an "ex-program manager who is now a volunteer producer." And even though I assumed the relatively demoted title of volunteer producer, I was still accorded my old role by those in leadership, particularly because the same people were still running the station when I returned. Leaders confided in me about their hopes for and concerns about the station, and producers frequently requested my help with or advice on their programs.

At the same time I think that former and current volunteers were more open with me during interviews because, in their eyes, I was no longer associated with the station. Many volunteers openly expressed their criticisms of the station in ways that they never do with staff members, and never would have with me had I not been perceived as a researcher or, at the very least, ex-staff member.

This situation was auto-ethnographic in the sense that I could not completely distance myself from the research or the ethnography as a distant or objective observer. As Deleuze and Gutarri might say, the auto-ethnographic experience is neither here nor there, but betwixt and between, since one is simultaneously insider and outsider, native and foreign, standing "in that undeterminable threshold place where she constantly
drifts in and out” (Trinh, 1989, p.418). Occupying the spaces in between also has advantages. As Said writes (in Akindes, 1999, 2), “The essential privilege of exile is to have, not just one set of eyes but half a dozen, each of them corresponding to the places you have been...” (p.48).

Data analysis

Data analysis took place using the categories proposed by Marshall and Rossman (1995) as a guide: Organizing the data; generating categories, themes and patterns; data reduction and interpretation. After I transcribed the notes and interviews, I read and re-read the transcripts in order to become familiar with the data, and notes were made on the data. Transcription allowed me to identify key themes in individual interviews, as well as across interviews, to determine “which parts of the experience are truly part of [my] consciousness and which parts are merely assumed” (Lanigan, 1988, p.10).

Transcribing represented an important shift from listening or hearing to seeing. When possible I transcribed most interviews on the evening of the same day that they were conducted, allowing them to remain fresh in my mind. Interviews were transcribed verbatim, including pauses and stumbles of the interviewees. Somehow seeing the words on paper allowed me to “hear” them more clearly. Being able to look at them over and over again made it easier to understand, to “read between the lines,” and even to
recreate or re-live the interviews. As Van Maanen (1990) points out, transcribing is an important shift from listening to seeing, and is in fact the “act of seeing meaning” (p.79).

Next, I generated categories for analysis by grouping the data after developing a set of criteria in terms of which to distinguish observations as similar or related (Dey, 1993). Categories and sub-categories were derived from the data; in other words, the categories and themes (chapters) of this dissertation reflect the data. After the assignment of categories, data was re-organized and analyzed in terms of the categories and how they interconnect. This emergence and revision of analytical categories forms part of the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). However, it is important to note that these stages were often not followed in a prescribed linearity. For example, I never stopped doing literature searches and reading new material relevant to my study, or material, which was in some way related, or thought provoking. The data was unstructured, i.e. not coded at the point of data collection in terms of a closed set of analytic categories.

I wrote constantly when I returned to the U.S. after the first fieldwork trip - both in an attempt to capture my experiences in writing and speed up the formal dissertation writing process; as well as to help me understand my experiences
much the same way I started writing a personal journal when I was 13 years old. Writing constantly, allowed me to write freely, without having to conform too much to academic formats, since I had plenty of time for later revisions. I would write large chunks of material some of which were purely reflective, others that I adapted into research papers for the classes I was still taking.

Writing constantly, afforded me the opportunity to develop my thought processes in a non-linear fashion, as well as to dispel notions of writing as a linear process. I would often write twenty pages over two days, return to them a month later and find that my analysis of the situation had changed. This is what Van Maanen (1990) refers to as “re-writing (re-thinking, reflecting, re-cognizing)” (p.131). As Akindes (1999, 1) says, writing is the centerpiece of ethnography, but while it has been accepted as a neutral device to record, it is selective, partial truth, and thus political.

These kinds of constant shifts led me to frequently revise my major themes and ideas for chapters, leading to a more unpredictable, circular and rhizomatic approach than the prescribed formula of mass communication research. This was not only an abandonment of the linearity of the research process, but also of linearity in thinking and doing. This makes my research more exploratory than definitive.
Embodiment of the researcher

One criticism of traditional ethnography is that it does not take into account the embodiment of the researcher, particularly in the text. The qualitative researcher, particularly the ethnographer, is always actively participating in the events of the studied community. There is the physical participation in events and activities; and there are also the sights, smells and sounds that are a crucial part of the experience. However, this is often left out in the final report, regarded as marginal, trivial and egocentric. A rhizomatic approach to methodology would take into account this embodiment of the researcher, versus seeing the ethnographic approach as a hierarchical linear process that moves from step A to step B and ends with the text.

South African media historian, Keyan Tomaselli (2001), addresses this very issue in his article Blue is hot, red is cold. He says there should be greater acknowledgement of fieldwork done in developing settings vis-à-vis theory development in Western metropoles. He proposes that the narrative should forge a space in the publications industry for kinds of cultural studies done in Africa - in which detail is as important as theory, in which human agency is described and recognized, and in which voices from the field are engaged by researchers as producers of knowledge.
In other words, in a rhizomatic approach the process of doing the research is as important as the “data” gathered. Tomaselli writes about how he took four graduate students into the Kalahari Desert to “study” a group of indigenous people. Their jeep broke down along the way and they were marooned in a small village, only about 50 miles from where they were going. Whereas most researchers would not write about this event, and would base their final report on the events that take place once they reach their final destination, Tomaselli reveals how this predicament teaches them about themselves, about their research goals, and surprisingly even about the people they wish to study, some of whom they encounter in this small village.

Process is thus very important in a rhizomatic approach, which should not focus overtly on the text. The traditional fetishization of the text tends to ignore the flux of human relationships and the ways meanings are created intersubjectively as well as intertextually. Most ethnographies do not reflect on the process, but merely present a neat package of findings. Indeed, the academy often demands this. Publishers and dissertation committees in the North often frown upon texts perceived as disorganized or too descriptive. With a rhizomatic approach, the researcher has to be present in the text, as I am present in all the chapters that follow. Like the cyborg, the final report has to be simultaneously research report and
confession, history and prophecy, academic analysis and poetic fiction.

**Authority and ownership**

In a rhizomatic methodological approach, where the on-going deconstruction of binary opposites is key, and things are both this, and not this, authority and ownership must be deconstructed. Even in so-called participatory research, the voice of the researcher is usually dominant. This hierarchical, arboric approach means that the researcher is always in authority, and ultimately owns the text.

I intended to invert this in my ethnography of Bush Radio through a rhizomatic approach. I hope to achieve this by writing a text that is accessible to the members of Bush Radio, as opposed to one that excludes the very subjects of the study. Furthermore, the text will be made accessible, as opposed to the many researchers who do dissertation research in the developing world and are never heard of there again. I intended the final project to reflect the voices of the people at the station, and to engender a sense of ownership and empowerment. The final project will be a dissertation, but it will also be a live text that reflects the complex interpersonal relationships and the rich visual impressions that constitute the research process, as well as the station itself.
Conclusion

In conclusion, I fully immersed myself into Bush Radio, a process constantly exciting as both researcher and staff member. In negotiating the line between insider and outsider, I found a comfortable space in-between the two, from which to understand and interpret what I was seeing. Doing ethnography is more difficult than it appears.

Furthermore, doing a native ethnography in your home city, surrounded by friends and colleagues, positions you in a realm very different than the one occupied by the pioneers of anthropological and ethnographic research. Instead, an element of social responsibility comes to the fore as you attempt participatory approaches, try to please your future audience: your academic professors, peers, colleagues and research subjects; and simultaneously attempt to create a product which heralds the arrival for yourself of some kind of catharsis.

Finally, positioning oneself within the theoretical framework of rhizomes and cyborgs poses very specific methodological challenges. It calls for sometimes expanding the gap between researcher and researched, for placing an emphasis on process over product, for acknowledging the embodiment of the researcher, deconstructing notions of insider and outsider, and finally, of seriously confronting notions of authority and ownership. To use a metaphor from backpacking, rhizomatic
research involves bushwhacking - sometimes leaving the well established trails for more scenic vistas, or sometimes simply to get there quicker. In this case, the terrain invited a departure from the conventional trails.

In the end, I have done an ethnography of Bush Radio while acknowledging all the while that no blueprint for such a methodology exists; yet creating a product which is both something that selfishly helps me to understand myself and my passion for community radio, as well as a gift that I present to Bush Radio, so that they can see themselves as I do; and hopefully this is as close enough to a mirror image as anyone can get, at this particular moment in time.
Chapter 3: The history of Bush Radio

Introduction

In the previous chapter I outlined the methodology used in this dissertation, which frames the interviews and outlines the rhizomatic nature of the study. Here I intend to provide a history of Bush Radio, tracing its roots from an organization that produced political audiocassettes, through to its existence within the current media environment as a community radio station.

It’s a typical day at Bush Radio: people are bustling about getting ready to go on-air, others are on the telephone setting up interviews, some are downstairs broadcasting “pavement radio” to the local factory workers and a group of teenagers are upstairs in the meeting room discussing hip hop and social change. I have the rare opportunity to chat with Adrian Louw for a few minutes over a cup of coffee. Louw is the program integrator at Bush Radio, responsible for the day-to-day running of the station, from making financial decisions to hauling equipment up the stairs. Louw’s memory of his decision to work at Bush Radio is still fresh in his mind.

The journalism course at Pentech [Cape Town based Peninsula Technikon] has a year practical and you have to apply to do your in-service training. I applied to Bush Radio in 1994 and the SABC [South African Broadcasting Corporation], them being the only option for broadcast journalists at the time. I walked out of my SABC interview because I realized that nothing had changed, you couldn’t expect too much, it
was about a month after elections. So I basically put all my eggs in one basket and went to my Bush Radio interview (A. Louw, personal communication, 08/20/02).

Figure 5. Adrian Louw. Picture from the Bush Radio files.

As Louw reflects, the history of radio and television in South Africa between the formation of the SABC in 1936 and the early 1990s, is linked to the then ruling National Party’s strategies for their continued existence and dominance (Tomaselli, Tomaselli & Muller, 1987). During the apartheid era television and radio broadcasting was owned and controlled by the state’s South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) and biased in favor of government. Louw’s choice is not a hard one to understand. The main newspapers catered largely to the country’s white minority and sided with mining capital (Jacobs, 1999). SABC-TV became the vanguard of the state’s media counter attack against grassroots democracy (Tomaselli, 1989). In particular,
special services were created to mirror segregationist practices. As Bush Radio’s first employee, Sandile Dikeni, says,

My concept of radio was based on public radio, which was basically bad apartheid propaganda kind of radio made for blacks. But because we hated the radio programming we tended to hate radio as well as a concept. For instance there’d be a news program, and at the end of the news they’d have the news analysis, which is like ten minutes of state propaganda just coming straight at you. How bad terrorists are, how bad the liberation movement was, how we should become scared of them. Really basic bad, bad propaganda about how beautiful the South African government is – and how neat the plan is of how to divide people into the different homelands. What we knew as people who lived our lives under those systems, is that those systems were not working for us. Those were the kind of things that really alienated many of us from radio (S. Dikeni, personal communication, 08/30/2003).

Despite the dominance of the SABC, South Africa has a history of alternative print media, which flourished in the 1980s. Compared to broadcast media, print media was much cheaper to produce. Publications and pamphlets could easily be reproduced using photocopy machines and distributed via existing networks. Alternative news sources openly supported mass-based political opposition (Jacobs, 1999). “People’s media” emerged in the 1980s and popularized anti-apartheid discourse (Tomaselli, 1989). In fact, the alternative press acted as a catalyst for political changes such as the un-banning of the liberation movement, the African National Congress (ANC) in 1990 and the release of ANC leader Nelson Mandela in 1990.
Except for the African National Congress' (ANC) Radio Freedom, broadcasting from exile, the democratic movement ignored broadcasting as a site of struggle. Radio Freedom was the underground radio station of the ANC. Founded in 1967, it broadcast into South Africa daily on short-wave from neighboring African states, particularly Zambia and Mozambique. As part of the ANC's cultural wing, Amandla, Radio Freedom provided the only alternative to the strongly censored South African Broadcasting Corporation, merging political content and news with popular music of many banned artists.

However, the Cassette Education Trust (CASET) produced and distributed cassette tapes containing speeches from banned activists, local music and revolutionary poetry in Cape Town in the early 1980s. After the first national democratic elections in June 1994, CASET evolved into Bush Radio. The subsequent liberalization of the airwaves and the formation of an Independent Broadcast Authority (IBA) made provision for community radio as a formal structure, intended to give previously disadvantaged groups access to the airwaves.

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2 In April 2001 the IBA merged with the South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (SATRA) to form the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA). A new bill passed by parliament stated that the merger was needed because of the rapid convergence in the fields of broadcasting and telecommunications.
This chapter traces the history of Bush Radio from its origins as CASET in the 1980s, within the context of the broader political and broadcast environment. To write the story of Bush Radio from the perspective of those who contributed to its development is to broaden participation in the process of constructing historical interpretation. Of course, there are many interpretations of history told through a multiplicity of stories, and the history of Bush Radio is not without mythology.

This chapter attempts to document a people’s history of Bush Radio, telling its story through the voices of the station’s founders and staff, together with other sources of historical data. While the apartheid state constructed essentialist racial and ethnic categories, CASET and later Bush Radio, have constantly positioned themselves in a space of liminality (Turner, 1969) to interrogate and redefine these categories. In post-apartheid South Africa, Bush Radio both reflects and to some extent shapes broader societal concerns of community, social and national identity. Privileging an instrumentalist approach, this chapter shows the connections between ideology, politics and economics as they converge to form the industrial structure, the political environment, and the cultural product of broadcasting (Meehan, 1986).
Background: The history of broadcasting in South Africa 1923-1980

The first radio broadcasts in South Africa took place under a broadcasting committee of the South African Railways, with the first experimental broadcast in 1923 by the Western Electric Company (http://www.oldradio.com). At this time South Africa was still a British colony. The Radio Act of 1926, passed by parliament, placed all radio transmission and reception under the control of the Postmaster General who was empowered to grant licenses for broadcasting. After an inquiry by the then governor-general of the British Broadcasting Corporation, Sir John Reith, the government decided to follow the British pattern and to establish the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). The SABC was modeled on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

In 1959 Radio Bantu was set up, a series of seven radio stations targeting the black population with the slogan, “one nation, one station.” Each station targeted a specific ethnic group, located within a specific geographic area, with specific languages and music to create a sense of belonging to these specific ethnic groups.

When the National Party came into power in 1948, media in South Africa was split into various factions. Up to the late 1980s, ownership of the English-language press was associated with the mining industry: Anglo American and Johannesburg Consolidated Investments (JCI). The Afrikaans language press
emerged as a propaganda arm of the Afrikaner-dominated National Party. All the major Afrikaans newspapers were founded to propagate the views of various precursors and branches of the National Party, including the Afrikaner Party (Tomaselli, 2000).

Television was introduced relatively late in 1976, under the pretext of preserving Afrikaner cultural sovereignty, as well as because of a Calvinist fear of television as a moral danger to youth and family. For the Afrikaners, television was an agent of cultural fusion that could subvert their efforts to promote cultural fission (Nixon, 1992). As the Nationalist Party founder (1914) and state president (1924-1939) James Hertzog said, “If at the present time, you introduce television, you will pay for it with the end of the white man” (Cape Times, 1971).

The launching of the communication satellite Intelsat IV in 1972 by Western countries, ushered in new fears about the dangers of uncontrolled reception of international television via cheap satellite dishes. Afraid of imperialism, the South African government introduced a national television service as an anti-imperial device. Between 1976 and 1990, the SABC-TV service was state-controlled and heavily censored, and functioned as an arm of the government. Unlike other state-owned television services in western democracies, the SABC had no formal mechanism to ensure proportional broadcasting time for all political parties (Tomaselli, Tomaselli and Muller, 1989). The SABC was banned from
broadcasting pictures or voices of opposition figures and its editorial policy was dictated through an institutional censorship structure.

Programming was varied, and included news, sitcoms, documentaries, quiz shows, variety and sport, with broadcasts that ended at midnight and resumed at 6am. International programming included shows like *The Waltons* and *Starsky and Hutch* dubbed into Afrikaans. Locally produced material included documentaries on the armed forces, and two dramas, *Opdrag* and *Taakmag*, glamorizing the South African Defense Force. Religious programming (including white church services broadcast in their entirety) was juxtaposed with news in order to create a soothing and calming effect on the reception of news (Tomaselli, Tomaselli & Muller, 1987). As Tomaselli, Tomaselli and Muller (1989) argue, the SABC played an active role in providing models of class practice geared to safeguard the interests of capital. In particular, the cultural meanings carried in the texts of radio and television brought social experiences in line with the discourse articulated by the dominant group.
The broadcasting and political environment of the 1980s

By the 1980s a few major organizations controlled the media and set South African news agendas. The pay television channel Electronic Media Network (M-Net) was established in 1986 to save the Afrikaans press from financial decline after the introduction of advertising to SABC-TV in 1978. M-Net was dominated by Afrikaner capital until early 1997. Toward the end of the 1980s the media sector was dominated by the SABC, Argus Holdings Ltd, Times Media Ltd and the Afrikaans owned Perskor and Nasionale Pers (National Newspapers). The four white owned press groups together also controlled M-Net (Tomaselli, 2000).

The 1980s, particularly the period between 1983 and 1986, has been described as a revolt from below, with the mass democratic movement deliberately attempting to make South Africa ungovernable. After the ANC was banned, the United Democratic Front (UDF) was formed in August 1983 to coordinate internal opposition (Thompson, 2001). The UDF developed a class analysis, arguing that apartheid was a particular distortion of capitalism (Tomaselli, 2000). In other words, the UDF believed that while racial oppression was dominant, class was the determining factor. For the UDF, the objective of capital was to impose a racial capitalism, which shifted in response to international pressure on government, internal dissent and to aid the continued extraction of profits (Van Kessel, 2000).
During this period, blacks had begun to express their grievances through local civic organizations, largely coordinated by the UDF. Mass resistance and collective action led to events such as rent boycotts, spreading protest and encouraging support for civil organizations. In 1984 these civic organizations began to demonstrate their level of organization through general strikes. In September 1984 over half a million workers and almost as many students stayed home to protest army occupation of the townships and to support students’ educational demands.

By 1985 school boycotts and bus boycotts often led to violence. There were worker stayaways, clashes between township residents and security forces, and attacks on black police and councilors, as well as on symbols of government such as buildings or the houses of police officers. During this period there were 390 strikes involving 240,000 workers, the number of recorded insurgency attacks rose to 136 and the recorded death toll in political violence to 879 (Thompson, 2001). There was also violence and incidents of street justice among blacks, with police informers or “sellouts”, as they were called, frequently sentenced to necklacing, the placing of a burning tire around the victim’s neck.

Furthermore, ANC guerilla attacks increased from 40 in 1984, to 136 in 1985, to 228 in 1986 (Marx, 1992). Armed attacks were part of the broader strategy to render South Africa
ungovernable. The ANC began small-scale military engagement with limited civilian casualties, to make white South Africans doubt that government could ensure their safety (Marx, 1992).

**Alternative media in the 1980s**

The 1980s also saw the emergence of “people’s media”, popularizing anti-apartheid discourse (Tomaselli, 1989). There were a few black newspapers from the missionary press, publishing ventures by oppressed communities, and trade unions and student presses (Tomaselli & Louw, 2001). Black literacy emerged through the first missionaries in the Eastern Cape, who supplied skills and technical tools of journalism. Community media included community newspapers, video and student media, with strong leanings toward advocacy journalism because of their emergence within this context of struggle against apartheid (Duncan & Seleoane, 1998).

The most significant alternative media developments were in video, with the formation of the Community Video Resource Association (CVRA) in 1977 at the Adult Education Unit of the University of Cape Town. This was initiated by a visit from members of the Canadian Film Board’s Challenge for Change program and inspired by the need for community organizations to document their experiences and activities. This program gave community activists access to video equipment and training. CVRA later gained independence from the university and became the Community
Origins of CASET

CASET emerged at the height of this increased internal resistance and the defiance campaign against the apartheid regime. Founder, Edrik Gorfinkel, explained how the political context informed CASET’s mission.

The initial work that we did was recording what happened in the defiance campaign. Going to mass rallies, recording toy-toys\(^3\) as well as recording some of the ANC-IDASA\(^4\) safaris where people from inside South Africa were going to meet ANC people outside. And CASET recorded those conferences to be transcribed, and quite a few audio productions were made out of that as well and distributed through the democratic movement (E. Gorfinkel, personal communication, 08/28/02).

During this time, librarian and UDF member, Vincent Kolbe, kept a duffel bag under the counter of the Bonteheuwal township library in Cape Town, filled with pamphlets advertising political meetings, strikes or protests. UDF activists would stop by the library to drop off or pick up pamphlets for distribution from Kolbe’s under-counter bag.

Being a librarian I was very conscious of banned or suppressed information. We used to smuggle in things, banned stuff. We used to get material from the trade unions. We used to get stuff from overseas, Angela Davis tapes, you name it. And that was a kind of underground information network. In fact we used to call it AIDS –

\(^3\)Toy-toying is a Zulu protest dance almost always used by protesters at marches and demonstrations.

\(^4\)IDASA is the Institute for Democracy in Southern Africa.
Alternative Information Distribution Service. And that’s how CASET came into existence (V. Kolbe, personal communication, 08/21/02).

But Kolbe says it all began with Edric Gorfinkel. Gorfinkel was held in high regard by the people he worked with, though others have described him as a “white liberal wanting to do something, but it mustn’t be too much risk and it mustn’t be too hard work” (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, 07/2002). Most of the staff at the radio station vividly recall the long white beard he sported at a community media forum in 2002. I traced Gorfinkel to the end of a dusty gravel road, on a farm in the middle of the desert in the Karoo, 700 kilometers outside of Cape Town.

Basically the idea for me after I’d been working in radio in Zimbabwe for a number of years was that at some point South Africa’s broadcast environment was going to need to be transformed. I had the idea basically of using audio cassette of a way to play radio, began to train people and I had a hunch that audio cassette could actually be quite a useful mechanism for organizing and education and that kind of stuff within the mass democratic movement. So I registered for an adult education course at UCT [the University of Cape Town], and I did the Talking Newspaper as my student project. It was repression days and as an academic project it wouldn’t necessarily attract the same kind of attention from the top people and so on. And because it was an adult education course I targeted people with handicaps to independent reading, that’s how I put it, so blind people and also aimed at illiterate people. The blind thing was also just to make it look like a social project (E. Gorfinkel, personal communication, 08/28/02).

Inspiration for the project came from another unlikely source. During the Iranian revolution, banned audiocassettes
circulated through religious networks, giving sanction and energy to the vast movement in opposition to the Shah (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi, 1994; Downing, 2001). I spoke to Vincent Kolbe in the living room of his Plumstead home, seated directly opposite the perfectly preserved tape recorder on which the very first CASET tapes were duplicated.

What was the major source of inspiration for this project was the Ayatollah Komeni. He was in Paris in exile and he used to talk into a tape recorder. Now Lenin didn’t do that because they didn’t have tape recorders in Lenin’s time. But the Ayatollah Komeni was in France and he used to talk into a tape recorder and that tape used to be smuggled into Iran and it was distributed and multiplied. And we thought now if the Ayatollah can do it, talking into a tape recorder, Nelson Mandela can do it, Oliver Tambo can do it, Albie Sachs can do it, why must it be them. You in Bonteheuwel can talk to your fellow students in Oodtshoorn. It was this whole power of communication and outreach and reaching and information and knowledge (V. Kolbe, personal communication, 08/21/02).

Audiocassettes have been used extensively in rural environments; for example, in Guatemala cassette recordings on health and nutrition were used to improve health care among coffee plantation workers. This same approach has been used in Afghanistan and Ecuador, as well as the Audio Cassette Listening Project in Tanzania in 1977-78. The Tanzanian project was designed for rural women and drew directly from these earlier projects.

Listener feedback, mostly through letters, prompted an improvement in programming, and with growing support from
progressive organizations, an audiocassette service education organization, CASET, was set up in 1989 during a state of emergency (Girard, 1998). CASET produced audiotapes with recordings of conferences and political meetings, local music, poetry and story telling. Recordings were mostly in English, the unofficial lingua franca. Poet and writer Sandile Dikeni was the first employee of CASET. I met the effervescent Dikeni for the first time at Bush Radio where he was recording a documentary on the enrobement of Saartje Baartman\(^5\) as part of his current work at the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS).

We used to work together as a team. We’d discuss projects and I’d go and implement that. We’d receive requests from organizations and political organizations to produce tapes on them and their history. I would go out with my Marantz [field recorder], then come back and remix and so on. Much of the stuff that was produced organizations requested from us. We worked on recording history. You must remember that at this time the country was under a state of emergency. So we packaged material and we also received material from outside. Material was sent by mail order. We’d create profiles of tapes, which were put together in a newsletter called *Mamela*\(^6\). People were starved for information. What really was amazing was people’s reception of the tapes. We got letters from the Northern provinces, people would come down to Cape Town to buy the tapes.

Radio’s got this beautiful thing about it. You can hear your own voice on tape, it just gives you goose-bumps, it does something to you. And so many people that never

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\(^5\) Baartman was a local Khoi woman taken to London in 1810 where she was displayed naked in freak shows. She died 5 years later in France. After years of negotiations between South African historians and French authorities, Baartman’s skeleton, brain and genitalia were finally returned from a French museum. A traditional Khoi enrobing ceremony was held, a scared rite performed by Khoisan elders to prepare a body for burial.

\(^6\) “Mamela” is Xhosa for “listen.”
thought they’d ever be heard from the speakers of a ghetto-blaster, heard themselves suddenly through the speakers of a ghetto-blaster. And I recorded them, and I could look in their eyes and see this excitement in their eyes of recognizing their own voices on the air. And those small things were for me the most beautiful stuff (S. Dikeni, personal communication, 08/22/02).

Figure 6. Sandile Dikeni. Picture from the Bush Radio files.

Local music (not broadcast in mainstream media) was also an important source of content, as was international music from artists such as Bob Marley, which the government considered subversive and inappropriate for consumption by black audiences because of their revolutionary lyrics.

SABC actually had someone employed full-time to scratch songs and records that were banned. So for years we didn’t even know that many artists existed, except for what the SABC allowed us to know existed and mostly Afrikaans boere
musiek, which by the way is very funny, was presented by a black presenter on Saturdays (S. Dikeni, personal communication, 08/30/03).

At this stage CASET played an important role in its provision of alternative information not available elsewhere. Rashid Lombard was one of the first trustees of CASET, and today heads an initiative responsible for the promotion of South African music. Lombard reflected on those early days from his Cape Town office overlooking the city.

The thing was about awareness, getting information to people. It was also a period where meetings were banned. The gist was about education and dealing with mass mobilization. Some people were involved in armed struggle; we were involved at another level mobilizing people to some kind of solidarity. We were sort of all linked to the UDF or the civic bodies or the youth and especially with the youth it was critical because they were in the forefront of the struggle. We were obviously looking at the working class because that’s your mass base. So it was working class, it was poor people basically that were being targeted to just lift their spirit because people are very down when they’re going through hard times and not understanding what the youth are doing, to get the older folk to rally behind them. We were also up against at that time the Tri-Cameral party⁷, the labor party, the coloreds were siding with the whites and we had to come in-between and just break that mindset. (R. Lombard, personal communication, 08/27/02).

CASET fulfilled a basic news function in its coverage of political meetings, rallies and demonstrations. By spreading information about insurgence in one part of the country to

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⁷During 1980 to 1984, President P.W. Botha implemented a tri-cameral parliament under an executive presidency, with coloureds (85 seats) and Indians (45 seats) represented, but Africans excluded and whites (178 seats) in control.
another, they increased solidarity and support for the liberation movement. Furthermore, as Dikeni explained, CASET challenged the apartheid regime on several levels, including in the sphere of media.

I remember we did this vox-pop of these people in this one major rally in Cape Town where organizations were unbanning themselves. My name is so and so I come from the South African National Students Congress and I declare SANSCO unbanned from today! And I come from the women’s league and I declare the Women’s League unbanned from today! It was obviously illegal, but just try and catch us, you know, it was that kind of an excitement. So we were part of an entire process of defiance as well and so we became also a statement of defiance. In our case a statement of defiance of the broadcast regulations and laws that governed us at the time (S. Dikeni, personal communication, 08/30/03).

Figure 7. The tape recorder used to copy CASET’s first audiocassettes.
The move toward democracy: 1980 - 1992

The machinery of the apartheid system began to unravel during the 1980s. In addition to rising township activism, a number of other factors acted as a catalyst for change. The costs of maintaining a huge security apparatus, homeland administrations and multiple bureaucracies for segregated populations, were growing (Marx, 1992). The administrative and defense costs of implementing apartheid increased South Africa’s vulnerability to capital flight, changes in world prices and business cycle conditions, and political changes abroad. According to Lowenberg (1989), the internal dynamics of the system dictated the end of apartheid because its costs began to exceed its benefits to white South Africans.

The government of P.W. Botha had used its economic and military power to dominate neighboring countries and to restrain them from pursuing anti-apartheid policies (Thompson, 2001). South Africa had been employing a deliberate policy of regional destabilization in the 1980s: South African armed forces occupied Namibia; South Africa cooperated with the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in its civil war against the government of Angola; and South Africa provided arms and assistance to the Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO) (Thompson, 2001).
This started to change when, except for Rhodesia and Namibia, its neighbors were no longer European colonies but black states. The white minority in Rhodesia had been losing its war against African guerillas (Thompson, 2001), and black revolutionary leader, Robert Mugabe, was elected in 1980. In 1987 South African troops suffered a humiliating defeat by Cuban air forces in the town of Cuito, in their attempt at direct intervention in Angola. The Cubans enforced an agreement to the United Nations Resolution calling for the independence of Namibia, ending 75 years of South African rule in 1990 (Ross, 1999).

By 1986 South Africa had become a major focus of public attention despite media censorship of repressive government activity. Foreign countries were beginning to exert pressure on the government to end apartheid. In October 1986, U.S. Congress passed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act banning new investments and bank loans, ending South African air links with the U.S., prohibiting a range of South African imports and threatening to cut military aid to allies suspected of breaching the international arms embargo against South Africa (Thompson, 2001). The collapse of communist rule in Eastern Europe, symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, changed Afrikaner perceptions of their opponents: they could no longer claim to be the “bastions of Christian civilization
against the hordes of the evil empire” (Ross, 1999, p. 183). In other words, government could no longer legitimize apartheid policies as an offensive against communism.

All these events led to the disintegration of the apartheid state, but in particular the fall of the Soviet Union was the final catalyst enabling the National Party to move past its opposition to the black liberation struggle and toward some kind of negotiated settlement (Adam & Moodley, 1993). After the fall of the Soviet Union, communism was no longer the enemy, and the government could not expect to receive the support it had tacitly obtained from the West (particularly from the Thatcher and Reagan governments). The loss of Soviet material and ideological support could no longer support the ANC's dreams for the total destruction of apartheid and the creation of a socialist order (Horwitz, 2001).

Known as the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), all-party talks commenced in December 1991. CODESA moved slowly during the first couple of years, largely because the ANC was trying to transform itself from a liberation movement into a political party, while simultaneously trying not to distance itself from its grassroots supporters. The National Party pressed for substantive agreement on post-apartheid political institutions in advance of elections. These included entrenching power sharing within the executive (with minority
veto-power), securing the right to private property, establishing strong regional governments, and creating a Bill of Rights enforced by a special constitutional court (Horwitz, 2001).

**The transition to a radio station: 1990 - 1993**

During this period of political upheaval and change, CASET started to consider expanding into a radio station. The concept of community radio was unheard of in South Africa at this time, though it had been around in Latin America for decades, dating back to the miners’ stations in Bolivia in the 1950s (O’Connor, 1990), and Radio Sutatenza in Colombia in 1947. At this time the only other person doing anything similar was an Argentinian doctor, Gabriel Urgoti, who broadcast health programs with a 5-mile radius in the black township of Gugulethu in Cape Town. This project later evolved into Zibonele Community Radio which still exists today, without the original health link, broadcasting in the formerly black township of Khayelitsha. Gorfinkel said,

> We had a lot of debate about the word community radio and what we wanted to call it and quite honestly at the time we thought we were inventing the word. We thought we’d invented the concept of community radio! It was only then AMARC\(^8\) got hold of our stuff somehow or other, and we got this thing inviting us to send something to the World Assembly of Community Radio. And we thought whoa hey man there’re other people out there doing it. And I went to that conference and it was a complete eye-opener. As like okay this is really something that can be done. Then we connected up with UWC [University of the Western Cape] and networked internationally with people all over the place.

\(^8\)AMARC is the global World Association for Community Radio Broadcasters with offices in Africa, Latin America and Canada.
who were really supportive and that was in a lot of ways where the Bush Radio idea really got momentum and started happening immediately after that (E. Gorfinkel, personal communication, 08/28/02).

Indeed, the Bush Radio initiative gained momentum as a result of this inspiring contact with the global network of community radio. In particular, technical support came from Germany and The Netherlands. Organizations there that supported the anti-apartheid movement donated equipment or provided funds for the purchasing of equipment. As current station director Ibrahim said,

I can with all honesty say that if it wasn’t for the German people, the ordinary German taxpayers, through the efforts of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, there would be no Bush radio today. They were the first people to have confidence in us, and took the brave step to support us when nobody else came forward. They supported us as early as 1993, and up to today still, we are so grateful, we still enjoy their support. And there will forever be a gratitude for what the German taxpayer through Friedrich Ebert Stiftung has done for this organization (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, July 2003).

At this stage, the goals of the radio station were articulated as an extension of CASET’s objectives. In particular, members drafted a mission statement for Bush Radio which is still in use today. The mission statement reads,

Bush Radio’s mission is to ensure that communities who have been denied access to resources, take part in producing ethical, creative and responsible radio that encourages them to communicate with each other, to take part in decisions that affect their lives, and to celebrate their own cultures. Through such radio, communities will affirm their own dignity and identity, and promote social responsibility and critical thinking.
According to Kolbe,

When the decision to establish community radio was taken, everybody was excited by that because now you could broadcast. The whole definition of community radio then was debated. I felt what we need is independence and it should be people driven and it should be free, it should be a facility. So immediately you start saying, Rex Trueform\(^9\) across the road, those factory women they must come in here lunchtime and state their case. Trade union down the road, they must be able to come in and use our facilities. Street people, they must be able to come in and use our facilities. Gays, you know, here’s a facility, this broadcasting facility was going to be like vox populae (V. Kolbe, personal communication, 08/21/02).

Gorfinkel and his team then began discussions with the radio society of the University of the Western Cape (UWC). UWC was a university-college created for black South Africans, who were denied access to the whites-only University of Cape Town. UWC was located on the Cape Flats, a sandy area located about 60 miles from the city center, surrounded by nothing but bush. For both its location and reduced academic status, the university thus earned the nickname Bush University or Bush College, and this is one explanation for where Bush Radio got its name.

There are various other explanations for how Bush Radio was named. The official explanation, posted on the Bush Radio website (http://www.bushradio.co.za) is that the station’s name is linked to its association with UWC. But according to Dikeni,

We had the image of a Bushman on the outside of the tapes that we produced. And it kept coming up. At some point

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\(^9\) This is a clothing factory, staffed mostly by women.
there were discussions with Radio Bush the UWC student organization, but the name did not come from there, CASET was never based at UWC. We used images, quite a lot of Khoisan images. I don’t know why but they always came up. Actually the name evolved, but there was this book in the office that we took images from for the tape cover and they were frequently San [Khoisan] images (S. Dikeni, personal communication, 08/22/02)

Kolbe also believes that the name may have been linked to Bush House in London, the home of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

But it’s an African thing, the Bush the drums, the concept was like that. Bush wildfire, the drums, the African theme. There’s a lot of talk going on, new management, new definitions, I didn’t like [the name] Bush Radio but I just lost. Everyone went Bush! (V. Kolbe, personal communication, 08/21/02).

According to Gorfinkel, the name emerged as a combination of factors, incorporating these ideas but also adding some new theories.

It was a combination of things. I thought at that stage (and it was a contested thing), that it would be a good idea to locate a community radio station in a university, remember it was still a state of emergency – in a university environment where it would be protected somewhat from the security apparatus. So we started talking to UWC radio society and suggested that it be called Bush Radio because it was called Bush University. And there’s also…you know drums as the bush telegraph kind of thing. Bush telegraph was part of the idea of it. And also that in African culture, going to the bush in a way is about returning to roots, going wild, you know out of the mainstream. So very much part of what the Bush Radio idea was trying to do, challenge existing notions of who we are and how we got to be that way and what we want and what is possible and so on (E. Gorfinkel, personal communication, 08/28/02)
The logo of the station also has an interesting history, for which Gorfinkel is responsible (the logo appears on the cover page of the dissertation).

I drew that thing. It was winter Olympics in Norway and they had kind of European style rock art as their kind of icon for all the games. The main one for that whole thing was a torchbearer, a guy running with a torch in his hand. What I did with that, I whited out the torch that he was carrying and put the aerial in that hand. And then on the other hand that had nothing in it I just put the ghetto blaster in there. And just really did it quite carefully, did it on a big scale and photocopied and reduced and all of that kind of stuff. I did a lot of images like that and that was just the one that kind of stuck! (E. Gorfinkel, personal communication, 08/28/02).

Lumko Mtimde was chairperson of UWC radio at that time, and after some time as a Bush Radio staff member, he later became a councilor for the new regulatory body in the country, the IBA. The new radio station also started partnerships with local civic organizations.

We brought in community organizations to participate in this process that was discussing this concept. What is a community radio, what do we mean by a community radio. But we were able to come to a common goal, and common ground, which agreed to what we felt a community radio was, which was a radio station that is owned and controlled by the community and that encourages members of the community to participate in all the elements of running a broadcasting service. And that was the birth of Bush Radio (L. Mtimde, personal communication, 08/30/03).
The media environment: 1993 - present

In August 1993, Bush Radio students and volunteers pressured the government to free the airwaves and grant Bush Radio a broadcast license. However, during this period of negotiations the apartheid government was still in power and two right wing radio stations were given licenses, while two applications by Bush Radio were rejected. Following this, the station had their first illegal broadcast on 25th April 1993. The authorities arrived within a few hours to confiscate their equipment.

There were 20, 30, 40 of them with guns and dogs and patrolling outside, I mean it was a serious military operation, it was hilarious! The people who were there also found it amusing. They were obviously very threatened by it. And in a funny kind of a way it’s just confirmation that one’s on the right wicket. And to a large extent that’s how we treated it. You want to take our equipment away, no problem, we’ll see you in court. And they picked a couple of people to charge and that was me and Mervyn Swarts, Mervyn was the trade union representative. The tide of history was going in the other direction, nobody was going to be going to jail. (E. Gorfinkel, personal communication, 08/28/03).

But according to Mtimde, this did not derail the process. In true rhizomatic fashion, the Bush Radio story did not end here. According to Deleuze and Guattari’s principle of asignifying rupture, "a rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines" (1987). In a rhizomatic network, movements and flows can thus be re-routed around disruptions, with the severed section
regenerating itself and continuing to grow, forming new lines and pathways.

People were not disappointed. Even after that confiscation we had demonstrations, which were successful, which were supported by a number of people and actually strengthened our campaign to free the airwaves, that very action that the enemy did. So people were not demoralized, instead they began to say we have to fight until we win this battle. And one can say safely we won that battle (L. Mtimde, personal communication, 08/30/03).

After elections in 1994, a coalition government of national unity took power with the ANC having secured a parliamentary majority. By 1994, international capital had begun to acquire interests in local media companies and domestic black empowerment groups made major purchases in previously white owned media corporations (Tomaselli, 2000). For example, the black-owned National Empowerment Consortium (NEC) comprised of 25 business and trade union entities raised the funds for the purchase of Johnnies Industrial Corporation (known as "Johnnic"), a diversified industrial and media group.

With the implementation of a new constitution allowing for freedom of expression and guaranteeing media protection through a Bill of Rights, the post-apartheid legal and constitutional context changed (Jacobs, 1999). Changes in the political and social terrain during this transition period formed the backdrop for the reconstruction of the broadcast industry. Greater media independence with the decline of the partisan press resulted in
more critical coverage of government. This changed political and economic order led to debates on the role of journalists and the media in the new democracy. Whereas the government is largely black, “most media is still largely white despite recent attempts to change ownership, management and personnel patterns as well as news focuses” (Jacobs, 1999). As Barnett (1999, 1) points out in his discussion of the processes of broadcasting reform between 1990 and 1998, the nationwide nonracial elections of 1994 marked only the beginning of the full-scale restructuring of the broadcast sector.

Community broadcasting was recognized for the first time and defined as, “initiated and controlled by members of a community of interest, or a geographic community, to express their concerns, needs or aspirations without interference, subject to the regulation of the Independent Broadcast Authority – IBA” (Duncan & Seleoane, 1998: 216). The formation of the IBA was particularly crucial to the transformation of broadcasting in South Africa and for the licensing of community radio (Barnett, 1999, 2). The IBA was a regulatory body set up by government to democratize the airwaves, ensure the reception of broadcasts free of government interference and to encourage ownership and control of broadcasts by previously disadvantaged groups (Mutume, 1998; Mtimde, 1998, 2000).
The IBA approved community and commercial broadcast licenses and is in the process of opening up the television airwaves. Apart from granting licenses, one of its main tasks is enforcing local content quotas and dealing with audience complaints through its Monitoring and Complaints Committee. The role of the IBA as set out in Section Two of the IBA Act (153 of 1993) was to open up the broadcast media. Section 2 of the act lists several objectives: to encourage historically disadvantaged ownership, to diversify ownership, to diversify programming and to encourage South African programming (Duncan & Seleoane, 1998). The IBA describes its mandate as “to open the airwaves to previously excluded voices and opinions and to establish viable market conditions for a diverse and independent broadcasting system” (Barnett, 1999, 1. p.651).

Within the two years following the elections, six radio stations were privatized, new private stations were created, a private television channel was created and 82 community radio stations were granted licenses. There are community radio stations in all nine provinces of South Africa, and they include religious stations, ethnic stations and stations which serve particular geographic areas. The emergence of community radio in South Africa thus occurred within this particular historical context, as a challenge to the status quo of a state-owned and controlled press (Thorne, 1999). Its establishment was seen as a
tool to empower the disadvantaged majority (Buckley, 2000). Priorities for the community media sector shifted from resistance to reconstruction and development, with the sector ideally placed as a tool to build participatory democracy, and to empower communities at the local level (Thorne, 1999).

Bush Radio was thus not the first station to receive a community broadcast license. According to administrator, Brenda Leonard, (personal communication, 08/30/03), the IBA first allocated licenses in provinces where there was little contestation over frequencies. Bush Radio was granted a broadcast license on 1 August 1995, but started broadcasting on 9 August, National Women’s Day, “as a symbol of appreciation for the role women played during the struggle for liberation” (Ibrahim, 2000, 200).

Conclusion

In conclusion, Bush Radio emerged out of the struggle for democracy in South Africa. This chapter has shown how external political conditions gave rise to a media organization for the dissemination of alternative information as a counter to apartheid propaganda. Moreover, the extension of CASET into Bush Radio reflects a certain “invention of tradition,” where the organization attempted to transcend the traditions of the apartheid state. Bush Radio made history by being the first organization to give black South Africans the opportunity to be
formally trained as broadcasters in their own facility (Ibrahim, 2000).

This chapter outlined the history of Bush Radio, starting with its origins as the cassette production and distribution facility, CASET; and ending more than a decade later with its first community broadcast license. However, the growth and history of Bush Radio is rhizomatic. From a cassette production facility to a radio station, Bush Radio today runs a Broadcast Training Institute (BTI). It is not a static story that begins in 1980 and ends in 1995 – the story of Bush Radio is constantly evolving and changing. Furthermore, this chapter does not claim to present a definitive history of Bush Radio – it is only one story, created by one person, at one particular moment in time and space.
Chapter 4: Deconstructing the community in community radio

Introduction

In the previous chapter I provided a history of Bush Radio within the context of South Africa’s political environment. Previously, I also outlined the methodology used in this dissertation, explaining how I approached the interviews that are reproduced at length in the following chapters. I justified my choice of ethnographic methods and outlined my rhizomatic methodological approach. In the chapters that follow, I focus on several case studies within Bush Radio, which demonstrate both its rhizomatic nature, and simultaneously its ability to build various kinds of communities. However, before I proceed with those cases, in this chapter I first deconstruct the term “community”, using the theoretical concepts of communitas and habitus. This chapter argues that an “invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm, 1983) takes place in South Africa as class differences create fissures in old communities of struggle.

Monday morning staff meetings are an integral part of Bush Radio’s organizational culture. Staff members and interns bustle about making coffee or having breakfast before the meeting begins. Many engage in animated discussions about their weekend activities, which often include social events covered together as journalists, or the occasional night out together. Some people chat about the headlines in the morning newspaper, the Cape
Times. Those that worked over the weekend share anecdotes about interesting events that may have taken place. Even the morning DJ leaves his post and joins the staff meeting, leaving the iMac to run the on-air studio and entertain listeners with its programmed play-list.

Chairing the meeting is a rotated responsibility, and every Monday each staff member presents their weekly report of job-related activities, informs other staff of new projects or programs or raises issues for further discussion by the group. When station director Zane Ibrahim is present, he energizes staff members for the week ahead and reminds them of their responsibilities as staff of a community radio station and consequently as perceived leaders. Ibrahim often motivates staff by telling them that their efforts are for their communities. In one staff meeting he said,

You don’t work for Bush Radio, you work for the community! We’re not chasing listeners; we’re chasing empowerment and development [of the community]. I’m not your boss; the community is your boss. Those people that live in shacks [informal housing] in Langa, those people that were robbed last night in Khayelitsha, those are your bosses (07/2003).10

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10 Since meetings are not recorded, I wrote down this particular quote while Ibrahim was speaking.
Indeed, the term community is crucial to Bush Radio and to community radio in general. The concept of community as a unit of social organization is the very foundation upon which community radio is based. Within this context, it is usually used in both a geographical and sociological sense, to designate the basic unit for horizontal social organization (Teer-Tomaselli, 2001). Although the Independent Broadcast Authority (IBA) defined community radio as either geographic, or community of interest (e.g. religious radio stations), the “community” within community radio remains problematic. Community radio stations often use the term to refer to their audiences, without access to any reliable statistical information about this audience. Most community radio
stations cannot afford the prohibitive costs of employing a market research company to do audience research. In South Africa they all depend on the nationally done SAARF (South African Advertising Research Foundation) survey, which provides some statistics for community radio, but is targeted towards advertisers and commercial stations. Though they do give some indication of community radio listenership, these statistics are thus largely unreliable, because of the limited selection of the sample. Bush Radio is currently in the process of carrying out its own in-house audience research project, spearheaded by a graduate student volunteer from Louisiana State University.

However, traditional surveys may not always be able to adequately address rhizomatic communities. As Michel de Certeau (1984) says, "statistical investigation grasps the material of these practices, but not their form; it determines the elements used, but not the 'phrasing' produced by bricolage (the artisan-like inventiveness) and the discursiveness that combine these elements...the power of its calculation lies in its ability to divide, but it is precisely through this analytic fragmentation that it loses sight of what it claims to represent" (p. xvii).

This chapter attempts to deconstruct the term "community" in the case of Bush Radio in particular, and community radio in general. The chapter will outline how this category was politically invented and how it carries certain political
connotations in South Africa (Crehan, 2002). Drawing on Turner’s (1969) concepts of liminality and communitas, this chapter argues that the development of Bush Radio in South Africa can be explicated as the formation of an alternative communication medium by a liminal group of activists who developed a sense of communitas in response to apartheid structures. Moreover, the habitus of the city in which Bush Radio operates maintains this communitas. This chapter argues that community can be considered as a concept “under-erasure” (Derrida, 1976), constantly challenged yet currently used and widely understood.

I will give a brief overview and definition of community radio, discuss how “community” has been theorized, and finally attempt to re-evaluate the concept, suggesting that it is a more fluid and multi-dimensional space than the rhetoric on development communication suggests.

**Overview of community radio**

The terms alternative or community media refer to a diverse range of media including newspapers, magazines, radio, television and electronic network initiatives. Community radio in the developing world emerged within the context of participatory communication projects in Latin America in the 1960s, following the criticisms of the failures of the dominant, capitalist paradigm of the West and the Marxist/socialist paradigm of the East (Nwosu et al, 1995). Led by Third World scholars and
activists, Paulo Freire (1970, 1985) in particular, these critics pointed out that the mass media privilege agendas irrelevant to Third World citizens. Scholars and activists searched for alternatives, leading to the consequent global rise of participatory communication initiatives, which include community radio (Rodriguez, 2000).

Today, small-scale, locally owned media are developing to counter the spread of global media corporations. Groups in developing countries have been empowered to express their opinions and needs by using modern technologies to gain participation in the public sphere (Mowlana, 1998). As Maria Victoria Polanca, former director of the Canadian based World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) said:

[The] community media movement has a very important role to play; how to raise the needs and perspectives of communities at all levels and in all issues; how to become actors of development and not only the objects of development (M. Polanco, personal communication, 07/2000).

In general, radio remains the most pervasive medium with the greatest potential for participatory communication strategies due to its low cost and accessibility to illiterate populations, particularly in rural areas. Community radio has provided groups with access to media and an opportunity to articulate their views through direct and indirect participation. The rise of radio as a vehicle for popular, participatory communication began with the
Bolivian miners’ radios in the 1940s (O’Connor, 1990), but extended beyond its Latin American origins to the Caribbean, Asia, Australia, Europe and Africa. In South Africa, over 80 community radio stations were granted broadcast licenses in 1994. In June 2003 there were 150 stations broadcasting with community radio licenses.

The term “community radio”

Predominantly referred to as community radio in Africa and the Caribbean, the term alternative radio is used in Latin America and the United States. In Europe it is known as free or association radio, and in Australia it is called ethnic or aboriginal radio. More recently, Rodriguez (2001) coined the term citizens’ media in an attempt to overcome binary categories traditionally used to theorize alternative media. While used widely, the term “alternative” suggests its own lesser relationship to dominant media. British theorist John Downing (2001) prefers the term radical media to refer to any small-scale media that express views alternative to hegemonic perspectives. I use the term community radio in this dissertation, because it is used widely in South Africa both by government and by the radio stations.
What constitutes community radio?

The key concepts underlying community media are access, participation and self-management (Lewis, 1993. The public is brought closer to communication systems through their ability to access materials and the availability of a range of relevant materials. Access includes feedback, whereby audience members interact directly with producers of messages, participate during the broadcast of programs, and are encouraged to comment and criticize. Participation implies the widespread involvement of ordinary people at the levels of production, decision-making/management and planning. Self-management is thus the height of participation, through which the target audience exercises decision-making on all levels (Lewis, 1993).

The defining characteristic of community radio is thus its operation by specific groups of people who participate in all aspects of running the station, from fundraising and management, to programming, production and on-air activities. Volunteers, drawn from the audience, usually staff community radio stations. In this sense, the traditional boundaries between sender and receiver are blurred through the creation of an active audience.
What does “community” mean?

The notion of community has been central to the analysis of social and political life from Plato and Aristotle through to nineteenth-century social theorists who were concerned with how modernity, urbanization and capitalism threatened traditional patterns of social life (Bender, 1978). The term has been largely used with positive connotations in both popular and academic discourse, with the notion that social change or industrialization has led to the destruction of community. Tönnies’ (1963) typologies of Gemeinschaft (community) and Gesellschaft (society) emerged out of this assumption. In general, the term has been a vehicle through which to name collective identity or to legitimate collective action.

Community can thus be defined in many ways, from time and space specific communities of culture and geography, to intentional communities or communities of affinity such as virtual communities or academic communities. The most common definition focuses on community as a group of people sharing a common interest in a particular locality, i.e., territorially based social organizations and social activity (Bender, 1978). On the other hand, communities of interest refer to a situation in which members share cultural, social or political interests independent of geographical proximity (Jankowski, 2002). For
example, community of interest radio stations, cater to specific religious or ethnic groups.

Bender (1978) expands these definitions to include an experiential component, arguing that “community” includes many layers of emotional meaning resulting in expectations of the quality of human relationships in a community. In this sense, community can also be understood as a social network characterized by a distinctive kind of human interaction, much like what Bourdieu (1977) referred to as habitus, and Turner (1978) later called communitas.

However, there has been much criticism of community. Feminist and poststructuralist scholars in the 1980s and 1990s argued that identity political communities were exclusionary in their attempt to constitute nations and liberal states as communities. These scholars argued that community constructs a distinction between its members and non-members, becoming oppressive in its consolidation of these binary oppositions. For example, the designation alternative or community radio includes an implicit assumption that mainstream media are in power.

Furthermore, as Joseph (2002) argues, community is constituted by capitalism and thus enables exploitation. Fetishizing community can blind us to the ways in which we might intervene in the enactment of domination and exploitation. Joseph (2002) explores sites where the ideal of community relentlessly
recurs, from debates over art and culture in the popular media, to the discourses and practices of nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations, to contemporary narratives of economic transformation or globalization. She shows how community legitimates the social hierarchies of gender, race, nation, and sexuality that capitalism implicitly requires, arguing that social formations, including community, are constituted through the performativity of production.

Similarly, Mouffe (1992) argued that while we should return to a politics where citizens recognize themselves as participants in a community, we should not return to a pre-modern conception of the political with its nostalgia for the Greek polis and Gemeinschaft types of community.

While many earlier scholars were concerned with the internal dynamics of communities, this dissertation is more concerned with the production and consumption of community, attempting to situate the discourse of community within the social processes in which they are constituted and that they in turn help to constitute (Joseph, 2002).

**Community in South Africa**

In South Africa the term was originally used as a euphemism for race. After the 1948 victory of the National Party, that instituted the policy of apartheid, government policies were openly based on racial exclusion. Official racial categories were
suffixed with the word community: the black community, the Indian community, the coloured community and the white community (Crehan, 2002). Apartheid was thus legitimized by a rhetoric of ethnically defined cultural communities which defined the life one lived, the language one spoke and officially appropriate practices (Louw & Tomaselli, 1991).

Government frequently used signifiers such as “community development” and “community participation” to refer to the white population. Formed in 1961, the Community Development Department was concerned with the development of white Afrikaans speaking groups and the removal of others from areas designated as white under the Group Areas Act (Thornton & Ramphele, 1988).

Conversely, those who mobilized against the apartheid regime also used the term prolifically. The popularization of community as an oppositional term came out of the Black Consciousness (BC) Movement of the 1970s (Thornton and Ramphele, 1988). BC supporters used the term to refer to “wide sociopolitical groups like black community (which included all those classified as African, colored and Indian), or even more loosely, ‘the community’ to describe residential entities such as the townships” (p.35).

Apartheid involved the forced and often violent removal of hundreds of thousands of black South Africans to make certain areas racially homogenous (Crehan, 2002). Opposition to the state
often assumed the form of struggles by these groups or communities against removal. Furthermore, argues Crehan (2002), the harsh realities of life for black South Africans under apartheid tended to “weld existing black settlements into communities of struggle” (p.180), “united by the experience of history, shared ideas and a sense of destiny” (Marx, 1992, p.15). The term community acquired progressive political meaning over time. Those involved in the movement against apartheid used the term prolifically to refer to a unified black population.

Apartheid categories of black or African, colored, Indian and white (in ascending hierarchical order) further served to fragment the black population and emphasize difference based on ethnicity. During the struggle against apartheid the term community served to unify these groups as an opposing force against the minority white government. Since 1994, these manufactured divisions have resurfaced to play a crucial role in the new political terrain.

However, communities in post-apartheid South Africa occupy a concrete space in the legal framework of the state. It is “communities” that can make claims for land restitution and land redistribution, and the term “formerly disadvantaged community” refers to racial groups dispossessed of land, an entity on whose behalf a struggle was being waged (Crehan, 2002).
The term community also arose from the cleavages created by the apartheid state in their colonial “divide and rule” approach, particularly with regard to land distribution. In an attempt to decentralize black populations and anticipate black resistance against the British government, black people were placed in reserves or locations, with government exercising indirect rule through existing African chiefs.

The formation of these locations represented an attempt to separate blacks from whites and to prevent both the formation of a permanent body of black workers in the cities, and the formation of class-consciousness or broader identities organized around race. Also known as the Shepstone system, these African locations of the 1950s were originally created by white liberal segregationists to allegedly protect blacks from the erosion of their societies by white civilization. This was further developed by the creation of Bantustans or so-called independent homelands.

The Group Areas Act of 1950 assigned specific geographic areas or neighborhoods to be exclusively occupied by certain racial groups. Many so-called non-white South Africans were forcibly removed from areas that were re-zoned for white occupation only. In Cape Town thousands of people were moved from the District Six area along the mountainside in the city center.
to the desolate sandy Cape Flats area where Bush Radio was later born.

**Notions of community after 1994**

Speaking before a panel at the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) licensing hearing in June 2001, Ibrahim said,

> One of our mandates is to demystify radio to the community; for so long we’ve been spoken at not spoken with; for so long we’ve had radio thrown at us and it was the worst kind of radio, telling us that we were useless, no good. So now, from the age of four we are teaching children, it’s your radio, the airwaves belong to the people\(^{11}\).

The community Ibrahim speaks about refers not only to the station’s audience, but also to a group of people whose interests they attempt to represent. But who is this community today? To everyone’s surprise, an auto-mechanic called in one Monday morning from a previously black township for a copy of the Michael Parenti commentary that aired the previous Friday night. While the target audience is predominantly working class, staff always assumed the Parenti listeners would be mostly lower middle class, perhaps students or members of non-governmental organizations. On the other hand, a DJ from the hip-hop show described how he was surprised to encounter a professor at the University of Cape Town that was an avid listener of the station,

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\(^{11}\) Transcribed verbatim from an audio recording of the license hearings.
and of his program. This was a surprise since the station assumed that the hip-hop show’s audience comprised mostly black youth.

Many of the Bush Radio staff do not live in the Cape Flats, and many of the volunteers are students or professionals and do not fit the class profile of the original usage of the term “community.” The presenter of the Sunday night blues program is a surgeon employed at Groote Schuur, the biggest hospital in the city, prestigious as the site of the world’s first heart transplant. The presenter of the jazz program is an internationally acclaimed jazz musician and returnee from the United States. A former Truth and Reconciliation Commission\textsuperscript{12} investigator hosts a Friday afternoon current affairs program. The principal of an elementary school on the Cape Flats is a volunteer news reader. Many people from poorer areas on the Cape Flats cannot participate in volunteer programs at Bush Radio because they cannot afford the cost of public transportation to and from the station.

While Bush Radio has always targeted a specific geographic area, after the end of apartheid and abolition of the Group Areas Act, black people are no longer concentrated in those areas. Furthermore, the station’s broadcast range extends to areas

\textsuperscript{12} The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up by the new Government of National Unity to help deal with human rights abuses under apartheid.
outside of the Cape Flats, and many listeners call the station from these areas. The audience is no longer a black audience. Some white presenters work at the station, and there are many calls from white South Africans. The station has attempted to redefine its understanding of community as a group of people who are interested in alternative information. In other words, critical information about global political issues such as that provided by the Michael Parenti and Alternative Radio cassette tapes, which come from the United States. As Adrian Louw said,

One of Bush’s aims, which I think it’s done very successfully, is also to build bridges between those communities. If there’s a more advantaged community listening that’s okay, but we’re not catering for them. So if our listenership is increasing they’re either listening because they want to find out what’s happening or we are actually spreading the message of understanding (A. Louw, personal communication, 08/20/2002).

News producer Raymond Silinga echoed Louw’s thoughts.

Well as the mission of the station says to service the community and its needs, to be an alternative voice from the mainstream voices that we’ve got, whether it’s media organizations, whether it’s the print or broadcasting media. So to try and balance what is not yet balanced in terms of how the media would cover events and see things because we basically live in different worlds especially here in South Africa. The whites live there, blacks live there on their own, so they live their different lifestyles, so it’s basically to sort of bridge the gap between the two communities (R. Silinga, personal communication, 07/23/02).
Bush Radio and communitas

As described in the previous chapter, Bush Radio emerged in the 1990s out of the Cassette Education Trust (CASET) created during the 1980s, a period of heightened political struggle which acted as a catalyst for political change. Ruling Nationalist Party supporters were clinging to the vestiges of a white minority run state to ensure the perpetuation of white privilege and political power. Conversely, an increasingly militant black mass democratic movement was fighting apartheid. The divisions were clear: you were either white or black, oppressor or oppressed. There was agreement of white as a signifier of power and black as a signifier of struggle against apartheid. Within this context, there was a proliferation of community-based organizations, bringing together constituencies at grassroots level to take action and to make representations to government on issues of common interest.

Edric Gorfinkel, a young Jewish white South African, together with several others from various apartheid racial categories, founded the Cassette Education Trust Project (CASET).
Neither fully part of the mainstream liberation struggle\(^\text{13}\) nor of the privileged class of oppressors, they found themselves in a liminal state. As Turner (1969) points out,

> liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention and ceremonial (p. 68)

The group that started CASET was not completely part of the working class struggle, nor were they content with the status quo and their relatively privileged status as teachers, artists and students. According to Ibrahim, who took over from Gorfinkel in 1994:

> The truth is, on the one side you had a conscientious objector and his friends, white liberals mostly wanting to do something. But it mustn’t be too much risk and it mustn’t be too hard work. So they put together tapestries of sound of the leaders’ speeches on cassettes and distributed it or not. It didn’t matter to them whether they distributed it, they were mostly getting stoned, growing their own pot and then putting these mosaics onto tape and it sounded – wow! And then they go onto the next project and it didn’t matter whether that got to the people at all. That wasn’t the purpose. If it was their purpose they would all have been in jail. They weren’t jail material. They were white liberals living very well, all owning their own apartments” (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, August 2002).

Indeed, Turner (1969) points out that the values of communitas are strikingly present in the literature and behavior

\(^{13}\)While many of the founders were members of the African National Congress (ANC) or United Democratic Front (UDF), their activities within these organizations were limited to support, and perhaps attending the occasional rally or meeting. None of them were ever imprisoned for political activities.
of "hippies" who did not have the advantage of national rites of passage. According to Ibrahim, the original founders of CASET were exactly that, a group of hippies searching for expression of their liberal political views. The group of people that made up CASET certainly formed a kind of communitas through their creation of an organization that they believed would provide an alternative communications medium in a repressive broadcast environment.

Turner (1969) privileges the Latin term communitas over community to distinguish it as a "relationship between concrete, historical, idiosyncratic individuals", rather than "community" as defined by overarching structure. In other words, communitas is a kind of anti-structure.

Ibrahim took over management of the station in 1994, shortly after they were granted their first broadcast license. They got their license in August '95 so they’re on air. It was a great station until they went on air. They didn’t have a clue how to proceed, the day to day grind of keeping the station on air. So it was music wall to wall the moment they got a license. The station hit rock bottom because nobody was interested anymore because this was hard work. Everybody was a great radio maker until they had to make radio (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, 02/25/02)

Ibrahim was visiting family members in Cape Town after a 30-year political exile in Canada, where he worked in community radio and
television. Several Bush Radio staff members approached him confidentially and asked him to help them with their new role as broadcasters. He initially came aboard for four months only, and was later asked to stay on in a more permanent capacity. In fact, there was some controversy around this, resulting in several staff members going on strike to demand his appointment. When Ibrahim was hired, he started making organic changes.

“I look at life in terms of the plant life. And I looked at Bush Radio like that I looked at the roots and I said okay. It was rooted in the struggle, so some of the roots needed to be cut, trimmed and these roots were mostly ANC roots and I cut the political roots off. Then I looked at the stem and it was fine, it comes from a good community it’s rooted in the community, Salt River’s fine, to get back on the campus you have to deal with campus politics and I haven’t got time; and then the leaves were fine. So what about nutrients and soil and that’s where the funders came in - money, training information. I contacted all the underground structures that I knew in the world and asked them for materials. Michael Parenti and all of that, and they came on board And I was done, I had my nutrients, I had my fertilizer and my soil and that was Bush Radio and I’ve run that ever since (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, 02/25/02).

This transition from the earlier laissez-faire environment of Bush Radio where volunteers drifted in and out of the station represented a major shift in the station’s history. Ibrahim positioned his desk directly outside the on-air studio and interrogated volunteers about their on-air performances as they left the studio. He instituted strict policies about who was allowed on the premises or even up the stairs to the reception area, and he occasionally searched volunteers’ bags, sometimes
confiscating stolen goods such as equipment or, more commonly, music CDs and cassette tapes. During this period one would find up to twenty volunteers on the premises, many of them unemployed with nothing to do during the day, hanging around and using the Bush Radio phones or faxes. There was a common belief that community radio, together with all its resources, “belonged” to the community. This stage of Bush Radio represents what Turner (1978) would call a normative communitas,

where, under the influence of time, the need to mobilize and organize resources, and the necessity for social control among the members of the group in pursuance of these goals, the existential communitas is organized into a perduring social system (p.132).

There is also communitas among the people who work at Bush Radio. Staff and volunteers seem to share a certain interpretive schema that provides guidelines of action. According to Bourdieu (1977), individuals “who share a common habitus which, in turn, structures their social practices – sets out guidelines and limits but allows for individual innovation. The habitus is both a product of social structure and itself a structure generative of social practices that reproduces social structures (in Seidman, 2002). As Louw said,

Bush Radio’s filled with caring individuals and if you don’t care you’re not going to survive at Bush Radio. If you care about yourself, if you care about your career, you’re not going to survive at Bush Radio. I’ve seen, since my involvement with Bush Radio, those people that are here to be famous, they leave, they don’t fit in. If they’re
here to make big bucks they’re going to leave. But if they
care about their community and if they care about
themselves in terms of their own development, for what
their development can do for their community, they survive
and prosper and they survive and prosper when they leave
Bush Radio...the clichéd saying is that if you want to change
the world start with yourself and I think Bush offers that
to a lot of young people (A. Louw, personal communication,
08/20/02).

In this sense, Bush Radio recognizes the problems inherent
in traditional apartheid categorizations and definitions of
community. Instead of embracing these notions and restricting
themselves to essentialist notions of the term, the station
acknowledges the limitations of community and attempts instead to
bridge the gaps between artificially constructed communities. The
station does not attempt to place any specific limitations on its
audience. As Louw explained:

Who is it that we’re serving and who is actually listening.
It’s not an easy question to answer because we don’t have
the resources to do proper audience research. The station
is geared towards a younger audience currently. We try and
service as many people in the broader community as
possibly, community of Cape Town very broadly speaking. We
always say if you want to find out about HIV and AIDS, if
you want to find out about children, gender issues, then
you can listen to Bush. We don’t try and entice people with
sexy presenters that pose half naked. We’re not that kind
of radio station. We’re not a sexy radio station (A. Louw,
personal communication, 08/20/02).

This habitus existed right at the beginning during the
formation of CASET. People from different racial or religious
backgrounds made up the organization. When interviewed for this
study, many of the founders spoke with nostalgia about their old
colleagues and expressed a desire to re-establish contact with their old friends. As Martin Buber (in Bender, 1978) said,

A real community need not consist of people who are perpetually together; but it must consist of people who, precisely because they are comrades, have mutual access to one another and are ready for one another (p.8).

Today people often say that once you have worked at Bush Radio you will always return to the organization whether in a direct or indirect way. Most of the staff find it hard to articulate specifically what they mean, but they say that there’s something special about the organization which has changed them. Producer Erna Curry said,

For the first time I’ve got to do the kind of work that falls in with basically what I believe my principles are about. So it’s very comforting in that respect. Bush Radio is a very progressive organization. So working at Bush I think really changed my life. Bush Radio’s got its own politics and its own organizational difficulties as well, but I’ve just always felt that, I don’t know, I just found that there was a place I could really utilize all my skills—and that’s not something you can do in a lot of other organizations (E. Curry, personal communication, 08/21/02).

Bush Radio’s location and target audience

The term community was and still is used prolifically by NGOs, “to win funders’ hearts and open their wallets” (Crehan, 2002). Bush Radio is no exception and has always used the term to refer to a largely anonymous and faceless audience. In the early days of CASET, it referred to the specific geographic area of the Cape Flats to which so-called non-whites were forcibly relocated. The Cape Flats refers to a sandy stretch of land about 50 miles
long on the outskirts of Cape Town, referred to colloquially as the “dumping ground of apartheid.” Several townships for black and so-called colored people still exist within the Cape Flats, and the housing is mostly tenement style with large areas of squatter camps or informal housing.

Relocation was accompanied by a host of social problems including an increase in domestic violence and alcohol and drug abuse stemming from the separation of families, which broke down family and neighborhood networks. This was the “community” that CASET originally targeted, and the organization’s key objective at that time was to inform and educate the poor on issues that they had little or no opportunity to learn about, like literacy, hygiene, health, and of course, relevant political issues (http://www.bushradio.co.za).

Habitus of the city

Bush Radio’s location in Cape Town is significant in terms of cultural geography. As Lee (1997) argues, cities have their own habitus, that is, certain relatively enduring (pre) dispositions to current social, economic, political or even physical circumstances in very particular ways, ways in which other cities, with different habitus formations, may respond to very differently (p.127).

As the oldest and traditionally most socially and politically liberal city in South Africa, Cape Town certainly has
its own particular habitus. To some extent then, Bush Radio uses “community” geographically to refer to people who live in Cape Town and who share a certain communitas or culture.

The first Dutch settlers in 1652 established a stop in Table Bay for the Dutch East India Company and their ships that sailed to the Dutch East Indies, to replenish fresh fruit and vegetables. Later, slavery defined the culture of the city. Over 180 years, as many as 63,000 slaves were brought to Cape Town from East Africa, Madagascar, South India and Indonesia, among other places. They were used as labor on farms on the outskirts of the city, as workers in households and factories and as builders. As a result, the majority of South Africa’s mixed race, or so-called colored population live in Cape Town. This group actively engaged in processes of creolization to construct their identities from both ruling and subaltern cultures (Erasmus, 2001). Erasmus (2001) argues for the reconceptualization of colored identities as cultural identities, comprising detailed bodies of knowledge, specific cultural practices, memories, rituals and modes of being...colored identities were formed in the colonial encounter between colonists (Dutch and British), slaves from South and East India and from East Africa, and conquered indigenous peoples, the Khoi and the San. The result has been a highly specific and instantly recognizable cultural formation - not just ‘a mixture’ but a very particular ‘mixture’ comprising elements of Dutch, British, Malaysian, Khoi and other forms of African culture appropriated, translated and articulated in complex and subtle ways (p.21).
Many of the people at Bush Radio would have been racially classified by the apartheid state as colored. In fact outsiders have been known to criticize Bush Radio for being too white and colored, and exclusive of black identity. In terms of language, for example, the station broadcasts primarily in English, with about 20% of broadcasts in Xhosa and 10% in Afrikaans. As Louw said,

Black identity and the whole issue of colored identity, it’s a very convoluted thing. I think a lot of people at BR see themselves as black rather than as colored even though it’s about a 60% split. And if you want to use the term colored most of the people working here are colored, working to a form of black consciousness and black identity. Because of how the identity issue has been used by the previous government and even today. You know, you have to be proud of your colored identity – I mean what the hell is colored identity? I identify more with the Xhosa than the coon carnival. I think Bush in many ways is trying to develop that black consciousness (A. Louw, personal communication, 07/2003).

The use of the term community to represent the station’s constituency was thus rooted in a progressive political notion of the community as black. As Rashid Lombard, one of the first trustees on the board of Bush Radio said of the audience:

I’d like to define it as black because I’m very much still into black consciousness. It’s the black community, not colored, not African not Indian, black. And I think that’s a critical thing that I hope they [Bush Radio] still have that vision of getting it into people’s minds (personal communication).

Here again Lombard reflects on how people at Bush Radio have always preferred to refer to themselves as black, rather
than use the apartheid category of colored. South Africa has a complex ethnic composition, roughly divided by the apartheid state into black (73%), Indian (3%), Colored (8%) and White (16%). In addition there are 11 official languages with 15 others recognized by the constitution (Leicester et al, 2000). Prior to 1994, the momentum of resistance and struggle camouflaged ethnic and racial differences and substituted them with homogenizing terms such as ‘the people’, which became fragmented after the 1994 elections (Marais, 1998).

As a result, race and ethnicity in this context is not a social construct, but has been concretized by its economic roots. It is not a “false consciousness” or a mere super-structural manipulation, but has had direct effects in terms of people’s material conditions and their relations to modes of production (Carrim & Soudien, 1999). Race in South Africa is not imagined. While essentially a social construct, ethnicity is a lived reality for those who identify with the in-group (Fataar, 1999). As a result, the micro-cultures in South Africa became isolated from one another because of the hegemony of the so-called macro-culture.
One example is the rift between black and colored communities in the Western Cape. This is not to say that these are homogenous groups, although they are frequently perceived as such. Race and racism in South Africa is thus more complex than a simple black-white issue. As Nkomo et al. (1995) points out, there are variations in experiences of prejudice within the black community and gradations of prejudice among them. The tendency to homogenize all black people into the category of black obfuscates the racial or ethnic dynamics within the black population itself. The “bipolarity inherent in the white versus black construction...is unhelpful in coming to terms with the complex ways in which racism expresses itself in various
settings, particularly in regard to intra-black dynamics” (Carrim and Soudien, 1999, p.154). While the term community was thus used to refer to a unified black audience, Gorfinkel, the founder of CASET, explained that the term was always problematic:

I really don’t like the word and we struggled to find an alternative, but they were all clumsy and what people really reacted to was the idea of community. And so the community term I think is a bit of an unfortunate one. If I were pushed to say okay well what is the notion of a community - the first thing I would say is that community is something that has got completely volatile boundaries. No community ever is something that is just a stable thing. There are constantly changes going on within a community, people moving in and out of a community, nobody lives in any one community (E. Gorfinkel, personal communication, 08/28/02).

While almost everyone at the station formerly classified as coloured, identifies with the more inclusive term black, the habitus of Cape Town lends a particular character to Bush Radio. In this sense location is conceived culturally. As Lee (1997) says, the culture of a location is the cumulative product of the collected and sedimented history of that location, which marks its presence on the contemporary social landscape.

In fact, Bush Radio’s specific location within the city center has always been an issue. Since its inception as CASET, the organization was based in Salt River, a suburb five minutes away from the city center and at least a twenty minute drive from the Cape Flats. Bush Radio has never been located in its target geographic community like most other community
radio stations. While there is participation through volunteerism by members of the community, this involvement is not as widespread as it could be. According to Ibrahim,

> It’s very difficult to address that issue. First of all, it is crime infested. So to go into the community and make yourself vulnerable to the attacks of your volunteers, staff and equipment, that’s got to be a consideration. To bring the community into the station, it’s a poor community, they will steal everything that’s not screwed and welded into the ground. So you let them participate on the airwaves for now, that’s all we can afford for now. If anybody has a better idea, let them do it. We don’t know how to do it (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, 08/2002).

**Conclusion**

Hobsbawm (1983) points out that the “invention of tradition” occurs more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which old traditions were designed. Nearly a decade after the transition to democracy, South Africans continue to struggle with the competing demands of difference and unity as they attempt to reconstruct themselves (Brown, 2001), shift away from apartheid’s imagined communities (Anderson, 1983) and to define themselves in new ways.
Since 1994 these manufactured cleavages have resurfaced to play a crucial role in the new political terrain. In particular, with people no longer excluded from economic opportunities on the basis of race, class differences are creating fissures in old communities of struggle. Old umbrella terms like “community” and “black” are no longer signifiers of unified groups.

The formation of Bush Radio specifically and community radio stations in general usually arises out of a communitas or habitus. In the case of Bush Radio, a group of people who occupied a liminal space as neither oppressors nor political activists, created a communication medium to reach apartheid’s victims. The term community in South Africa designated race with the South African Broadcasting Corporation delivering radio programs designed for specific racial groups (as discussed in the previous chapter). In this sense, the SABC was offering an essentialist version of communitas, later challenged by Bush Radio’s subversion of both the medium and the message.

In conclusion, the term community often raises more questions than it answers, and the terms community or grassroots media may conceal more than they reveal. The term community radio is certainly stronger in what it excludes than in what it signifies. While the term community in this context is clearly problematic, it is still useful verbal shorthand to refer to the large spectrum of the relatively dispossessed, and it is hard to
think of a replacement. Perhaps it is best thought of as under erasure, in a Derridean sense. In other words, we should use the term community, but remain aware that it is always open to question and deconstruction. Furthermore, in the case of Bush Radio, a more useful way conceptualization might be through the theoretical lenses of communitas and habitus, as opposed to “community.” While communitas implies anti-structure and habitus involves some kind of structure, the coexistence of these two concepts in the case of Bush Radio points to its rhizomatic nature of being both this and not this, as discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter 5. New theoretical directions for community radio

Introduction

The previous chapter described the community within community radio as a complex construct, deconstructing it within the context of Turner’s communitas and Bourdieu’s habitus, to reveal its political history in South Africa and concluding that it should be considered as a concept “under erasure.” This chapter continues this critical theorizing, extending it to include community radio and Bush Radio. This analysis is crucial since it informs the methodology of this dissertation. In order for any methodology to function coherently, researchers must articulate their actions with a number of theoretical concepts.

In this chapter I propose that community radio may be best understood through the theoretical lens of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s writings on the rhizome, as well as feminist scholar Donna Haraway’s work on the cyborg. This chapter will first describe established, traditional theoretical concepts for alternative media and reflect on why it may be necessary to move beyond these, toward cultural studies. The practice of cultural studies is understood as a multi-disciplinary field that “blurs the boundaries between it and other subjects” (Barker, 2000, p.5). Secondly, the theories of the rhizome and the cyborg will be explicated with specific reference to community radio, and more specifically, Bush Radio.
Traditional theoretical approaches to community radio

There is no shortage of theories on alternative media. Community radio usually falls within traditional theoretical approaches, which situate alternative media on the axes of specific communication-oriented debates in the areas of development. These international development theories are divided into two distinct areas: modernization and dependency.

Modernization was the dominant paradigm in development theory and practice between the 1940's and the 1960s, often still employed today and based on the premise that insufficient knowledge causes underdevelopment and that interventions should provide people with information to change their behavior. Modernization suggested that cultural and information deficits as opposed to economic problems, cause development problems. According to these proponents, the difficulties in Third World countries were at least partially related to traditional culture, which inhibited development.

Walter Rostow (1960) and Daniel Lerner (1958) believed that development takes place irreversibly in a common direction when key institutions and certain behavior patterns are established. Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth* (1960) presents a five-stage model of transition from traditional to high mass consumption, which he believed every society must pass through.
Everett Rogers (1962) introduced the top-down diffusion model of communication in the 1960s within this uni-linear model. Rogers (1962) focused on the transfer of technological innovations from development agencies to their clients, focusing on the media as the message, with its main goal the diffusion of innovations. As theorized by Daniel Lerner (1958) and Wilbur Schramm (1964), communication was the transmission of information. Exposure to mass media was one of several factors that could bring about modern attitudes, including urbanization and literacy. This knowledge-transfer model defined the field for years to come. These theories originated in the Shannon-Weaver model of sender-receiver and the propaganda model developed during World War II, which believed that mass media had "magic bullet" effects in changing attitudes and behavior.

One of the most powerful critiques of modernization came from the dependency paradigm during 1960s to the 1980s. Originally developed in Latin America, dependency was informed by Marxist and critical theories. According to these dependistas, it was the dependence of the periphery, the poorer, Third World countries, to the center, the dominating Western powers, that constituted the essential problem of the "development of underdevelopment" (Frank, 1972). According to them, the problems of the Third World reflected the general dynamics of capitalist development. Dependency theorists argued that the problems of
underdevelopment were not internal to Third World countries but were determined by external factors and the way former colonies were integrated into the world economy. The problems of the underdeveloped world were thus political rather than as result of a lack of information. Dependency theorists argued that underdevelopment was the consequence of the development of the Western world.

In the 1970's, dissatisfaction with mainstream development initiated an alternative, people centered approach to development. Paulo Freire (1970) argued that true development should include the liberation of the individual through conscientization, i.e. an understanding of the forces at work in the system one lives in. The agents in alternative development are mainly the "community" and NGOs through "development from below." Melkote (1991) states that the delivery of technological innovations is not enough and that development communicators have a new role to assist in the empowerment of marginalized individuals, groups and organizations. This calls for grassroots organizing and communicative social action on the part of the women, the poor, minorities, and others who have been marginalized.

For participatory theorists and practitioners, development communication required sensitivity to cultural diversity that was ignored by modernization theories. Modernization projects had
undermined the importance of local knowledge and the consequences of the interaction between local cultures and foreign ideas. For many, development communication needed to be human centered rather than media-centered, with the collective decision-making of all stakeholders in a project to ensure ownership by the recipients that continues after the researchers have left (Chambers, 1997). This implied the abandonment of the persuasion bias that development communication had inherited from propaganda theories.

**Shifts toward critical theory**

There have been shifts in the theoretical terrain away from more traditional mass communication theories toward more critical approaches. Clemencia Rodriguez (2001) has drawn on the theory of radical democracy proposed by Chantal Mouffe and Ernest Laclau (1985) who suggest that attempts by non-mainstream groups to contest legitimate discourses and to redefine their identity in their own terms should be interpreted as political action.

Similarly, Chris Atton (2002) draws on Foucault's writings on the “insurrection of subjugated knowledges”, predicting a situation in which the Other is able to represent itself. Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) democratic theory claims that social meaning is derived from a plurality of possible ways of understanding social organization and activity and that this meaning is subject to endless contestation (Rodriguez, 2001).
Radical or alternative media projects view media as a site in which to contest such social meaning, as it provides an appropriate forum in which to respond to the hegemony of the dominant medium. Drawing on Habermas’ notion of the public sphere, Downing (2001) argues that alternative media provides a forum that is relatively free from economic and editorial constraints, permitting the “discursive reinterpretation and refutation of media forms and symbols” (p.318).

However, these theories only explain certain aspects of alternative media such as democratic participation, or the subversion of traditional power dynamics. The overarching theories on international development are useful to frame the phenomenon, but do not provide a useful frame of analysis for understanding. When I began to attempt to theoretically frame my research on community radio first in the Caribbean and then in South Africa I found a more representative theory lacking. In other words, I found that I could very easily pick any one of a number of mass communication theories, but that none of these came close to explaining the complexity of community radio as I had experienced it. Community radio falls within the paradigm of participatory communication theory. It can be described within this framework, and more specific theories such as agenda setting or reception studies. At this point discussions with my dissertation advisor, Jenny Nelson, led me to the concept
of rhizomatics. As I fought my way through the density of Deleuze and Guattari, I began to realize that perhaps I had finally found a more useful theoretical outlook that departed more radically with the old positivist approaches.

**The concept of rhizomatics**

A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, *intermezzo* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

As explicated by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the rhizome generates connections through its characteristics of heterogeneity, disjunction, multiplicity, multiple entry points and routes rather than roots. In a botanical sense, a rhizome is an underground tuber that ramifies and diversifies, producing new buds, opposed to what Deleuze and Guattari call “arboric systems of knowledge” based on the model of a tree.

The model of the tree symbolizes linear thinking and hierarchical structures. The rhizome is therefore motional, a network of connections across which things flow and disperse. In this sense, it is a mapping, in-between, a becoming. The rhizome moves between the lines established by the arboric systems, and as such is vague rather than aggregated, with both “this” and “not this” co-existing simultaneously (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).
By having no center and no solid structure, the rhizome is a state of chaos or becoming. The rhizome is therefore non-representable, and understandable only through the concept of multiplicity, destroying the unity of the subject. Rhizomorphosis is a radical state of fragmentation that cannot be accounted for within existing models of representation such as language, but which nevertheless exists as a kind of chaos existing underneath any representation.

For Deleuze and Guattari the binary becomes a tool of its own destruction when pushed to its ultimate limit. Many of their key terms function in this way, as the polar opposites of that which they oppose and seek to destroy. In effect, Deleuze and Guattari construct a binary in order to perform a deconstruction that will eventually do away with the binary altogether. This is their method in *Anti-Oedipus* (1983) where they posit schizoanalysis as the polar opposite of psychoanalysis, for the purpose of first critiquing psychoanalysis, then doing away with it. They employ this binary construction even though such dualisms are precisely what they hope to escape.

Deleuze and Guattari invite the reader to become a rhizome, for only the rhizome can defeat the tree. The rhizome deterritorializes strata and subverts hierarchies. It can create new uses for the trees that it infiltrates. Moreover, the rhizome allows for the re-opening of flows that the tree shuts down. The
rhizome offers some hope of bringing about a kind of "liberation" from structures of power and dominance.

Community radio develops in rhizomatic fashion, growing globally more like the grass than the trees. Community radio is not becoming more powerful than larger forms of media, but it is growing horizontally, creating ripples under the surface. As Alfonso Gumucio Dragon says in Making Waves (2001), individually community radio stations may make only small waves, but together they have the effect of a tsunami. Like a rhizome, community stations are a network of connections, across which things flow and disperse.

More specifically, the internal workings of a community radio station like Bush Radio are particularly rhizomatic. At Bush Radio titles often have no real meaning and responsibilities are shared. If you are a producer you may also be expected to present programs or read the news when the regular news reader is off sick. Everyone is expected to learn how to operate the on-air studio and to know basic editing skills. There are no dedicated studio operators or editors at Bush Radio. Further evidence of this subversion of hierarchical strategies is the manner in which people interact. As Louw said,

At Bush yes I’m the program integrator and I do this that and the other. Basically Adrian is the person that will make the decision, that sort of thing. I take out the garbage every Thursday, you know. Where are you going to find that at a commercial radio station? Where the
executive director buys a parcel of fish and chips and has it with the staff. That’s something that somebody told me once. She hasn’t been to any place where people are sitting around a table having some fish and chips and you can come and take some out of that person’s packet and actually just share. And I didn’t realize it until she said it and that’s so strange. You don’t get that anywhere else. And I think we’ve been lucky in that way because there’s not much to do in Salt River, there’s nowhere to go at lunch so we’re forced to work together and eat together. Celebrating everybody’s birthday, celebrating when somebody leaves. That doesn’t happen at many places. Here at Bush we get together we say thank you to that person, if we have money we buy some cake (personal communication, 08/20/02).

Figure 10. Night manager, Bassie Montewa celebrates his birthday with some of the Bush Radio staff and volunteers. Picture from the Bush Radio files.

Linear thinking and hierarchical structures have thus been subverted rhizomatically to allow for tasks to be completed, while not allowing titles to control individuals. Another example of this is the station’s views on HIV/AIDS or gender issues. Rather than ghettoizing these issues and relegating them to a specific slot, awareness is raised throughout the programming
day. Even a music program will have scheduled public service announcements on topics from gay rights to domestic violence. The AIDS producer, Ntombi Yoko, is constantly encouraged to produce features on other topics and to invite other presenters on to her program, Positive Living (as discussed in Chapter 7). Staff members do have specific responsibilities, but they are encouraged to be flexible in the interpretation of their job descriptions. This different articulation of leadership and authority allows for more participatory democratic practices.

Similarly, Bush Radio’s programming is rhizomatic, comprising pockets of information located at various times. Unlike commercial radio which has a distinctive format, Bush Radio’s programming is distinctive for its diversity. You can hear every kind of music from blues and jazz to hip-hop, kwaito or drum ’n bass. Commercial R’nB, rap or even traditional music are also played on the station. Talk programs range from call in programs on African politics to informational programs on AIDS. On Friday evenings you can listen to talks by Michael Parenti and on Sunday afternoons you can hear Conversations with Writers. On Saturday afternoon teenagers talk about underage drinking and drugs and on Sunday afternoons Abantu Abakhulu broadcasts programs to the elderly. The listeners’ ability to choose a program to listen to is much like the rhizome where many points
are linked together, not necessarily in sequence, allowing one to move from one point to another.

Furthermore, like the rhizome, community radio cuts across borders and builds linkages. As outlined in this chapter, Bush Radio uses radio as a medium to assist in the creation of many different communities in South Africa. Moreover, the radio station acts as a meeting point for these various communities and their interest groups and organizations. People involved in different types of struggles are brought together by Bush Radio. Bush Radio also assists these organizations in various ways. The gay and lesbian service organization Triangle Project is currently being strengthened through the training of some of their members to participate in production activities on In The Pink (see Chapter 9). The Red Cross Society of South Africa gains assistance by its partnerships with Bush Radio, which brings outside broadcast equipment into different areas under the joint banner of the two organizations. As Sarah Stevens of the Red Cross said at one outside broadcast,

With the help of Bush Radio, we’re getting a lot of members who want to become a part of the Red Cross Society, and that plays a big role for us because we want to recruit more volunteers, and actually Bush Radio is making us famous because people know, okay, they have a volunteer community outreach, and Bush Radio’s going to be there, and people are running to Bush Radio to see the faces behind the voices that are actually here, so we really appreciate that (S. Stevens, personal communication, 07/2003).
Donna Haraway’s cyborgs

Feminist scholar, Donna Haraway’s *Manifesto of the Cyborg* (1991; 1994) is closely linked to my rhizomatic theoretical analysis of community radio. The point of similarity is Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of a body without organs as any organized structure, such as a government, a university, a body, or the universe. For them a machine is any point at which a flow of some sort (physical, intellectual, emotional etc) either leaves or enters a structure.

Although Haraway did not invent the term cyborg, she is associated with its theoretical development. In science fiction cyborgs are hybrids in which organic, cybernetic or synthetic
elements are combined. Haraway (1994) says that cyborgs are not so much about the machine and the human as they are about these categories as unfixed and unstable. In other words, all these entities are constantly changing. In fact, cyborgs are beings in whose presence the categories themselves break down. For Haraway then, questioning existing categories and definitions is essential from the standpoint that discourse draws lines between self and other which leads to oppressive social consequences. For example, in the *Biopolitics of postmodern bodies* (1989), Haraway argues that the power of biomedical language results in the marking of the organic body as a critical locus of cultural and political contestation.

The cyborg is an appropriate metaphor for community radio. As feminist scholars argued against the possibility of an essence of womanhood, there is similarly no essence of community radio. As discussed in the previous chapter, the term frequently excludes more than it includes - it tells us more about what it is than what it is not. Community radio is thus a cyborg in that it is composed of many different things e.g. there is no standard to community radio and it borrows from state broadcasting and commercial models, sometimes incorporating aspects of both. It does not consist of a “pure” essence, i.e. there can be no specific global definition of all the community radio is; and it is constantly evolving and changing.
Often the only role models that stations have are commercial or state broadcasters. In the former colonies these commercial and state broadcasters were modeled upon media in Europe. While to some extent community radio subverts the medium and message, it also complies with the traditional structure set out by those role models. For example, the style of news reading and content of news broadcasts, norms about use of music, editing styles etc. even the equipment community stations use often come from stations in the first world. The staff of community radio stations frequently work at commercial stations, but sometimes return to their community media roots.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that moving away from traditional mass communication theories allows for a better understanding of community radio. In particular, theories of the rhizome and cyborg affirm and support interdisciplinary research occupying liminal spaces of ambiguity and discontinuity. These theories were found to be more useful to discuss the phenomena of community radio since this dissertation draws on multiple disciplines in a rhizomatic fashion. As Kellner (1997) noted, cultural studies cross academic boundaries, and thus draws on a disparate range of discourses and fields to theorize the complexity and contradictions of the multiple effects of a vast range of cultural forms in our lives, and differentially demonstrates how these forces serve as
instruments of domination, but also offer resources for resistance and change (p.25).

Drawing on such a disparate range of discourses and fields, this chapter has argued that community radio is composed of many different, sometimes contradictory components, and can thus be considered as a cyborg, in the sense that Haraway used this concept. Furthermore, Bush Radio is rhizomatic in its structure and organization, it is more like an organism than an organization, and it displays a network of connections across which things flow and disperse.
Chapter 6: Critical consciousness: Children’s and youth radio

Introduction

In the previous chapters I deconstructed the terms “community” and “community radio” using the theoretical concepts of liminality, communitas and habitus. In particular, I argued that Bush Radio can be explicated as the formation of an alternative communication medium by a liminal group of activists who developed a sense of communitas in response to apartheid structures; and that community radio is best understood through theories of cultural studies, in particular, rhizomatics and the cyborg. This chapter is the first in a series of case studies within Bush Radio, which will demonstrate its rhizomatic construction of various communities. Here I intend to outline Bush Radio’s children’s and youth projects within the theoretical framework of the educational context in South Africa, as well as Paulo Freire’s theories of education for critical consciousness.

Children and youth played a key role during the liberation struggle. Mobilized in political organizations and at rallies, thousands were tear-gassed, shot, and detained. Some children even joined Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), the military wing of the African National Congress. In a repressive political context where other forms of mobilization were restricted, schools became sites of struggle and recruiting grounds for political organizations (Bundy, 1987).
The state’s offensive against black South Africans extended to black children, numbering about 43% of the African population (census figures quoted in Bundy, 1987). Some of the most violent clashes between police and children include the Soweto uprising of 1976 and the Trojan Horse massacre in the 1980s. Thousands of children took to the streets to protest Bantu education and the government’s suggestion that black children learn through the medium of Afrikaans.

Many of these children were shot, jailed for extended periods of time without trial, or later executed in prison (Burman & Reynolds, 1986). When protests against apartheid escalated in 1984, the government tried to crush them through a sustained maximum force policy aimed directly at children and youth adolescents. Between 1984 and 1986, over one thousand children had been wounded and 312 children were killed by police in township confrontations (Brittain & Minty, 1987). Many youth were recruited to join armed wings of political organizations as guerilla fighters, and those who remained in school led educational boycotts and stayaways.

This particular generation of South African youth can be described by Mannheim’s (1952) notion of a “social generation.” In other words, they did not merely co-exist in the same time and space, but developed a sense of common identity. A similar generational consciousness extends to children born in the late
1980s, in the twilight of the struggle, who have often been referred to as the “lost generation” because of their inability to participate in political action.

This chapter argues that the children in post-apartheid South Africa, who listen to and make the radio programs that air on Bush Radio, belong to this generation, politically unaware, oblivious to history and motivated by popular culture. Their apartheid counterparts embraced alternative education to “understand the politics of liberation” and to “make more sophisticated implements than petrol bombs” (Bundy, 1987). Youth in post-apartheid South Africa embrace the alternative education and the spaces on the airwaves that Bush Radio offers, as a tool to carve out new spaces in which their ideas of self and other are imagined, produced and lived. While schools were once the site of political struggle and the negotiation of generational consciousness, music, popular culture and radio, have become the new critical sites for identity formation.
Children on the air at Bush Radio\textsuperscript{14}

About sixty children show up at Bush Radio on Saturday mornings to learn about how to make radio. On an average Saturday, one sees children between age six to about eighteen writing scripts, editing their recorded materials in the production studio, discussing topics for the program upstairs in the meeting room, and in the on-air studio, running all aspects of the live on-air broadcasts. The Saturday environment is busy, almost overwhelming. As youth facilitator Nashira Abrahams said,

\begin{quote}
We know exactly what goes on here, even if it looks like they’re jumping up and down on the table it’s normally for a reason. Or riding the chairs down the passage or something (N. Abrahams, personal communication, 08/27/02).
\end{quote}

This situation is quite unusual for any radio station, and perhaps disconcerting if you are not familiar with Bush Radio’s Children’s Radio Education Workshop (CREW), to see children and teenagers running the station on a Saturday morning. It is particularly surreal to see the station turn into a microcosm of South Africa in a country with a history of institutionalized racism, guarded inter-racial interaction and a segregated educational system. The children and youth represent almost every group in South Africa: black and white, Muslim and Christian,

\textsuperscript{14}Children were not interviewed. This is mainly because the Institutional Review Board categorizes research conducted with minors (children under eight) as Level III, i.e. “possible risk to human subjects.”
refugees, and middle and working class. Children are high on the agenda at Bush Radio, and the ultimate aim is that the entire Saturday programming consists entirely of children’s programming, produced by children.

This chapter addresses Bush Radio’s Children’s Radio Education Workshop (CREW) project, describing its various on-air and outreach components. CREW will be examined within the broader context of the educational system in South Africa, issues of race and class, and youth identity construction before and after apartheid. The outreach components Alkemy, (Alternative Curriculum for Mentoring Youth), will be examined through Paulo Freire’s theories of critical consciousness.

**Background of children’s broadcasting**

With the global rise of community radio, children and youth are increasingly participating in the production of radio programs. Children’s and youth radio in the developing world is on the rise, and international radio networks also feature the voices of children, focusing on disadvantaged groups such as children affected by war. Radio Gune Yi in Senegal is a nationally aired program produced for and by children in villages and outlying areas of the country. Street children in Haiti started Radyo Timoun, which broadcasts a mix of Haitian rap, news, interviews, commentary and live music (http://pangaea.org/street_children/latin/haiti.htm).
The Butterflies Radio Project in India features a dozen seven to eighteen year old street and working children who broadcast a thirty minute program featuring news, popular music and interviews. In Peru, youth child rights reporters work with a network of local radio stations. The Talking Drum Studio in Sierre Leone produces programs designed to encourage peace and reconciliation (http://www.comminit.com).

As is the case elsewhere, there are many television programs in South Africa that target children. The Soul Buddyz program, an offshoot of the multi-media Soul City project in South Africa, features child actors in a ten-minute drama series. Soul City is a multimedia entertainment-education project. But Bush Radio is the only radio station in the country that trains children in all aspects of broadcasting, with a four-hour on-air product, as part of CREW. According to Louw,

Nobody wants children in the studios because they’re going to break the studios. We’ve had fewer breakages with the kids than with the adults in terms of headphones for example. We don’t want to turn them into DJs or even radio broadcasters. We simply want them to understand media. And whether it is through radio or eventually through TV or the Internet, we’ll give them the understanding of media and how media operates, that’s the aim of CREW essentially, not to make them broadcasters. It’s cute to have my kid on air. Yes it’s cute, but that’s not why they’re here. It’s to give them an understanding of media. And when they become lawyers, doctors or whatever they’ll understand how to use media and how important media is and communicating is (A. Louw, personal communication, 08/20/02).
The CREW On-Air Components

CREW was born out of a desire to involve young people in programming at Bush Radio. In 1997, six grade-ten high school students were recruited from Cape Town High School and trained to conduct interviews, to use field-recorders, edit on reel-to-reel machines, and how to use the on-air studio, in a series of weekend workshops conducted by Louw and myself. The outcome was a half-hour program called Ragged Edge that aired on Thursday evenings at 6.30pm. This program later became Street Seeds, a one-hour program that aired on Saturdays. Street Seeds drew on a more diverse group of youth, including some from township schools. The production team numbered six. A few years later in 2000, children’s involvement was encouraged in a more formal way through CREW, the Children’s Radio Education Workshop, which now comprises about fifty children between six and eighteen.

CREW comprises four on-air components: the Bush Tots, Bush Kids, Bush Teens and the Street Philosophers. The fifth component has no radio application, and consists of a group of youth that participate in alternative education workshops, which take place on Saturdays. These workshops are held in “The Crucible,” the mezzanine level of the Bush Radio building.

The Bush Tots consists of a group of fourteen children aged between eight and twelve, divided into two groups of seven. The groups rotate on-air responsibilities with intensive training. In
other words, during the week in which one group is on air, the other group will be in training, and vice versa. The Bush Tots on-air component is quite flexible, and the children are encouraged to take up topics that interest them. Nashira Abrahams who joined Bush Radio as a member of Ragged Edge in 1997, is one of the producers. Now a student at the University of Cape Town, Abrahams spends Saturdays at the station supervising the children, assisting with their training, and providing technical back-up where needed.

Basically what they do on air most of the time is taken up with discussion, and it’s whatever they want to talk about. Whether it’s where babies come from to what happens to your food when you swallow it, whatever they want to talk about. And sometimes they’ll have a recipe in-between, or talk about something that happened at school (N. Abrahams, personal communication, 08/27/02).

For example, during one of the programs that I heard, the Bush Tots read their own poetry, explained how to make Fathers’ Day cards, shared a cookie recipe, and discussed the significance of the public holiday, Youth Day on June 16th. An eight-year old explained quite articulately how June 16th commemorates the day in 1976 when police shot at schoolchildren protesting the implementation of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction in schools.

The themes that emerge from the Bush Tots program are thus quite broad and deal with a combination of serious and light subjects. The main idea is to give children the confidence to speak on radio, as well as basic technical skills. Bush Radio
producers also hope that this program lays an important foundation for those children that may continue on to the Bush Kids or Bush Teens programs.

During another program, children brought up the topic of role models.

And of course they all got that right, someone to look up to or someone you want to be like. And when asked who their role models were, all the girls said, I remember one of the girls said, it’s my mother and my grandmother and Britney Spears. Or like my role model is my father and DMX (N. Abrahams, personal communication, 08/27/02).

Dolby (2001) demonstrates how this alienation of South African youth from their local or national cultures impacts their openness to cultural offerings from abroad.

Ironically these youth then use these new cultural forms - rap music associated with the U.S. urban black ghettos, Levi jeans and rave culture associated with suburban white youth of Europe and North America - to redraw lines of distinction among themselves that often cut at right angles to the old forms of affiliation linked to ethnic ancestry (p.2).

This is an important issue for South African youth especially, given the political history of the country. During apartheid, the cultural ban meant that foreign artists did not perform in the country. After 1994 there was a sudden flood of concerts by foreign (mostly American) musicians, foreign music and music videos, and a host of imported cultural products.
The CREW project plays a crucial role, both off and on-air, in interrogating these affiliations to popular culture. Topics like these become significant in terms of educating children about history and culture. For example, after the program in which the children identified American musicians as role models, they would be engaged in workshops and asked to reflect on how relevant such role models are for them as Africans. The children are constantly encouraged to question their statements and to play local music and to interview local musicians. Rifqah Khan is a volunteer who works with the children, and is responsible for their training around content issues:

What we do generally is anything around content on air and it could be anything from why are we looking at gossip and at J-Lo [Jennifer Lopez] and how relevant is it to us. Just posing questions so that they can think about it. Are we looking at our local artists, what is it the value of that. And then looking at things like recipes. If we’re going to be doing recipes we can’t be doing crème de la - because that’s not accessible to our audience. You have to think about who you’re broadcasting to, what kind of utensils they have available, what kind of oven. You have to give gas as well because for the most part people in the townships use gas and electricity so just think about those kinds of things. Why you are talking about the issues you’re talking about. And if you are, how open and conscious are you being about your environment. But also just thinking about issues, whether it’s gender issues, or race issues or even within the groups we try to do some sort of making them aware of their own prejudice (R. Khan, personal communication, 08/23/02).
One Saturday afternoon acclaimed kwaito\textsuperscript{15} musician, M'Du, came to visit CREW after he had been listening to the program at home. The children conducted an impromptu interview, and some of the youth worked with him afterwards to produce public service announcements promoting safer sex.

The children prepare for their program by arriving at the station an hour earlier to meet with the producers and to list the discussion topics. The producer keeps a record of the topics decided upon, but there is no script or predetermined sequence. This group does not receive any technical training. Their training consists mostly of listening exercises and games.

Another serious issue that has come up in the Bush Tots program is race and racial prejudice. Abrahams related one incident that stands out in her mind:

One of the little girls talked about her auntie getting married, and her cousin was in the studio with her that day and he told the children, you know, she’s getting married and I’m very happy for her, but she’s marrying a white man. And all of them just looked into the mike and said, No! And we just sat there and we said okay, what should we do? And we just decided to leave them and what they did was they handled it in their own way. And one of them said, doesn’t she like being black? And this little girl who’s sitting there and talking about her auntie just went: No she does like being black, but love sees no color! (N. Abrahams, personal communication, 08/27/02)

The Bush Kidz program involves a group of sixteen children aged ten-fourteen. They are also divided into two groups with the

\textsuperscript{15} See Chapter 8.
same rotation system of on-air and training. In this case, however, group one is slightly younger than group two, which comprises the teens. The older group is required to have at least one interview per week on their program. They deal with slightly more serious topics such as child abuse, substance abuse or emotions. Technical training is not mandatory for this group, but children are encouraged to experiment with equipment and to produce short pieces such as vox-pops for practice and not necessarily to be aired.

The Bush Teens program follows a similar format except that packaged pieces such as mini-features and vox-pops are mandatory. This program is also more structured, with regular features such as a career slot, interviews and calls from listeners. The teens often address topics such as HIV and AIDS, but they also frequently deal with topics such as fashion and trends.

The Street Philosophy group comprises youth aged sixteen to twenty who have moved on from, or are too old for, the Bush Teens program. Nazli Akhtary is a Bush Radio staff member and CREW producer:

They came up with their own name. There were a few of them that were on Bush Teens and had outgrown the program. We didn’t want them to be bored and we didn’t want them to fall by the wayside. And these kids, I think the level of maturity was just beyond the bubble-gummy flavor of the

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16A vox-pop (from vox-populae, Latin for voice of the people) involves asking a number of people the same question, then editing their responses to form one 1-2 minute piece.
Bush Teens show, and wanted to do something more serious. They put packaged programs together. So they spent a month off air and produced fifteen-minute documentaries, which were personal accounts of family life, issues of race at school. The radio diaries was an example, they had a bunch of other radio diaries that they followed on and they had specialized training in how to put it all together. They edited, they put together the sound, everything (N. Akhtary, personal communication, 08/21/02).

Indeed, the radio diaries make provocative listening as the teens reflect frankly on their relationships with their friends, with their parents, with their siblings and other family members. Their thoughts are presented in an entertaining and engaging format, with sound effects recorded at home and at school, as well as music interspersed throughout. Some of the diaries reflect on race and culture in South Africa, and the teenagers present their daily dilemmas with thoughtful analysis and insight sometimes beyond their years.

Abrahams reflects on some of the main themes that this group tackled in the radio diaries, as well as in their feature programs:

They’ve just produced a series on generation gaps but each of them took a different angle. For example Thando spoke to his grandmother about sex and just asked her questions very openly and she would answer. Wendy spoke to her parents about the drug scene, the clubbing scene, what it was like then and what it’s like now. And then we also worked on this piece on racial differences among today’s youth, Gabrielle being white and Leonie being coloured and them living together and being brother and sister (N. Abrahams, personal communication, 08/27/02).

Issues of race thus come up frequently for this group, affected by the legacy of apartheid, but with no immediate
recolletion or political understanding of that particular historical era. Their radio programs play a crucial role in their identity formation as they grapple with issues of the past while growing up in a new era.

The teens work within this context of racial struggle in South Africa, dealing very frankly with issues of race. Most of the team consists of youth who have moved on from the Bush teens program. Others were recruited based on calls to the program. The producers also recruited members at the HIV Hop program’s weekly visits to local high schools. Potential recruits were asked to fill out application forms stating their interests and views and signed by parents and school, and were invited to interviews on the basis of these applications.

All members of CREW are required to prove that their involvement in the project does not negatively affect their academic work, in order to remain in the program. Producers monitor this by asking them to bring in their school reports once a year.
Alkemy: Alternative curriculum for mentoring youth

The outreach or off-air component of the CREW project involves an alternative education program, Alkemy, designed by Nazli Akhtary and Shaheen Ariefdien, two Bush Radio producers. This project was started when they were asked to put together a training session around content for a group of people who were going to the Netherlands to be part of a hip-hop theatre production. This group was concerned with creating a bank of content that they could use to produce their scripts. The idea was that the musicians had the technical skills to write rhymes, but that they did not have anything to talk about. The content covered a range of topics covering poverty, globalization, politics etc.

It was funded and the funding agency wanted us to focus on HIV and AIDS and we thought yes alright we can do that. But HIV and AIDS doesn’t exist in isolation of everything else that is happening, So we tried to draw links between HIV and AIDS looking at poverty, and when we look at poverty we look at the cheap labor market system, where did that come from - looking at education and then it all went back through colonialism, all the way back. And they went and when they were there they were really surprised because suddenly they realized that they had a lot more information than a lot of other people around them had and that was like an eye-opener for them and then it sparked their interest (N. Akhtary, personal communication, 08/21/02).

When this group returned from The Netherlands, they suggested that Akhtary and Ariefdien consider offering such a program on a regular basis, since they had found it so useful. Akhtary said,
That also got me thinking that we have a lot of youth around, a lot of teenagers and they don’t really have a sense of anything that’s happening around them at all. And the biggest thing is that young people don’t have any recollection or memory of apartheid except maybe what their parents told them. But their lives are completely governed by that legacy. Or if you think about where they live and the kinds of conditions that they live in, that’s also left-over from that era. But they don’t really have a sense of how that impacted. They can’t really put today in context. They can’t really put the two together. So we wanted to put a program together that would at least make them aware of how things are linked, a lot of history. (personal communication, 08/21/02).

Figure 12. The Alkemy crew.

Education in South Africa

This alternative education project is best understood through a brief look at the educational context in South Africa, since the youth involved in the Bush Radio programs attend local schools. During the apartheid era, the educational system was segregated along racial lines in order to realize the aim of
separate and unequal education. There were nineteen different educational departments, including the independent states of Bophuthatswana, Transkei and Ciskei; and the self-governing territories of KwaZulu, KwaNdebele, KaNgwane, Qwa Qwa, Venda and Lebowa (Nkomo et al, 1995; Stonier, 1998).

Structural pluralism was implemented after the National Party’s accession to power in 1948 and the passing of the Bantu Education Act of 1953. The ideology of Christian National Education was intended for the transmission of Eurocentric values and culture, and schools (through textbooks in particular) were used as an instrument to support and legitimize the dominant group and its political interests (Leicester et al, 2000; Ntshoe, 1999). In 1994 a new National Ministry of Education was established to create a national policy for education.

The move toward schools with racially mixed student populations can be traced to Catholic and other private schools in South Africa, which fell outside the mainstream educational system (Nkomo et al (1995). Private schools usually enrolled a few wealthy black students; and the South African Catholic Bishops’ Conference defied apartheid legislation, after the Soweto uprising in 1976, with their decision to admit black students. During the de Klerk reforms of the 1990s, White state schools began enrolling black students. At this time the target population of white schools was dwindling, largely because of
demographic changes in the areas within which these schools were located (Nkomo et al, 1995). In October 1990, the then minister of white education, Piet Clase, announced that white schools could legally enroll black pupils. White school parent communities voted on the issue, and subsequent recommendations included that schools remain 51% white and that the white “cultural ethos” remain intact (Nkomo et al, 1995).

The opening up of schools in the Western Cape Province was subject to the same macro conditions as those which shaped desegregation elsewhere, although this region produced a different set of dynamics for the process. This is because, in demographic terms, the Western Cape has always been a coloured area, and a region deeply ravaged by divisive colonialism and apartheid policies, which nurtured specific forms of ethnocentrism and racism (Carrim and Soudien, 1999). During the 1980s, coloured schools began to open up as they received increasing applications from black students. These enrollments were illegal between 1985 and 1990, and took place in defiance of state laws (Nkomo et al, 1995). Influx Control laws prohibiting black people from living or working in the Western Cape broke down allowing rural blacks to move to Cape Town (Carrim & Soudien, 1999). Black parents also sent their children to coloured schools because of the perceived politicization of black township schools. The assumption was that there was increased
political activity at black schools, at the expense of time spent in the classroom.

The democratic transition in 1994 was accompanied by policy changes in a number of sectors, including education. In an attempt to establish a unified education system, eighteen departments of education were integrated into nine provinces of education. In terms of educational provision, far ranging changes have been implemented in an attempt to fundamentally change the framework and context in which education takes place in South Africa. The South African Schools Act of 1996 in particular, was designed to facilitate the change from an apartheid based education system, to one based on democratic principles (Asmal, 2000).

However, race and ethnic tensions have remained central in South African society and in schools. A study by the South African Human Rights Commission showed that racism persists in schools despite school desegregation (Vally, 1999). The reasons for this could be, as Carrim (1998) points out, that almost five years after 1994 there was still no nationally instituted anti-racist program or violence prevention package in place in the schools; there are no structured programs to help teachers cope with multi-racial/cultural/lingual/ability classrooms; and there are no nationally or provincially coordinated programs for students to develop anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-discrimination
awareness or violence prevention in the formal workings of the school.

**Alkemy as alternative education**

The creation of Alkemy represents an alternative to mainstream education with its history of bias. As a document created by the facilitators reads,

> The ultimate aim of this project is to conscientize our youth and focus on their development. It serves also to foster and develop youth leadership and youth mentorship. What we wish to instill, within our youth, is a sense of pride, a sense of dignity, and a sense of self worth. More than this, we wish to enable youth to see beyond the confines of their neighborhoods, beyond the confines of the chaos and disorder they find themselves enveloped in everyday. The approach taken will be quite a bit different to other (similar) projects in the past. The approach will focus on using music, hip hop in particular, as a means of communicating social change. Through a series of seminar sessions, workshops, and field trips, we wish to prepare youth for a future in which their participation is key.

From a pedagogical point of view, students have not been provided with the space to imagine their world in sociologies other than that of the dominant racial common sense bequeathed to them by apartheid. Schooling and racialization have assisted in the “entrenchment of fixed and incontestable meaning” (Soudien, 1998, 1, p. 79). Attempts to move towards a more multicultural way of operating are affected by conceptions of identity as stereotyped, homogenized and generalized, leading to ‘bad’ multicultural approaches being adopted (Carrim, 1998, 2, p.301). For example, Carrim & Soudien (1998, 1) show how there is a
trend in South African schools toward an assimilationist approach, simply expecting students to fit in with the dominant culture of the school. At formerly white, coloured or Indian schools, where many pupils are black but where teachers are usually not, pupils are “expected to simply fall into line” (Stonier, 1998; Carrim, 1998, 3).

Carrim & Soudien (1998, 1) advocate a “de-essentialised” idea of identity and a need to move away from forms of anti-racism, which homogenize and caricature whites as racists and blacks as victims. The CREW projects, particularly the ones that work with teenagers, deal with these issues on a daily basis. The youth that make up the program come from different socio-economic backgrounds, and in a sense are forced to deal with these issues on the Bush Radio premises, which can be more easily avoided in the classroom. One role Alkemy and CREW play is to provide a forum in which youth can interact in small groups or one on one, and confront racial or cultural issues which are not dealt with in the classroom. In this way there is no dominant culture to which youth have to conform - instead they together create a new, Bush Radio youth culture.

Akhtary and Ariefdien started attracting young people through the Friday night hip-hop show. They provided teasers in the program, hints at history and politics impacting the content of lyrics, and asked interested listeners to call in. These
listeners were then called up and asked to come in to the station for an informal interview. At this stage the main purpose of the program was to productively direct the energies of young local rappers. As Akhtary said,

A lot of people, a lot of them used to write rhymes, or write lyrics, but it was almost like a stray bullet. Some of them are really angry and they don’t know where the anger comes from. And it’s very sort of finger pointing and blaming. And my thing is that’s all okay to get it out but what are you really doing with it? And you can’t throw blame when you don’t even know what it is you’re blaming. So how about if we introduce you to some of the things that are happening around you (N. Akhtary, personal communication, 08/21/02).

The group started out with 15 youth recruited via the hip-hop program, who were meant to participate in a 16-week program. Once the program stabilized, 8 youth participated in an 18-week program. The second group was about to start their class at the time of these interviews. This group was recruited in a very different way. The program was so popular with the group that news of it spread purely by word of mouth and many people had to be turned away and put on a waiting list.

Each week deals with a different topic and the group is exposed to audio-visual materials or literature dealing with that topic. Guest speakers are frequently invited to come and talk to the group as well. But the most impressive component of this program is the compulsory reading requirement. I leaf through the informal library that has been started for the youth to check
books out or to read them on the premises. Michael Parenti’s *Manufacturing Consent*, Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Fanon’s *Black Skin White Masks*, are just a few of the titles that catch my eye. Required reading for any social sciences university student, I find it amazing that high school students are not only getting through this literature, but engaging with it in critical and constructive ways. According to Akhtary,

I think the choosing of the books may be biased. The first set of good books we got were—there were a lot of hip-hop albums named after books. And we thought we’d draw a link to get them interested in reading the book even though sometimes the hip hop album has nothing to do with the book. How we get them to read it, is to say if you read this book you’ll see the thread in the lyrics. *Things Fall Apart* that’s a Chinua Achebe book and that’s a Common album. Then there’s *The Art of War*, *Like Water for Chocolate*, *Machiavelli*, *The Prince*, that’s some of the connections we drew. So we started out with those books and those are some of the connections we drew. I suppose the focus is a lot of political science sort of alternative. I don’t know if they really know that its leftist politics but a lot of the people that come in are sort of there. But the thing for us to be careful is not to impose our views; the other thing we try to get them to do is when they read, to read between the lines (N. Akhtary, personal communication, 08/21/02).

Akhtary said that a range of topics are dealt with, but that African identity is often at the top of the list. This becomes increasingly important within the broader context of identity construction in South Africa after apartheid and during the forces of globalization. As explicated in Chapter 4, identity politics in Cape Town is particularly complex as people self-identify and are labeled in different ways.
The very first lesson we do is the whole idea of identity but in an African sense. A lot of people in South Africa don’t think of themselves as being African. But where do they fit in with the rest of the continent? Some of the books around that were *The Heart of Darkness* and that was actually required reading and it took a while to get through it. For some of them it was really hard to read. For some of them it was especially difficult especially if you haven’t read a whole book before. And then some of the things around that was the value of African life, again the whole thing of identity. When you have stories looking at Africa it’s all famine [famine-like], National Geography [like National geographic], and you look at the pictures to match. And also stories written about first world countries and third world countries and looking at the disparity in the representation. That’s where we wanted to take the whole idea of reading between the lines (N. Akhtary, personal communication, 08/21/02).

The producers see this project as fitting into Bush Radio’s broader mandate of providing its audience with views alternative to the mainstream. But this is also the development of some kind of critical consciousness in the Freireian sense. In his key works *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1970) and *Education for critical consciousness* (1973), Freire demonstrates how critical consciousness is the ability to perceive social, political, and economic oppression and to take action against the oppressive elements of society. In this case, the action youth are encouraged to engage in is discussion, debate and constant critique of their society. As Akhtary explains, they are encouraged to explore the historical roots of oppression.

But because a lot of the kids’ shows or the teen shows right now are sort of personal accounts and theirs would be a little bit more serious, a little bit more of a political slant which is what we don’t have on air. And I think Bush
Radio as far as its mission or mandate is to foster that whole idea of being necessary and of being out in the communities and talking to people at a level. Things like globalization but nobody’s talking about what it really means. NEPAD, what is that. So I think with this program it’s just a breaking down of that and feeding it back into the community. And if they have a sense of self-worth and if they can present their issues in a way that’s sophisticated and palatable for a larger audience then maybe they can attract other people to do the same thing (N. Akhtary, personal communication, 08/21/02).

Education in the Freireian model is also the practice of liberty because it frees both educator and student as they begin to learn, the one to know self as a being of worth and the other as capable of dialogue. I have frequently heard Akhtary and Ariefdien discuss their preparations for the workshop and their expectation of difficult questions from the group on the week’s reading. Their workshops seem to be not so much one-way lectures, but conversations guided by the facilitators, who are as much participants as facilitators. This is very different to the traditional South African educational system of “banking education” (Freire, 1970).

Other key components of Alkemy are to introduce youth to conscious lyrics and provide them with the necessary skills to write their own; to develop the concept of youth leadership and youth mentoring; to organize field trips and to introduce a peer helper system. At the moment some of the members of Alkemy work as facilitators of some of the CREW on-air components, mentoring younger people. There is also a tutoring system in place that
provides after school tuition in English as a Second Language (ESL) for the refugee children, and in subjects like mathematics and accountancy (book-keeping).

**Youth advocacy: the kidocracy conferences**

As an extension of the CREW project, a children’s broadcasting conference is held at Bush Radio every year. The intention of the kidocracy conferences is to expose children to broadcasting and to present media production as a viable career choice. While there is a new global awareness of the importance of involving children in broadcasting, more often than not, adults dictate programming and editorial choices. The idea is thus to allow children to make all the choices around the conference program and to discuss issues of broadcasting among themselves, and not just with adults. The first conference organized by Bush Radio took place on the 20th -21st of December 2001. Between 50 and 60 participants aged 6 to 18 participated in radio production workshops including training in radio drama, storytelling, interviewing, music and talk presentation.

This conference arose out of a government tender. The South African government’s Department of Communications (DOC) published plans in September 2001 to support and strengthen children’s radio by inviting community radio stations to tender for funds to produce appropriate programming for children. CREW members applied for this funding which was used to organize the kidocracy
conference held in December 2001 (McNeill, 2002). Workshops included titles such as “Stories and traditional culture on radio”. “What I feel and really want to say on radio” and “Programs made for and by children”. This conference produced a set of notes that formed the basis of the Children’s & Youth Radio Manifesto.

This initiative has been taken up by the World Radio Forum who intend to involve youth radio groups worldwide to draft an international charter to set a standard for appropriate youth programming. Their aim is to have the manifesto complete before the Fourth World Summit on Media for Children in Brazil in 2004 (McNeill, 2002).

The second conference, held in October 2002, was a five-day youth festival intended to encourage participants to explore new forms of radio production through a range of practical workshops. Discussion groups focused on child rights, HIV and AIDS and aspects of youth participation (http://www.comminit.com). The third conference is scheduled for October 2003, and will include discussions on the manifesto for youth broadcasting.
Conclusion

The various components of the CREW project play a crucial role in validating the voices of young people in South Africa. Providing an outlet for their creative and political expression, Bush Radio helps youth in the new South Africa to form a kind of generational consciousness, providing a physical and ideological space in which they can forge a common identity, develop a sense of community, and gain membership to a new social generation. Furthermore, the presentation of these ideas on the airwaves allows intergenerational awareness, allowing parents and other adults to listen to the program and to increase their awareness of the discourse of the youth.
Chapter 7. “Aids is gold, HIV is platinum”: Entertainment-education approaches to AIDS education

Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed Bush Radio’s use of radio for children and youth, in particular the Children’s Radio Education workshop (CREW) and the alternative youth education project, Alkemy (Alternative Curriculum for Mentoring Youth). In particular, the previous chapter showed how these projects target children and youth to create a generational consciousness, and encouraging them to use music and popular culture as the new critical sites for identity formation. In this chapter I discuss how Bush Radio uses hip-hop music, both on and off the air, to target youth with messages about HIV/AIDS, further building community and using an innovative approach to health education.

One Thursday afternoon I find myself surrounded by high school youth crowding into the school hall of Princeton High School in Mitchell’s Plain, Cape Town, and dancing enthusiastically to the sounds of some of their favorite hip-hop artists. Apart from the location, this is a common sight in Cape Town, where hip-hop music is very popular among youth. But when you listen closely you’ll hear that the lyrics of this music are unusual— they deal with issues of sexuality, HIV and AIDS, alerting youth to key issues and advising them to modify high-risk behaviors. This was the scene of a World AIDS Day Concert on
December 1, 2001, hosted by Bush Radio. International artists were featured too, including music like the song *AIDS is gold, HIV is platinum* by Canibus, composed specially for World AIDS day. The chorus goes:

> Aids is gold and HIV is platinum  
> Sit down and ask them where you get your facts from  
> Five hundred thousand niggas in the hood with it  
> And a million more niggas is getting ready to get it  
> (see full lyrics in Appendix 1).

DJs Ready D and Oscar were spinning tunes between the performances by BVK (Brasse Vannie Kaap), emcee Mr. Devious, kwaito\(^\text{17}\) group Dantai, and popular groups Dee Louw, Godessa and Cool Funk. In between the mixes audience members occasionally broke into spontaneous breakdancing (breakdancing is a kind of acrobatic dance that is part of hip-hop culture, connected to capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian dance). This concert was part of a campaign aimed at educating youth in Cape Town on HIV and AIDS.

This chapter discusses Bush Radio’s strategies for social change for HIV/ AIDS education. These strategies fall within the context of Bush Radio’s AIDS Workplace Policy, which states,

> The purpose of this policy is to decrease new infections among staff, volunteers, in-service trainees, the board and the audience of the station, to create an environment of openness and knowledge with regard to HIV and AIDS at the workplace and in the community we are serving, and to ensure that People Living With HIV and AIDS (PWA) are treated compassionately and fairly at Bush Radio as a workplace.

\(^{17}\) See Chapter 8.
The AIDS Workplace Policy was written by Dutch volunteer Antja Becker as part of her placement on an expert mission at Bush Radio by Dutch funder Nederlandse Instituut vir Zuidelike Afrika (NIZA). This document was written after consultation with Bush Radio staff members.

As the AIDS pandemic reaches crisis proportions in Africa, behavior change tactics are constantly being re-invented. Among the more creative of these are strategies that go beyond traditional approaches to deliberately mix entertaining formats with pro-social messages. Bush Radio’s Youth Against AIDS 2000 (YAA 2000) campaign embedded socially conscious lyrics in popular hip-hop music. As one Bush Radio listener who called in to the hip-hop show said,

A lot of people don’t know what AIDS is about. So if you talk in a slang that they understand then you will approach them in a better way and they will understand better (on-air broadcast, 2000).

This chapter will describe Bush Radio’s HIV/AIDS related projects, YAA200 and Positive Living, within the broader context of the entertainment-education strategy and the cultural relevance of hip-hop music.
Background: AIDS in South Africa

The AIDS pandemic is sweeping across Africa with South Africa showing the highest rates of infection in the continent. In 2001 the Department of Health estimated that 2.65 million women and 2.09 million men between the ages of fifteen to 49 were living with HIV. It was also estimated that 83,581 babies had become infected with HIV through mother-to-child transmission (www.avert.org/safricastats.htm).

Levels of heterosexually-transmitted HIV infection are high among South African youth with one study reporting levels of 18.9% among 17-20 year olds and 43.1% among 21-25 year olds (Campbell & MacPhail, 2002). A recent study (Eaton, Flisher and Aaro, 2003) concluded that at least 50% of young people in South Africa are sexually active by the age of sixteen; with between 50-60% of sexually active youth reporting that they never use condoms. Their study also showed that black youth reported earlier sexual debut and that between 10% and 30% of sexually active young people have more than one sexual partner. Further research (Elkonin, 1993; Naidoo, 1994; Richter, 1996) showed that less than 50% of young people in South Africa do not understand the relationship between HIV and AIDS.

There are clearly serious gaps in knowledge as well as an increased need to change attitudes and influence young people to change their high-risk sexual behaviors. As one Bush Radio caller
said, “You must stop asking us to not have sex because we are.”
The only alternative may be projects that are attractive to youth and speak to them in a language that they understand.

**Background: Entertainment-Education**

Mythologies, folk tales, tragedies, comedy, novels, comic books, games and mass media products, e.g. movies, popular songs, radio and television soap operas, have all influenced human thought, belief, and action (Campbell, 1988, Piotrow, 1997). These devices not only provide individual and collective entertainment, but also articulate and reinforce the educational goals of human societies.

Since the British Broadcasting Corporation’s agriculturally focused radio drama, *The Archers*, in 1945 and the developmental telenovelas in Latin America in the early 1960s, there has been increased use of entertainment programs to deliver pro-social messages. Terms such as enter-educate, infotainment, culture and development, pro-development entertainment, and entertainment-education have been used to describe this practice.

The term entertainment-education (e-e) is used most often, and is described as the process of

purposely designing and implementing a media message both to entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members’ knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, and change overt behavior” (Singhal & Rogers, 1999, p. 9).
Unlike pure entertainment, e-e approaches attempt to positively change audience members' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors with respect to a specific issue - in the case of health, to promote lifestyle choices or provide guidance on preventing disease.

Besides the more common radio or television dramas, e-e interventions have also used song lyrics and music videos promoting women’s issues, AIDS, sex education, and family planning. E-e approaches to health promotion are a popular method for interventions that target youth.

In fact, music has often been used as a political tool, as well as to promote awareness of socio-political issues. African-Americans have used blues and jazz as social criticism. Composed in the 1990s, John Corigliano’s First Symphony reflected on the AIDS pandemic. In Argentina, The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (mothers of people who disappeared) used rock music to construct, transmit and reconstruct memories of a military dictatorship that eliminated political dissidents through torture and killings (Kaiser, 2002).

More specifically, musical e-e strategies have been extensively used in health education, particular HIV/ AIDS education. The multimedia Soul City project in South Africa comprises e-e television and radio dramas on social issues, including AIDS. Soul City has been demonstrated to increase interpersonal communication as well as both self and collective-
efficacy. In St. Lucia, studies showed that the radio drama After the Pleasure promoted the use of contraception, the prevention of HIV transmission and increased the number of visits to family planning clinics (Vaughan, et al, 2000). In Tanzania, an evaluation of the radio drama Twende na Wakati (Let’s go with the times) showed that it had significant effects on listeners’ adoption of HIV prevention methods and self-efficacy. In Ghana the “Stop AIDS: Love Life” campaign utilized Ghanaian hip-life, highlife and gospel music. Local musicians produced a seven-minute AIDS song and music video featuring explicit messages of safe sex including abstinence, fidelity and condom use (http://www.jhuccp.org/topics/enter_ed/eeprojects/09-01.shtml).

The Communication for Young People Project, better known as Tatiana & Johnny, was implemented to promote sexual restraint among Mexican teenagers. The campaign consisted of songs and music videos featuring a male and female singer as well as public service announcements. Evaluation analysis concluded that the campaign had a number of positive consequences: teenagers felt freer to talk about sex, became more sensitized about the relevance of sex, messages reinforced behaviors of teenagers who already practiced abstinence, and demand for family planning services increased (Singhal & Rogers, 1999). In 1998 the Nigeria Music Project produced and commercially launched two family planning songs performed by popular musicians King Sunny Ade and
Onyeka Onwenu. Both songs rose to the top of the charts (Daves & Nickerson, 1993). In Japan, the dramatic television series Kamisama Mo Sukoshidake (Please God just a little more time), was shown to double the number of requests for HIV/ AIDS tests and requests, by moving a highly stigmatized topic into the public domain (Singhal & Rogers, 2003).

Besides television and radio dramas, there have also been other e-e campaigns dealing with AIDS. Street Artists Against AIDS in Brazil, Nalamdana in India and the Chirumhanzu Home-Based Care Project in Zimbabwe, use street theater to provide information about AIDS.

**Hip-hop in South Africa**

With its links to the Black Panther and Civil Rights Movements in the United States, hip-hop music is another, less documented, genre of e-e. Hip-hop is a cultural movement that began predominantly among urban African-American youth in the United States. Its four main elements are emceeing, deejaying, graffiti art, and breakdancing. The term hip-hop has since become a euphemism for rap music to mainstream audiences. However, the two are not interchangeable — emceeing (rapping) is the vocal expression of lyrics in sync to a rhythm beneath it.

Hip hop music is related to the griots of West Africa, traveling singers and poets whose musical style is similar to hip hop. Slaves brought the griot traditions to the New World.
Jamaican dub musicians isolated percussion breaks because dancers at clubs preferred the energetic rhythms of the often-short breaks. Soon, performers began speaking in sync with these rhythms (http://www.4reference.net/encyclopedias/wikipedia/African_hip_hop.html).

They were originally called MCs (Master of Ceremonies or Mic Controller) and, later, rappers or emcees. Originally, these early rappers focused on introducing themselves and others in the audience, with some improvisation and a simple four-count beat, along with a simple chorus. By the end of the 1970s, hip-hop music was on its way to becoming a major commercial and artistic force and had spread throughout the United States (http://www.4reference.net/encyclopedias/wikipedia/African_hip_hop.html).

The first African hip-hop act was the South African group Black Noise who began as a graffiti and breakdance crew, and started emceeing around 1989. The South African government had banned rap due to its perceived subversive lyrics and association with the struggle for racial equality in the United States, but by the late 1980s, rap music was broadcast on radio and television. Artists like Run DMC and Afrika Bambaataa rapped against apartheid in South Africa in 1985.
Hip-hop emerged on the Cape Flats in the early 1980s as one of many responses to apartheid. It was particularly powerful in Cape Town, where it functioned as a vehicle to work through the tensions of being racially marginalized from local domains of power (Watkins, 2001).

Local hip-hop musicians in Cape Town have a large following in Cape Town’s townships, and have used rap and hip-hop in the development of their communities. Apart from addressing social problems in their lyrics, members of the hip-hop scene were also active in the struggle against apartheid. Hip-hop was used in workshops introducing youth to issues of self-respect and the history of apartheid. POC (Prophets of the City) songs were played to encourage people to vote during the first elections in 1994 (Gesthuizen, 2003). The group Black Noise organizes rap and breakdance workshops and the yearly African Hip-Hop Indaba, intended to present youth with an alternative to gangsterism. In 1994 Bush Radio became the only radio station in Cape Town with a dedicated hip-hop show offering local rappers the opportunity to present their work and addressed youth in the townships in their own slang for the first time.
Youth Against AIDS (YAA) 2000

Driven by the increasing numbers of youth infected with AIDS, and drawing on the popularity of hip-hop, Bush Radio launched the youth AIDS campaign Youth Against AIDS 2000 (YAA) in March 2000. The campaign was supported through funding from NIZA (The Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa) and the Madunia Foundation of The Netherlands YAA 2000 was intended to create effective ways to educate high school youth in Bush Radio’s broadcast area on issues of sexuality and AIDS. According to Adrian Louw,

Radio is used as a vehicle for a lot of what we do. Bush Radio as an organization has taken on such a lot of activity. But that’s because of our history as a developmental radio station as a struggle radio station. We’ve taken on tasks that might not necessarily be important to other people, or people might question why. Why would a radio station be engaged in AIDS education? And reality is, it’s necessary. There’re lots of other social issues that need to be addressed, and in many ways the station tackles all of that and looks towards younger people to help improve the situation of other young people and improve the situation of the community (personal communication, July 2003).

The Bush Radio website describes YAA 200 as follows.

YAA 2000 is more than just a fun live event under the AIDS banner, it is a creative platform of performance and participation, which aims to build a new level of awareness around AIDS and sexuality in Cape Town townships, and particularly among the youth.

The first phase of the project was formative research during which Bush Radio staff administered questionnaires to
students at local high schools. Formative research was intended to identify students’ current levels of knowledge, attitudes and behavior, as well as prevalent myths, with the intention of deconstructing them. Formative research may also include the pre-testing and then revision of messages or programs, though in this case, messages were not pre-tested and audience feedback was continuous. The next phase included live performances and a simultaneous live broadcast at Princeton High in Mitchell’s Plain, one of Cape Town’s largest colored townships. The station produced a CD of the event (not for sale) to encourage youth ownership and to raise the profile of the project. Bush Radio and Radio Netherlands distributed the CD to national and international community radio stations.

Another feature of the project was weekly school lunchtime shows, designed in consultation with students from local high schools. The Bush Radio outside broadcast crew headed out once a month to local schools and invited all youth, including those from neighboring high schools to come and talk openly about all issues related to sex.

As Louw explains, Bush Radio hoped that these Teen Town Meetings would contribute to the demystification of community radio, as well as the development of youth programming. Bush Radio visited over fifteen township schools, bringing radio to the youth to highlight their challenges and problems. Local
doctors and Department of Health and Department of Education representatives were often invited to speak and to answer students’ questions. HIV testing was made available to students in the school hall at one meeting. According to the Bush Radio website,

Youth talk about everything from thigh sex to the male ego to young women's self-esteem when it comes to being the decision-makers in a relationship. Of course, we cover the basics too, on HIV and AIDS (http://www.bushradio.co.za).

Figure 14. Shaheen Ariefdien at a teen town meeting. Picture from the Bush Radio files.

Princeton High staff then officially endorsed their students’ participation in a daily on-air afternoon program, aired during an intensive one-week campaign. These programs comprised panels with AIDS experts and school representatives with the youth tackling attitudes, challenges, sexuality, prevention, care and management of AIDS.
The longer term on-air component of the project, HIV-Hop radio, was a five-week radio campaign launched on May 9. The HIV-Hop show served as a pilot project in the development of a new radio format for youth education, raising the importance of increasing the responsibility for AIDS education. As one listener said during a call to the program,

I think it’s also up to the leaders in our society. Not the politicians, but teachers or any leader in the society, it’s up to them to teach us about these things. Because we’re teenagers we’re not going to go to the libraries and read about this stuff even though we know.

AIDS researchers in Africa have recognized this need to consider the objective social, environmental and economic factors (Webb, 1997). Eaton, Flisher and Aaro (2003) point out that social-cognitive theories of behavior change may not be useful to understand AIDS in developing countries because they emphasize personal processes and the subjective aspects of social influences, neglecting the objective aspects of social influences and the societal and cultural context. Instead of adopting traditional behavior change strategies, the HIV-Hop show took the cultural context of hip-hop music in Cape Town into account.

The show was designed using focus group interviews with students from schools in three of Bush Radio’s main target communities: Mitchell’s Plain, Gugulethu and Woodstock. The HIV-Hop show was modeled on the station’s already highly successful Friday night hip-hop show, Headwarmers, hosted by local musicians.
of international acclaim. Youth called in from all over the city to share their thoughts and lyrics. One Friday night a young man called in saying

As an emcee, all the issues that you are dealing with now, it like really gives you inspiration to like write on, especially AIDS and youth issues. As an emcee it really inspires you so you can really write about it. I also just wanted to drop a few rhymes on the AIDS issue.

He then shared the following rhyme to a backup track played by the presenters in the studio.

Yo as a kid it’s hard, dealing with all the kinds of symptoms called AIDS. Taking victims, Africa’s dying guess the whole world knows that. Is there a cure, you know the facts
Prevention, attention they call it HIV
We gotta get up fight for all humanity
Love they neighbor, Have dignity
Aids cancer it’s all reality
Immuno -deficiency - syndrome
Having AIDS just like you wish you had a clone
Dying is hard especially if you die alone
It’s cold and lonely, coz it’s eating you slowly
Brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, Kings and queens its all upon us
The clock is ticking and the score ain’t in our favor
People are dying it feels like dying is safer
The headlines read, AIDS hit the street
You gotta open your ears, eyes and know the beat
Unprotected sex, sharing needles
I spread out awareness just like the Beatles (on-air broadcast, 2002).

Callers to the hip-hop show are a regular part of the program, and these youth often share their lyrics as a way of gaining exposure and receiving feedback from their peers. The radio station often receives calls from people who do not have
telephones in their homes. These people call from public phone booths on street corners, “dropping” their lyrics before they run out of change. On another occasion another young man called Headwarmers with the following rhyme.

Let me express me not undress me
AIDS infects and mutilates your flesh see
Let me express me not undress me
AIDS infects and mutilates your flesh see
By the time Aids was discovered
It was walking amongst us
Undercover
Spreading from yourself to your lover
Then you suffer
Yo, yo, yo
You get Aids from infected needles, sleeping around
(on-air broadcast, 2002).

HIV-hop segments were rebroadcast during the Friday night program. Listeners participated in vigorous on-air discussions by calling both programs. These calls usually sparked vigorous debate and discussion on a number of issues ranging from whether abstinence before marriage was a viable option, to whether distributing condoms in schools promotes promiscuity. Calls also often raised myths that could be dealt with either by the presenters of the show or other listeners. Here are two examples of what callers said.

AIDS is the American Ideology to Discourage Sex.

If you look at how much AIDS drugs that are out there cost these days, pharmaceutical companies have like a big interest in keeping something like that under cover. For one thing drugs cost like 400 rand for a box of pills for a
week. That’s a lot of money that they’re making. So if they have a cure they can hold on to it for a while, sell this stuff and then eventually when they figure okay they’ve made enough money, let’s give them cure now.

A key aspect of the campaign was the support of local hip-hop musicians who built upon their existing popularity. The musicians attended some of the outside broadcasts and events, as well as in the studio during the broadcasts. They also attended workshops and discussion sessions arranged by Bush Radio, with AIDS workers and experts to increase their knowledge and to ensure informed input during the broadcasts. The musicians readily committed themselves to the campaign and composed songs with AIDS related messages. Many songs, like the one below by Mr. Devious, emphasized basic information about how the virus is transmitted, and addressed so-called conspiracy theories.

We’re caught up in a war against a chemical weapon that’s unseen
There’s no escape once it enters your bloodstream
There’s a killer with no prime directive to come clean
Only life support system is knowledge of what seems to be
Super STD, scientifically designed to wipe out you and me
We not free
It’s set to decrease the population of the planet
But how do we stop population understanding
What we’re dealing with is an articulate plan
Sent to destroy nations
In various variations
You people might think I’m making serious accusations
My theory exists due to previous regulations
So play close attention, receive this information
There’s 4 million people infected in this country alone
33.6 million across the globe
The death toll increases ten fold
So I’m telling you about a crisis
Because we’re dealing with human deficiency virus
Attacking the immune system at a rapid pace
And yo! It might be too late before we act with haste
What we’re dealing with is a master plan
If you’re seeing this you’re seeing past the scam
The crisis is a virus created by man
Most people would tend to disagree with my theory
And I might be assassinated if some governments hear me
But I’ll say this anyway
Aids is man made

They tried killing us before with guns that’s man made
Isn’t cyanide a weapon
What about atomic bombs
Isn’t that man made
Made to harm men, women and children
Isn’t this virus on the same mission to kill them
Breaking down the immune system of its victim
‘til there’s nothing left except your last breath

Mr. Devious finally ends his series of AIDS related songs with this one.

I could think of a thousand more conspiracy theories
Enough to split in a series
If you’ve been waiting to hear these
I suggest you adjust your earpiece
For the truth is
While we’re pointing fingers and trying to chill
There’s people out there infected and dying for real
People afraid to be tested denying they’re ill
People on the verge of a breakdown, relying on will
Trying to deal with misinformed people’s prejudices
feelings toward them
If society refuses to pay attention to this problem then
I’ll force them
The deal is AIDS is more than what your average sexually transmitted disease is
It’s evidently killing our species
By the next millennium there’ll be zero population left
I guess the current synonym for copulation’s death
The shit we’re facing, this current situation
It’s a must that I drop these stats to this misinformed nation
The only way you get Aids is by sleeping around unprotected
Next thing you know you’re six feet deep in the ground come and check it
You can only get Aids from contact with blood
Or the transfer of semen from a partner to another
Even a baby can get infected by its mother
Make sure you apply the correct use of a rubber
For instance when you open use your fingertips to tear the cover
Don’t use it you might shred it
Make sure the condom tip contains air and check the expiry date
If it’s old don’t go there, oh yeah
You can’t get Aids from animals or mosquito bites

You can’t get Aids from going to the dentist or sharing the same glasses
You can’t get Aids from cutting your hair or breathing the same air
Or sharing cutlery with a person with HIV hopefully I’ll make you see
Having sex while standing does not prevent infection
Neither does pulling out your penis before ejaculation
So go ahead and laugh at this
You can still get Aids if you have sex and pee afterwards
That’s my verse
If you confused, rewind and go back ‘til you understand the lyrics in this rap. Get that?

Songs like these address basic misconceptions about the transmission of the virus. These include the ones mentioned in this song. Other common beliefs are that condoms can disappear into women causing them serious injury (Abdool Karim et al., 1994; Harvey, 1997; Nicholas, 1998), and that contraceptives offer protection against HIV or that condoms can be reused (Blecher et al., 1995; Du Plessis et al., 1993).

Besides disseminating basic information about HIV and AIDS and how the virus is transmitted, song lyrics also dealt with reducing the stigma and prejudices toward people living with AIDS. This song by another local artist speaks from the
perspective of the victim, tells people that AIDS is more commonplace than they might imagine, and encourages them to get tested.

The hard thing to tell me, please is this my curse
This tune in my head is slowly killing my nerves
On top of that my friends left me in the lurch
I sit and drink and I curse
Sit and think and a burst in to tears

Deep in depression I think that it’s worse
But I’m not ready to leave got things to achieve on this earth

When I sleep I have nightmares about how my family will grieve
I wake up in the morning and I look at my
But this knop [lump] in my throat leaves me unable to speak
Aids is a killer this statement is deep
Instead of spitting phlegm I spit blood when I cough

If you’re going to front don’t front on me
Rather front on this virus called HIV

The cap on TV says I must hope and maintain
But tell me how on earth can I cope with this strain
When my friends don’t visit me
It’s like I lost my dignity
‘til the very end
He’s now spreading rumors
They’re afraid I might spit or cough and they might catch it too
They’re afraid to even hug me or walk through my avenue
I can tell by my family’s attitude
They’re ashamed to even say I have this virus
They say I’ve got cancer an infection in my sinus
It’s already a crisis to fight this virus
On top of that I have to deal with high prices
Pharmaceutical companies
When all they really want to do is make a bunch of money
This is a summary of all I must endure

I’m a HIV positive victim faced with a test
I’ll explain my prerogative before they lay me to rest
You think you’re different coz this virus didn’t show up on your test
I’m seen as evil by people who know I’m depressed
I’m already lying on the ground and they’re kicking me in the chest
I’m walking around fighting for dignity in distress
Is it ignorance or prejudice leaving the people vexed

You best believe what you read take a peep at the stats
One thousand six hundred people’s infected daily
Not only by sex but needles injected maybe
You need to take the test yourself then check your attitude
Coz someone in your family even you might have it too

This song addresses the fact that people often feel invulnerable to HIV, perceiving it as a disease that only affects others. The Health Belief Model and Social-Cognitive Learning Theory say that key determinants of health behavior are perceptions about the seriousness of a health threat, perceptions about one’s personal vulnerability to a health threat and one’s perceived ability to reduce one’s risk. (Eaton, Flisher & Aaro, 2003). Local research shows that many South African youth underestimate their risk for contracting HIV and that higher perceived vulnerability and anxiety about personal risk is linked to greater intended and actual sexual behavior change (Van Aswegen, 1995). This song intends to increase such awareness and change commonplace misconceptions about youth’s vulnerability to AIDS.

Furthermore, many of the discussions and lyrics also focused on the factors influencing the spread of AIDS, as opposed to just talking about safer sex. Poverty, unemployment, global economics and ignorance were all on the agenda for discussion.
One seminal rhyme called “Ek is wyn” (I am wine) achieved huge popularity among listeners through its broadcasts on Bush Radio.

Ek se jy, ken jy vir my?
Jy, raak wys, ken jy vir my?
Ek se jy, ken jy vir my? Raak wys
Ek stiek uit soos ’n chameleon
Ek is nou hier langs jou
Dans ek soema binne in jou TV in
’n verkleremannetjie in die verkere company
Ek change color soos groen bruin en blou
Ek is alles waarvan jy hou

Ek is die downfall van ’n bruin ou
In die township is ek ’n main ou
Ek is daai ding wat die working class in die werk hou
Ek is die rede hoekom baie predikante kerk hou
Ek is trouble, en ek lyk om te sien hoe onskuldige mense struggle
Ek is die cause van die violence en hoekom it aanhou
Ek is die rede hoekom prostitutes aan mans klou
Ek is die rede hoekom brasse jou sal rob en skop sonder ophou
En as die nood druk, dan stik ek naad soos a speld
En ek is die rede vir daai bra se demise op die veld
As ’n laaitjie toet jye my verloor het, het jou tannie jou hard geneek met die beld deur my want ek is geld
Nou net as jy check jy’d my uitge figure se ek haaties, ek change in daai ding wat jy invat by parties
Ek is daai ding wat wat a waai bring
Ek laat jou verbeel jy kan kwaai sing
I can even make you cry vriend
Of Engels praat en laat afbriek
Ek is die rede hoekom jy daai bra wil hard steek
Ek is die rede dat jy Sondag oggende laat kip
En ek is die rede hoekom jy die laws wil ’n kaard skiet
But dit baat nie
Met daai asem sal jy dit nooit maak nie
Met my in jou system is jy totally reckless
Ek is ’n alcoholic se supper lunch en breakfast
En as jy jou motjie klap sal jy vir my blame
Ek laat die pyn verdwyn want ek is wyn
Ek’s a tool van oppression
In die form of a chemical warfare experiment
Ek is Wouter Basson se bierrie kind
Ek laat jou omkap as ek jou mond vat
Ek slat jou long pap en jy...jou sopnat as jy die grond vat
Ek is ‘n ...en ek dra die ghetto se kroon
Ek is ‘n gangster se droom
Hulle meng my met boom
Ek’s a button, but I can change into a flake
Ek is...Hoe lyk jy vir my
...sys nie a mens nie sys net a meit.
Ek is die rede hoekom jy ha wil gryp en rape
Ek is geld, buttons wyn en rape
...fingerprints
Ek is ignorance

Rapped in the mixture of Afrikaans and English that is commonly spoken in Cape Town this translates into English as:

I say, do you know me?
Wise up, I stick out like a chameleon
Now I’m here next to you, then I’m inside your TV
A chameleon in the wrong company
I change color like green brown and blue
I am everything you like
I am the downfall of the brown man
In the township I’m the main guy
I’m that thing that keeps the working class in work
I am the reason many priests hold church services
I am trouble, and I like to see innocent people struggle
I am the cause of violence and why it persists
I am the reason prostitutes cling to men
I am the reason guys will rob and kick you without stopping
I am the reason for the guy dying on the field
As a child you lost me and your mom beat you with a belt
because of me because I am money
Now just as you think you’ve figured me out, I change into that thing you take to parties
I am that thing that brings noise
I make you imagine you can sing well
Friend, I can even make you cry
Or speak English and break down
I am the reason you want to stab that dude
I am the reason you sleep late on Sunday mornings
I am the reason you want to cheat the law, but it’s not worth it
With that breath you’ll not make it
You’re totally reckless with me in your system
I’m an alcoholic’s supper, lunch and breakfast
And when you beat your wife you blame me
I make the pain disappear because I am wine
I’m a tool of oppression
In the form of a chemical warfare experiment
I am Wouter Basson’s\textsuperscript{18} bloody child
I make your lung collapse
I wear the ghetto’s crown
I am a gangster’s dream
They mix me with other drugs
I make you say she’s not a person, she’s a bitch
I am the reason you want to grab and rape her
I am money, drugs, wine and rape
I am ignorance.

The HIV-Hop project was supplemented with another program called SACRAI, the South African Community Radio AIDS Initiative, which ran between September 2000 and January 2002. Forty thirty-minute discussion programs were produced and distributed to six radio stations around the country.

\textbf{From HIV-Hop to “Positive Living”}

When the YAA 2000 project ended, Bush Radio continued to spark discussions on HIV/AIDS, particularly on the hip-hop show. A new program started in the form of Positive Living, a one-hour program hosted by Nomonde Tshikila and Ntombi Yoko, broadcast between 2 and 3pm Monday through Friday.

It gives information like starting from the terminology, like how it affects the immune system, how it works in the body, the medication, the anti-retrovirals, how does it affect the family. The other thing that we are still fighting is to eliminate the stigma, because that is why people find it so difficult to disclose their status. I used to call it HIV/AIDS program but I just decided to name it Positive Living because we are living positively and we have positive attitudes especially people who are living with the virus. It also boosted my attitude because

\textsuperscript{18}Wouter Basson headed South Africa’s secretive chemical and biological warfare program, and was tried for his role in the poisoning of thousands of anti-apartheid activists in prison.
I am also HIV positive (N. Yoko, personal communication, July 2003).

The on-air component of the show is quite traditional, comprising interviews with policy makers, experts and medical staff and encouraging listeners to call in with questions. The off-air component consists of school visits.

On Monday afternoons, Yoko, Tshikila, and Nicky Asher-Brown, who heads Bush Outside Broadcasts (BOB), and an assortment of interns and volunteers, pile into the battered blue VW Microbus and head to schools around the city. Bush Radio sometimes deliberately selects poorer schools with fewer resources; but most times they visit schools at the request of teachers or principals. One Monday afternoon, I found myself in the back of a crowded classroom at Perseverance High School in Belhar, a former colored township on the Cape Flats, about 20 miles from the city center. Conspicuous in my bright red Bush Radio T-shirt, the boisterous teens stared at me curiously. They eventually settled down once Asher-Brown turned on the outside broadcast unit and played the song “Ek is wyn.” When it ended she had their full attention and introduced the team. Then, to the students’ obvious delight, she asked their teachers to leave and told them:

HIV/ AIDS is not just about sex. It’s also about poverty and abuse, serious issues in our communities. We are here to tell you some things about HIV and AIDS, but we are not the experts. We hope that you can learn something from us,
but we also hope that we can learn something from you. Please don’t laugh at other people’s questions. We do stupid things, but there are no stupid questions.

Then she handed the microphone over to Tshikila, who began to engage students on the topic of AIDS, constantly eliciting responses and giving basic information on what the virus is and how it is transmitted. From the back, one boy shouted out that he heard that the virus came from Nigeria. This started a lively discussion about its origins, which eventually ended with another student pointing out that whatever its origins may be, it is now a problem in Cape Town that they all face. Tshikila skillfully negotiates all the students’ questions and comments, which come thick and fast in English, Afrikaans and Xhosa.

On the occasions when Yoko mediates the discussion, a central part of her strategy is to withhold her HIV positive status, and to reveal it to students toward the middle of the session. As Asher-Brown said,

On three occasions we had students that came out and disclosed their status to her and nobody else. Because she always tells them she’s HIV positive, they’ll talk to her or they’ll make an appointment with her where she goes to see them beyond school time. And she’ll tell them what to do and where to go. Most of the time she tells them about her experience. They learn that there is someone out there who can help, but that it’s going to take time, and I think that makes it a success in going out to the schools and really getting positive feedback and the students saying we must come back (N. Asher-Brown, personal communication, 2002).
Evaluation of the programs

One of the main weaknesses of these projects is that Bush Radio cannot statistically measure audience responses. In 2001 a Dutch funded PSO project allowed German Antje Becker-Benton, previously from Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (JHUCCP), to spend five months at the station helping Bush Radio to improve their AIDS programming. She designed basic questionnaires for staff to administer at outside broadcasts or to callers.

Together with staff, Antje also designed the AIDS Workplace Policy, making Bush Radio the only radio station in the country to have such a policy. However, these questionnaires yield very little information, and do not accurately measure whether the AIDS projects have any significant impact on listeners in terms of attitude or behavioral change. At the moment, the only indication the station gets from listeners that its programs are somewhat useful, is from callers to the show. On the days that I listened, this some of what listeners had to say.

Bush Radio is the only radio station that actually plays like hard core hip-hop and secondly also the issues that you deal with. Other radio stations don’t deal with that like AIDS and teenage sexuality, and all that stuff. It’s very interesting because it’s stuff that I never knew. It broadens my knowledge and my mind more on the stuff. Music brings over a message be it positive or negative. If you have a positive message people will sit up and listen to it because it is a topic that we all have to think about.
Some of that we need it. Actually I need it. No other radio station will do such a thing. They won’t go deep into such a subject and they’ll like just say blah blah blah. But like you guys you went deep into the subject and it really helps.

It really changed my behavior and my attitude towards people with Aids. For me personally ek het altyd gedink as ek iemand sien met Aids dan sal ek bag wies, ek sal nie met daai mense will praat nie ek sal net aan daai mense wil vat nie. It wassie soe nie. Ek weet nou hoe jy Aids kry en hoe jy nie Aids kan kry nie so daarom was ek baie different (I always thought that I would be very scared if I met someone with AIDS. I thought I wouldn’t want to talk to them or touch them. And it wasn’t like that. Now I know how you get Aids and that’s why I was very different).

I definitely learned something and I learned from hearing what other people have to say. People wonder about the same things. People ask the same questions, they ask the same things, for real. You dealt with people live on air and you approached them to call live on air.

However, these reactions don’t provide detailed feedback on whether or not the intervention was effective in changing knowledge, attitudes or behavior, or how it succeeded in doing so. Certainly, the program focuses heavily on knowledge, with many of the songs for example addressing the myths around HIV that are very prevalent among young people, particularly in the townships. However, program producers do not attempt to make any links between knowledge, attitudes and behavior (the KAP gap). Bush Radio thus has little idea of whether the e-e intervention resulted in any undesirable behaviors (or any desirable behaviors for that matter).
However, the HIV-Hop producers discovered that the program prompted listeners to extend their discussions on HIV and AIDS outside the radio show. As one caller said,

Discussing with friends outside the show. When we started to talk about sex the subject Aids is coming. So yes, we talk about things that you talk about on the show. Me and friends talk about it, we write lyrics about it, we have our own Aids song.

Communication theorists and practitioners have long recognized the interplay between mass communication and interpersonal communication in the process of social change. The literature on e-e theory shows that interpersonal discussion of media content often leads to greater effects than direct expose to media alone. Direct media information followed by peer discussion has been found to foster knowledge, attitude and behavior change in target populations (Mohammed, 2001). E-e campaigns have the strongest effect on audience behavior change when messages stimulate debate and reflection about the topic among audience members (Papa et al 2000).

As Rogers (1995) points out in Diffusion of Innovations, people are more willing to discuss a media program with others who they feel a high degree of homophily with. The HIV-Hop show thus fostered this kind of interpersonal communication, amplifying the opportunity for increased effects. Many listeners were also enjoying the songs written specially for
the show and recording them from the radio. One listener admitted that:

All the people are playing that stuff now, especially that Devious track. Everybody’s got it in the whole place playing it on their systems. We recorded it from the radio.

These projects also strengthen Bush Radio’s relationship with its constituency. As producer Erna Curry said,

The issues facing the population of the Western Cape where we broadcast is HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, the Western Cape has the highest rate of tuberculosis as well as issues around motherhood and pregnancy. And because we have to speak about those all the time, we have connections with people, community members, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, government departments. We work closely with department of health. Traditional healers, alternative healers, so just by that we have a network of partnerships in the community so people will come regularly, give us feedback of what are the issues on the ground, because we can’t necessarily be in all the communities at the same time. As well as what feedback they got from listeners after doing a particular show (E. Curry, personal communication, 07/2003).

Conclusion

Bush Radio’s AIDS programming demonstrate creative uses of entertainment to reach youth with positive messages about HIV/AIDS. Through its use of hip hop music both on the air and at local high schools, the station reaches youth in an innovative and entertaining way. The partnership with hip-hop groups in the Netherlands also demonstrates the cultural shareability of the e-e intervention. Cultural shareability refers to the ability of a media program to appeal to heterophilous audiences.
(Sthapitanonda-Sarabol & Singhal, 1999). The popularity of hip-hop music in other geographic regions of South Africa and abroad, means that media projects from HIV Hop can be used elsewhere, with the same benefits.

Moreover, this provides another example of how the station builds community, uniting youth around hip-hop. The assumption is that if youth memorize and sing along to lyrics with positive messages, they may be more likely to internalize these messages. Moreover, Bush Radio believes in the integration of these and other issues throughout its programming. Thirty-second public service announcements on HIV/AIDS, human rights, gender awareness and a host of other issues are scheduled throughout the broadcast day, particularly on music programs.

However, a few challenges remain. At this stage, the use of e-e strategies is mostly intuitive. Intuitive projects are usually successful because they are based on experience, but may be even more effective in combination with theory. While there is some knowledge of the theoretical foundation of the e-e strategy, this has not been adequately studied by Bush Radio staff, who may have much to learn from a more comprehensive study of similar projects around the world. Looking more closely at theories of behavior change may also be useful for the organization. As mentioned above, at this stage there is no comprehensive mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the HIV programming.
To date there have been no process or summative evaluations, neither is there any indication of whether the intervention creates sustainable behavior change; or at what stage the project is in closing the KAP (knowledge, attitudes, practice) gap.

Finally, the cultural relevance of hip-hop music has been clearly demonstrated in Cape Town. There is a clear potential for music in e-e projects. However, for greater effectiveness Bush Radio could diversify and draw on other aspects of hip-hop culture such as graffiti art or hip-hop theater. To some extent there have been attempts to achieve this through an art exhibition held by the Alkemy youth in 2002.

Figure 15. One of the Alkemy team preparing his exhibit. Picture from the Bush Radio files.
However, this was an isolated, short-term event, that could be replaced by more long term sustainable use of other media to reinforce the program. As Singal & Rogers (2003) point out, “launching a multimedia broadcast with supportive activities is crucial for effective entertainment-education. The effects of e-e are magnified when supplementary activities are included in an integrated communication campaign” (p.296).
Chapter 8: “Ek sê, heita!” Kwaito and the construction of community

Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed Bush Radio’s use of hip-hop music for social change, particular HIV/ AIDS education. Through its innovative use of hip-hop music, Bush Radio both reaches youth with built in messages and also serves to construct a hip-hop youth community. In this chapter I focus on kwaito music, showing how this new hybrid musical form developed out of hip-hop in post-apartheid South Africa. In particular I intend in this chapter to demonstrate how Bush Radio’s use of kwaito music establishes it as a site for the articulation of variable identities; and succeeds in building a more unified youth community than hip-hop, although its potential for use in entertainment-education strategies remains untapped.

Bush Radio’s relatively small broadcast footprint and low powered 250 watt transmitter means that you often have to search patiently through the plenitude of commercial stations to find 89.5FM on the radio. It may take some skill for the dedicated listener to find the sliver of frequency, surrounded on both sides by the national commercial rock music station, 5FM. But once you’ve locked on to 89.5, there’s no doubt that that’s where you are. The alternative political talk shows and features,
specialist hip-hop, jazz and blues programs, and the African\textsuperscript{19} and kwaito music, distinguish the station from all others in Cape Town.

Kwaito can be described as the new music of the new South Africa\textsuperscript{20}. Since its emergence after the country’s first democratic election in June 1994, kwaito blasts from minibus taxis, on the new urban commercial stations formed after media liberalization, and on street corners from Cape Town to Johannesburg. Kwaito is young, vibrant and decidedly black. This is hardly surprising in a context where music, like everything else, is a highly racialized terrain. For black South Africans, the choice is often kwaito. Bush Radio producer Lukhanyo Sitshongaye summarized a general perception when he said that most people who listen to and identify with kwaito are from the townships, from the Cape Flats. You can’t play kwaito for people from Clifton or Constantia [formerly white suburbs], they listen to rock and roll, heavy metal (L. Sitshongaye, personal communication, 06/04/03).

This chapter explores Bush Radio’s decision to broadcast kwaito music, and how this is related to its mission statement.

\textsuperscript{19}African music refers to music from the rest of the continent, e.g., the work of artists such as Papa Wemba, Khadja Nin, Positive Black Soul, and so on. Bush Radio is the only station in Cape Town with a program dedicated to music from the rest of the continent.\textsuperscript{20} Kwaito emerged on the South African music scene after the end of Apartheid, with the country’s first democratic elections in 1994, after which the country was often referred to as the “new South Africa.”
First, this chapter will articulate kwaito’s emergence within the context of South Africa’s mainstream cultural industries. Then kwaito music is explored as a signifier of black identity, with a discussion of how Bush Radio uses kwaito music to build a rhizomatic community. This chapter is located within a cultural studies framework, which approaches musical genres as cultural texts capable of generating multiple meanings (Grossberg, 1993).

**Kwaito defined**

Kwaito emerged in South Africa as a result of globalization, as well as a combination of local political, social and economic factors. Kwaito is a very danceable mixture of South African disco music, hip-hop, R’nB, dancehall, ragga, and American and British house music. The lyrics are chanted or shouted over a slowed-down bass and an electronically programmed beat. There are two possible origins of the word: one is that it that it comes from the “Amakwaitos,” the name of a township gang. The second is that it derives from the Afrikaans word ‘kwai’, meaning cool or wild (Stephens, 2000). Sitshongaye contends that one local musician developed both the musical style and its designation.

This word kwaito comes from Arthur. He sat down and said this is my music. He was the guy in those days, like one of the first architects of kwaito. So he said I’m gonna call my music kwaito, and everybody followed that trend, that’s why he was named the King of Kwaito because he’s the one that came with that name. Then came other guys too, there was competition. There were guys like Kalawajazzme, that’s
Oscar and Bruce Sibitlo and Don Laka, he used to do kwaito by the way. And Kalawajazzme, they said Arthur is our rival, why don’t we come up with another name for the same style of music. So they said, our music is The Gong. It’s still kwaito, but it’s a competition. People still use it but most people use kwaito because that’s the word that was marketed in the streets (L. Sitshongaye, personal communication, 06/04/03).

Figure 16. Sitshongaye and a young listener pose with kwaito superstar, Mzekezeke.

Whatever it’s linguistic otymology, kwaito was embodied by one nodal point, Arthur, and then dispersed. In an interview with South African online magazine, Rage, kwaito musician Mdu points out that before kwaito rose to its current popularity, people partied to South African ‘bubblegum’ or disco music. The popularity of bubblegum was short-lived, but it marked a shift in South African popular music. Separate state television channels were introduced for different ethnic groups in the early 1980s,
and the growth of disco was guaranteed with channels targeting black audiences.

However, audiences were also developing a taste for house music from the United States and the United Kingdom, so the two genres were mixed to produce kwaito (www.rage.co.za). Another explanation is that kwaito was born when a township DJ spun a dance track at the wrong speed in the early 1990s, and the crowd loved it. DJs then played house records at around 90 beats per minute (bpm), slower than the European 130 bpm, and some added their own lyrics. Despite its origins in the 1970s, kwaito musicians often sample music from 1950s artists such as Miriam Makeba and Hugh Masekela (e.g., the group Bongo Maffin).

Kwaito producers were the first in the country to launch their own black-owned record labels. Oscar, Don Laka, Bruce Sibitlo and the members of Trompies are at the top of Kalawa Jazzmee; Arthur is the head of Triple 9 Records; Mdu owns MDU Music and Christos runs Wicked Sounds. Along with Ghetto Ruff, these are the most popular independent labels with the biggest acts.

The sounds of kwaito are associated with township. Black townships in South Africa, artificial urban ghettos swollen by migrants from the countryside who had been moved outside the city under apartheid, have always been fertile grounds for musicians. For example, Soweto township in Johannesburg, one of the most
active music centers in the country, gave rise to the mbaqanga, a combination of South African rhythms, jazz, soul and old European tunes with a heavy bass (Leymarie, 1998). More specifically, kwaito can be traced to the early 1970s dominance of Mbaqanga or jive, which originated from marabi dance. This genre was influenced by traditional songs and played in shebeens, illegal drinking halls, with musicians using any instruments that were available from pianos to home made percussion instruments (Bergman, 1985). At this time, for mbaqanga, meaning was deeply embedded in the music, which played the role of education, cultural expression and identity construction (Boloka, 2003). Mbaqanga gave rise to "bubblegum" in the 1980s.

These were the musical roots of kwaito, but it was accelerated by the political and social transition of the 1990s. Kwaito was thus the coming together of South African music genres (bubblegum, mbaqanga, township jazz, Afro-pop among others), with Western music genres (e.g. rhythm and blues, house, hip-hop, jungle and drum 'n bass) (Boloka, 2003).
Kwaito culture and language

Like hip-hop, kwaito has become associated with a lifestyle and culture, and to some extent, symbolizes the start of a new narrative of South African culture. As a member of kwaito band Boom Shaka pointed out in an interview with CNN:

so when everyone was changing to the new South Africa, you know, we thought, why can’t we just change, to a new South Africa with a new type of music? (in Wright, 1999, p.1).

Kwaito fans wear bucket style hats, All Star sneakers, baggy jeans and check shirts. Fans and non-fans alike adopt the township slang that is used in the songs into their daily vocabulary. Although the songs are usually sung in African languages, predominantly Zulu and Sotho, the slang tends to mostly be Afrikaans words and phrases such as “ek se” (I say), “eintlik” (actually), “jou” (yours), and “nou” (now).

To some extent this reflects the cultural and linguistic hybridity of the country and of the city. In Cape Town Afrikaans is spoken very differently than in the rest of the country, with a generous splattering of English words and phrases. Culturally the city reflects a diverse African, Malay and European heritage, elements of which intertwine to represent Cape Town21.

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21 See Chapter 4 for a discussion of the identity and community of Cape Town.
Background: Culture in South Africa

During apartheid, blackness and black culture was hidden or whitewashed – one never heard traditional black music, or black musicians on radio or television. Music on the state owned South African Broadcasting Corporation consisted mostly of Afrikaans folk songs. Government sanctioned a “traditional” African sound, which was packaged, commodified and exported.

For many South Africans, kwaieto thus represents the reclamation of a black cultural identity being asserted for the first time in popular culture. Kwaito has come to represent black pride in a country where black culture and identity was always marginal despite a black majority population. In other words, one was more likely to hear foreign music on radio or television than local traditional musical forms. As Louw puts it,

There’s ownership of the music, I think that’s the key thing. It originates out of the townships. It’s township music. There’s nothing like it anywhere in the world. It’s owned by Langa, it’s owned by Gugulethu, it’s owned by Soweto, it’s owned by the townships, and I think people are very proud of it, the youth especially (A. Louw, personal communication, 05/30/03).

This issue of ownership is central. With the creation of a new form of music in the aftermath of political reform, the rise of kwaieto signifies a complete cultural break with the apartheid past.
Culture in South Africa is a set of processes, which form part of the production and circulation of identities in the new context of democracy and globalization. Stephens (2003) suggests that kwaito represented a break with the political, where

Many saw a positive change occurring in popular music where they could enjoy dancing without having to engage with any sociological discourse in the verbal text. Considering the political element that has motivated a large selection of South Africa popular music for so long, kwaito is breaking from the tradition...it reflects post-apartheid society by freeing the African body...from political consciousness and repositioning it in spaces of new physical freedoms (Stephens, 2000, p.263).

Music in South Africa

Music has always played a central role in the political and cultural life of South Africa. Musicians, artists and playwrights played a key role in acquiring support against the oppressive apartheid regime (Whitaker, 1994). During this time, music for black South Africans functioned much like blues music for blacks during and after slavery in the United States. It sustained them during apartheid, enabled them to maintain a sense of humanity and acted as a healing force (Peart, 1994). Political prisoners would sing freedom songs to maintain morale during indefinite terms of imprisonment without trial, during which family members were often unaware of their whereabouts. Former president Nelson Mandela has spoken about how soul and Motown, in particular the music of Marvin Gaye, provided comfort during
his imprisonment (Erlmann, 1999). Musical forms like the gumboot\textsuperscript{22} dance were created by the workers on the gold and diamond mines and performed by Zulu miners during their leisure time.

Music has always been influenced by politics, and in turn highly politicized (Martin, 1992). Songs such as the \textit{Internationale}, the revolutionary song of the French revolution; \textit{Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica}\textsuperscript{23} (God Bless Africa), the anthem of the ANC; or \textit{We Shall Overcome} formed part of the repertoire at political meetings and demonstrations. Furthermore, music was used by the apartheid state to manipulate listeners' tastes in an attempt to stunt the growth of a permanently urbanized black population. The state attempted to promote a vision of a rurally rooted migrant labor force oriented to traditional ways rather

\textsuperscript{22}Dancers wear rubber boots (often with tinkling bottle caps) which they slap with their hands. The only musical accompaniment is the rhythm of the steps and the shouts of the group leader (Leymarie, 1998). The gumboot dance is very similar (and may have given rise) to Step as practiced by African-American fraternities and sororities in the United States.

\textsuperscript{23}For decades \textit{Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica} was regarded as the national anthem of South Africa (S.A.) by the oppressed and it was always sung as an act of defiance against the apartheid regime. It is also the anthem of Tanzania. A proclamation issued by the President on 20 April 1994 stipulated that both \textit{Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica}, and \textit{Die Stem} (The call or voice which was the Afrikaans national anthem during apartheid) would be the national anthems of S.A. In 1996 a shortened, combined version of the two anthems was released as the new national anthem (http://www.polity.org.za/misc/nkosi.html).
than to a sophisticated city life favoring jazz for cultural expression (James, 1997).

A variety of “traditional” music was promoted during the 1950s and 1960s, primarily on the state owned ethnic radio stations as part of the state’s policy of keeping black South Africans resident in ethnic reserves (Ballantine, 1989). The government sanctioned Afro-jazz bands with their ‘authentic’ sounds, traced from their African roots, re-articulated (whitened) and commodified by Western corporations (Mellville, 2000).

One central event at this time was Paul Simon’s top-selling, controversial 1986 Graceland album. Nearly all the world’s entertainers had joined in a cultural boycott of the country to protest apartheid, refusing to participate in South African concerts, or in the economy in any way. Simon contravened the boycott to record with several prominent South African musicians, later winning a Grammy Award for album of the year (Peart, 1994; Whitaker, 1994). Graceland was controversial not only for its contravention of the cultural boycott, but also because of a perceived appropriation of African culture, following Simon’s solo acceptance of the Grammy (Erlmann, 1999).

This perspective of cultural dominance reflects the influence of early British cultural studies and the Frankfurt school (James, 1997). A contrasting approach emphasizes the
ability of consumers to appropriate and integrate commodities into their everyday lives for their own purposes. Drawing on practice theory, James (2000) argues that instead of merely representing the ruling group biases, musical genres can create new social situations in which players and audience constitute themselves as groups while enacting or appreciating a performance. One example of this was musicians’ ability to disguise the political content of their lyrics when government censors would destroy a record, ban it from the airwaves or force a musician into exile if lyrics were deemed inappropriate (Peart, 1994). Moreover, later writers such as Raymond Williams (1974) considered popular culture to have a dual role: besides being hegemonic it could also be decentralizing and emancipatory.

**Music and hybridity as political expression**

In his enthralling ethnography, Stolzhoff (2000) shows how dancehall is a political expression of Jamaica’s downtown poor in the face of upper class hegemony. “Downtown” or the inner-city slums and poor rural areas inhabited by the darker skinned lower class, participate in dancehall and use it for economic sustenance, cultural expression and social protest. Dancehall is thus more than mere entertainment: “It is also an important institution that generates, mediates and reproduces the social order—that is the hierarchical divisions of race, class, gender
and sexuality running through Jamaican society” (Stolzhoff, 2000, p.227).

Hip-hop\textsuperscript{24} is another example of a hybrid musical form created in urban black ghettoes in the United States, now a point of identification within the black Diaspora (Barker, 2000). In Ghana, HipLife is a new musical genre, which mixes hip-hop with highlife music. The liberalization of the airwaves in Ghana, with the formation of private FM stations, has led to the commercialization of what had been an underground music scene. HipLife is thus the appropriation of American hip-hop by Ghanaians who use the hip-hop beats while incorporating local rhythms and languages (http://www.webstar.com.gh/hiplife/).

Native Hawaiian rappers draw on African-American hip-hop to create na mele paleoleo, a form of Hawaiian rap which Akindes (1999, 2) sees as an articulation of resistance against colonizing forces. Akindes (1999, 2) demonstrates how using Pidgin is a means of excluding others and demonstrating working class solidarity in Hawaii. Similarly, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, kwaito is sung in a mixture of various South African languages or in tsotsi taal (gangster slang).

In South Africa, musical hybridity is not new. Swing and be-bop bands flourished during the jazz era. Township residents infused the Black American sounds with traditional rhythms and harmonies (Whitaker, 1994). A musical interdependence has been

\textsuperscript{24} See Chapter 7 for a brief history of hip-hop.
demonstrated between black South Africa and the African-American United States, drawing on examples of the similarities between Michael Jackson music videos and images of internationally acclaimed acapella group, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, renowned for their choral music known as isicathamiya (Erlmann, 1999).

**Bush Radio’s use of kwaiito**

In 1994 the Independent Broadcasting Authority legislated stations to devote 20% of their airtime to local music (Mutume, 1998). Bush Radio producer, Victor Jantjies, said:

> It [kwaiito] is music that South African people can recognize and be proud of especially the youth. It creates an original feel because it’s a combination of African beats. I play a lot of kwaiito music on the radio because I want the listeners to know that there is good local music as well, and they can be associated with it (V. Jantjies, personal communication, 02/2002).
To some extent the station is able to fulfill its local quota by playing kwaito music, since other genres produced locally do not produce the same volumes of material. But as Jantjies and other staff members point out, Bush Radio’s use of kwaito music is directly linked to issues of ownership, youth identity and black culture. As Louw articulated,

"I think it’s an expression of black township youth identity. I’d like to see it evolve into the supporting of black consciousness. Black identity and the whole issue of colored identity, it’s a very convoluted thing. I think a lot of people at Bush Radio see themselves as black rather than as coloured. And if you want to use the term coloured then most of the people working here are coloured, working toward a form of black consciousness and black identity. I think Bush in many ways is trying to develop that black consciousness. But not only with kwaito, I mean hip hop too, just opening up young people’s eyes to what’s out there, and some form of black consciousness (A. Louw, personal communication, 05/30/03)."
However, the many criticisms of kwaito have been an issue for the station. Kwaito comes under attack for a number of reasons despite it’s portrayal as a positive expression of black identity through its creation of the first black owned record labels, and by bringing African languages into popular musical genre for the first time. Firstly, the lyrical content of the music has been widely criticized.

Tokollo from the group TKZ compares it to rap's early days:

Parents never liked it either. They said it was full of swearing, but the youth loved it. Now kwaito is like that, but it's South African (www.rage.co.za).

Certainly, many people often mention the music’s vulgar and sexually explicit lyrics. But as Bush Radio’s Sitshongaye explains, this analysis may be because of misinterpretation due to inaccurate translation into English, as well as the removal of words out of their original cultural context.

Kwaito is not as explicit as hip-hop. But sometimes you find that Xhosa is very expressive language. Like say umqundu, is ass, you can use it, but because way back in the day you could use it easily even if you’re a child. But that’s a very expressive word to use, but these days with the changing times it’s regarded as being too disrespectful, you’re rather say bum or mpundu. Thebe is one example, he uses words like that because it’s not regarded as being disrespectful in Xhosa, but some other people who are more like Model C people, people who study in multi-racial schools, they see it as being rude because that’s how they grew up, so they don’t understand. But people from the townships, they don’t regard it as being rude, because it’s part of culture and tradition (L. Sitshongaye, personal communication, 06/04/03).
However, women are often referred to in derogatory words in kwai
to songs, and portrayed scantily clad in music videos, much like the average hip hop music video. Stephens (2000) reflects on
the inclusion of women in kwai
to music as a deliberate use of superfluous "singing and dancing girls" as a marketing ploy.
Women in kwai
to have often fallen into these kinds of stereotypes.

For example, kwai
to diva Brenda Fassie, known and loved for her outrageousness, has been nicknamed the “Madonna of Township”. In April 2000, as she accepted a prize at the South African Music Awards, she flashed her legs at the crowd and said “Nice, eh?” In another incident, a local paper reprinted verbatim, an interview with Madonna, replacing her name with Fassie’s (Philadelphia, 2001). Feminist scholar bell hooks (1999) points out how Madonna may have originally used her sexuality in a radical expression of feminism, but that she later defeats this purpose. Similarly, Fassie’s flaunting of her sexuality can be seen from within this perspective. While isolated incidents may have been deliberately designed to subvert traditional cultural expectations of women’s behavior or dress, these representations are subject to oppositional decoding by the audience.

People sing about partying, life and all that. So you’ll be sitting at home listening to say Thebe and he’s singing about I’ve been at a party and “natibana neses febe”, and febe is bitch. And he’ll be singing like I’ve been at a party and I saw some girls and they were sitting down with
their legs open and they were feeling horny, you know stuff like that. And he will sing about that in Sotho or Zulu. But the youth don’t regard that as being rude, they regard that as something that’s true, that’s happening (L. Sitshongaye, personal communication, 06/04/03).

But sometimes the music has no substantial lyrical content. As Lunga said,

Sometimes you’ll find there’s a good instrumental but there’s nothing going on in the song lyrically, just “hola, hola, hola” right through the song. And that’s wack! And then you find a combination where the lyrics are bad and the instrumental is bad. And some people actually like it. Arthur is one of those people, it’s like “haybo, haybo, haybo”, the whole song is haybo, and people love it. And there’s another one, injaincha, a dog is a dog, and it’s just repetitive (P. Lunga, personal communication, 06/04/03).

Kwaito thus often uses repetition as well as what Bergman (1985) describes as the call and response technique where the musician sings one line, and the listeners repeat a part of it in response. This is much like the performative modes of African-American secular speech and the practices of the African-American Holiness Church. Boloka (2003) provides the example of Arthur Mofokate’s song “Mnike” in which Arthur says “Hey Queen, Hau Mnike!; and together with the backing vocalist the listeners say “Mnike”. This makes it easy to memorize the songs, and increases interaction between artist and listener. This is also very similar to apartheid era slogans used during marches or at political meetings. For example, the speaker at a gathering would call out Amandla! (power), with the crowd responding Awethu (to
the people); or “Forward the people” with the response being “forward”; and the later inflammatory call of The Azanian People’s Liberation Movement (Azapo), “One Settler”, followed by “One bullet.” These call and response techniques of political protest were also repetitive, intended to motivate large crowds.

On the flip side however, other kwaiuto music reflects township life, with its accompanying social and political concerns. Brenda Fassie’s 1998 album *Memeza*, which went platinum on the first day of its release, contained the song *Vuli Ndlela* (Accept the Situation), which was played prolifically on black radio stations, in tacit support of the African National Congress, on the eve of the country’s first democratic elections in 1994. While younger kwaiuto acts create dance-party music, Fassie’s music addresses more complex themes (Philadelphia, 2001). For example, in *Sum’ Bulala* (Do not kill him/her), she asks taxi operators to end their violent rivalries.

Another criticism leveled at kwaiuto is the violence that often emerges out of the industry. In 1998, rising kwaiuto star Makhendlas committed suicide after killing a fan, shortly before a performance in the Mpumulanga province of South Africa. The artist was the brother of Arthur Mafokate, the multi-platinum selling ‘king of kwaiuto.’ Local press reports described the incident as a case of artist rivalry, pointing out how several groups have poked fun at one another in songs (Coetzer, 1998).
The acclaimed and controversial television series *Yizo Yizo* (The Real Thing) depicted rape, crime and violence in black townships, within a school setting. The series was made with the cooperation of the Education Ministry who believed that it mirrored the grim reality of learning difficulties, crime, ill-discipline and over-crowding in black schools during apartheid (Hennop, 2001). Viewers and parliamentarians called for its immediate banning and removal from television because they felt it contained unsuitable content. The sound track of *Yizo Yizo* consisted entirely of kwaito music.

With all these criticisms in mind, Bush Radio faces a dilemma. The station develops projects that encourage embedding of socially conscious lyrics in music, e.g. HIV Hop as outlined in Chapter 7. Yet the station also simultaneously plays kwaito, some of which may carry lyrics and messages contradictory to those encouraged in the hip hop music, which forms part of the entertainment-education project. Many staff members feel that the benefits of promoting kwaito music on the air far outweigh any possible negative effects. Because the music is black owned and controlled, the station believes they are contributing toward the reclamation and development of a black identity, being the only radio station in the city to play kwaito. Moreover, kwaito does appear to be bringing groups previously separated by apartheid closer together. Various so-called ethnic groups or tribes such
as the Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho etc. were forcibly removed to ethnic homelands in the countryside, each with its own political administration, independent of the government of the Republic of South Africa. Now people from various cultural backgrounds may find themselves living in the same township and as Sitshongaye points out, learning each other’s languages through kwaito.

Most of the kwaito is in Sotho and tsotsi-taal. But you’ll be surprised – I’m Xhosa but I will listen to that CD and I just sing, I don’t know what it means, but it will be ringing in my mind, as if I, and then maybe you bump into a guy who is Sotho, a friend of yours memorized the lyrics. And I’ll walk out, singing the song as if I know it, and he’ll be like do you now what that means? And then he’ll explain to you. But some of the lyrics you can understand, because sometimes the artist tends to repeat the lyrics in different languages. And another thing that makes you understand is the tsotsi-taal – if you grew up in the township you tend to understand. When you go to socials you hook up with different people from different backgrounds and cultures, you talk, sometimes you speak tsotsitaal and you mix it with Xhosa and you mix it with Zulu, that’s how you learn. So you mix and if you say a word that someone doesn’t understand then you explain it in Zulu or Xhosa. So that’s how kwaito is, it bonds people together, the youth especially. If you don’t understand somebody will explain to you (L. Sitshongaye, personal communication, 06/04/03).

Furthermore, the station feels that kwaito will eventually develop to the point where it can be used for social change in the same way as hip-hop (as discussed in the previous chapter). But kwaito’s lyrics are less dense than rap music, and it lacks hip-hop’s history as a community-based, awareness-oriented medium. According to Louw,
Kwaito is relatively young. Or at least the form of kwaito we see now is very young. And what needs to happen is that the skills need to be improved, and it is happening — people are rapping in Xhosa and trying to build in that consciousness into their lyrics. If you compare the percentages of conscious hip-hop to the commercial stuff then the commercial stuff still outweighs it. I think it’s too early right now. Because if you look at the construction of the music, it’s very repetitive, it’s very simplistic. Its simple phrases, simple phrase construction, nothing complex. Kwaito itself as an art form has not had a chance to develop yet, or getting the content in. Or maybe now is the time to get that moving (A. Louw, personal communication, 05/30/03).

In the meantime, presenters are conscious of potentially negative lyrics and attempt to counter this in some ways. According to Lungu,

I try to choose which kwaito I play because not all kwaito is good. The beats are often similar, the lyrics are repetitive and there’s no message in most of the songs. But I try and play the good kwaito. Like the Yizo Yizo 2 soundtrack, some of the songs in there talk about crime, people who’ve been in prison and how they regret that, and also the HIV/AIDS issue. There’s a song by Boom Shaka for example called “Don’t Be Ashamed” – don’t be ashamed of your brother, of your sister of your skin color (P. Lungu, personal communication, 06/04/03).

Kwaito artists have countered the criticisms by saying that their genre is a breakaway from the seriousness of life and that it accurately represents the lives of youth in South Africa (Boloka, 2003).
Figure 18. From left to right: Nicker Asher-Brown, Victor Jantjies, Pam Lunga and Lukhanyo Sitshongaye. Picture from the Bush Radio files.

Conclusion

Kwaito is problematic, but like “community”, it too becomes a concept under erasure. While the negatives associated with it are recognized, the music is legitimate in that it represents a black cultural identity. After all, cultural studies shows us that like any other cultural product, music generates multiple meanings; and meaning becomes the source of struggle as it is continually contested. Undeniably, contestation is part of cultural consumption.

Certainly, as the first music genre owned and controlled by black South Africans, kwaito represents a break from the apartheid past and a move toward the formation of a new cultural
terrain. Kwaito demonstrates how mass media helps the creation of a 'new' South Africa by implanting a new common culture based on consumption, and it is through this new culture that identities are forged (Boloka, 2003). As Ullestad (1992) said,

An exciting tension surrounds popular music in the 1990s: invention facing tradition, creativity confronting stagnation, tolerance versus intolerance, rebellion against authority, commercialism versus authenticity. This tension is not a simple struggle of positive and negative...it is much more than a struggle to decide what music we hear, when we hear it, where and how (p.37).

Like Jamaica's dancehall, kwaito is associated with darker skins, and to some extent reproduces the social order out of which it is born, in terms of gender and sexuality. Bush Radio's deliberate decision to broadcast kwaito reflects a conscious decision to build and to maintain yet another community - in this case a group of individuals whose self-identification places them under the umbrella term black. The Bush Radio audiences would not be able to listen to the amounts of kwaito music on the radio if it were not for the station's broadcasts, as no other station in the city broadcasts any significant volume of this type of music. In fact, kwaito has begun to signify a national South African identity, listened to by young South Africans abroad and played at sports rallies. During the 1998 World Soccer Cup in France,
for example, kwaito group TKZ’s song “Shibobo” became the slogan for the South African national team. Mandoza’s songs “Godoba” and “Nkalankatha” were played at the Tri-Nations Cricket Tournament in Australia in 2002 (Boloka, 2003).

Boloka (2003) points out that identities forged out of musical traditions are imaginary, multiple and temporal. Bush Radio’s use of kwaito music thus represents a consciously intended creation of community, arguably imagined (Anderson, 1983) multiple and temporal. Kwaito no longer represents merely the hybrid – it has become indigenous. South African popular music interacts with other forms including kwasa-kwasa from Central Africa, South American salsa and North American rap, and is produced with the help of digital technology to sample these various sounds. As Storey (1996) points out, meaning is a social production. Therefore, evaluated as a text, kwaito does not issue meaning about new identities in a new society, but becomes a site where the articulation of a variable meaning can take place.

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25 This refers to the act of placing the football between the opponent’s feet to demonstrate one’s skill.
Chapter 9: In the Pink: Gay and lesbian radio

Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with Bush Radio’s deliberate choice to broadcast kwaito music; and claimed kwaito as a site for the articulation of variable identities and meaning. This chapter claimed that through its articulation of black identity, kwaito succeeds in building a unified youth community in South Africa. This chapter moves away from the use of music to build community, and focuses on another of Bush Radio’s marginal communities – the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community. This chapter focuses on the program In the Pink and argues that it represents a space for the articulation of a marginal identity, and yet simultaneously builds gay community while acting as a bridge between gay and straight.

The signature tune, the Weather Girls’ It’s Raining Men drifts out of the on-air studio and down the stairs of the Bush Radio building. The programming office is filled with people making last minute changes to the program lineup. A young man in a T-shirt that reads “HIV positive” is on the phone confirming an interview with the Gugulethu Support Group for Gays. In the music library a lesbian couple discuss what to tell teenagers who may be feeling suicidal about their sexuality. It’s 8 ‘o clock on a Thursday night and it’s time for In the Pink, Africa’s only gay
and lesbian program, produced for and by the GLBT (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered) community.

This chapter explores the program In the Pink within the social and constitutional context of gay rights in South Africa. In particular, this chapter will explore how In the Pink represents the creation of an alternative space in which gays in Cape Town can articulate their identities and reify their sexual orientation.

The term “gay” is used in this chapter since it is has widespread currency and is considered acceptable in South Africa. The alternative term “queer” has entered the discourse of identity, particular in the West, where “gay” is perceived as exclusionary since it doesn’t include those on the margins e.g. bisexual or transgendered individuals. Queer theory encourages a move beyond normativity. Arising from post-structuralist and post-colonial feminist theory, queer theorists indicate uneasiness with “community”, and instead embrace a notion of queer as all that is not the norm, which may include, but is not limited to, gay. While this shift has occurred within theory, South Africans still prefer the term gay. As producer of In the Pink Adrian Alberts said,

I find the word gay quite validating, I don’t see it as a derogatory term at all. Gay somehow feels more comfortable to work with than queer. I think gay rights has already been accepted and adopted as a politically correct term to use. I suppose queer rights possibly where those rights
haven’t been acknowledged has been a more underground kind of term used specifically to maybe throw them out in the faces of those who determine where those rights lie. I think it’s more an activist term. The gay is almost a more politically correct, or just acknowledging (A. Alberts, personal communication, 06/03/03).

Figure 19. Adrian Alberts in the production studio. Picture from the Bush Radio files.

However, Alberts does acknowledge that the phrase “gay and lesbian” might be more exclusive, in line with criticisms from queer theorists.

I think as soon as it becomes gay and lesbian you’re dealing with sexist issues as well within the homosexual community. We’re not necessarily separated from human phenomena. And that is what hopefully we choose not to lose sight of if you are gay. The term gay is all encompassing. I find gay equally accommodating from a male or female perspective (personal communication, 06/03/03).
This dissertation uses the term gay interchangeably with GLBT, to refer to any individual who does not identify as heterosexual. Although problematic for similar reasons, the term “gay community” is also used in this chapter because of its widespread currency in Cape Town. As Alberts said,

There might be reasons why people have specific identifications with shared issues, why they might choose to share time or invest time together for whatever reason, whether it’s recreational or otherwise. I think it’s a term of endearment that stems from being seen as different possibly, or being a minority. And I suppose if one struggles through something and survives and still has an identity, though it might be perceived to be a minor identity, I think that’s a natural human condition to celebrate, one’s sense of self. Simply because of the struggles involved, or the shared spirit of maintaining a love or sense of endearment for a particular state of mind. And it brings up the very interesting idea of whether gay community is a community, which has as much right to affirmation of cultural identity. And I suppose it brings up conservative and liberal views of what it means within the community, as it might do in any community in terms of what its ethos is, or its agenda (A. Alberts, personal communication, 06/03/03).

Certainly the term community is problematic, but it is used here under erasure as discussed in Chapter 4. In other words, it is acknowledged that people who share a sexual orientation that is not considered heterosexual may have some things in common, but that they are not necessarily a homogenous group to be referred to under the umbrella term “community.” However, the concept is something that individuals like Alberts identify with; and In the Pink certainly constitutes a distinct group of people, listeners, or perhaps more accurately, a community.
Legal and constitutional background

On May 8th 1996 South Africa became the first and only country in the world to enshrine lesbian and gay rights in its Constitution i.e. the only country to make constitutional provision for gay and lesbian sexuality. Section 8 of the Chapter on Fundamental Rights outlaws unfair discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Gevisser & Cameron, 1995; Sunstein, 2001). The sexual orientation clause is found in Article 9 of the Bill of Rights, within Act 108 of 1996. Clause 9. (3) reads: "The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation [my italics], age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, and birth."

In 1998, South Africa’s highest legal body, the Constitutional Court, struck down laws that criminalized sex between men. On 9th October 1998 this court declared the laws which criminalized sex between men unconstitutional because they affected the "dignity, personhood and identity" of lesbian and gay people at a deep level. The presiding judge said that the laws undermined self-esteem, caused psychological harm and legitimated violence and blackmail against lesbian, gay, bisexual and, transgendered individuals. In addition, the Constitutional Court held that: "The harm also radiates out into society
generally and gives rise to a wide variety of other discriminations, which collectively prevent a fair distribution of social goods and services and the award of social opportunities for gays” (http://www.ilga.org).

Sex between women was never officially banned, but was symbolically stigmatized by the old laws. In September 2001 a South African court ruled that a lesbian judge could share the same worker benefits with her domestic partner as married judges do, making it easier for gay couples to adopt children together. The Constitutional Court declared sections of the Compensation Act for judges as unconstitutional, because they prevent same-sex partners from sharing benefits enjoyed by their married counterparts. Changing the act entitled the partners of gay judges to such benefits as sharing in medical insurance packages and compensation in the case of death (Associated press, September 2001).

The Defense White Paper (Ministry of Defense, 1996) makes specific provision that "the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) shall not discriminate against any of its members on the grounds of sexual orientation" (para 52). The paper also states that "the Minister of Defense shall appoint a work group to facilitate and monitor the implementation of the policy regarding...sexual orientation (para 53). The SANDF issued a press statement noting "the military respects their
constitutional rights to be homosexual or lesbian as long as their activities do not interfere with military discipline, esprit de corps and morale" (http://www.ilga.org). A law passed in May 2000 specifies that sexual orientation is a valid reason for extending political asylum. President Thabo Mbeki formally recognized the LGBT community by officially inviting them to take part in the Heritage Day festivities in 1999.

Gay rights in South Africa

Gay couples walking hand in hand are not uncommon in Cape Town. A “gay village” in the city center features bars and restaurants targeted at and frequented by mostly gays and lesbians. Many tour companies advertise services targeted exclusively to the entertainment needs of gay tourists. Cape Town's Pink Map lists gay friendly places and the city's first Pride festival is being planned, Johannesburg Pride in September is a week-long extravaganza of club events, theatre and art exhibitions, finishing off with the Parade and Mardi Gras party. Gay men, lesbian women and same sex couples are a very visible part of society. But despite this apparent liberal environment with progressive constitutional rights, gays in South Africa, as elsewhere, occupy a marginal space in society and face similar discrimination and marginalization. As Alberts said,

Hopefully through having won the right to express our happiness to be with each other, whether it’s people of the same sex or people across the color line, hopefully we’re
beginning to feel less fear in exploring what that right, or if it is a right, not fearing having it taken away, and allowing people to be more of who they are; and hopefully with that responsibility to gain a deeper awareness of what we hope for or desire as a nation, or a community (A. Alberts, personal communication, 06/03/03).

The history of division and resistance in South Africa makes the assertion of a gay identity particularly relevant. Within the context of a racial struggle dominated by a minority white government, apartheid legislated who you were, where you could live or work, and even whom you could date or marry. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (No. 55) of 1949 made marriages between whites and members of other racial groups illegal. The Immorality Act (No. 21) of 1950 banned sexual relations between whites and any non-whites. Stepping outside of pre-determined categories to assert a gay identity was to position oneself in a space of liminality (Turner, 1969), in defiance not only of mainstream views of sexuality, but also of apartheid's fixed notions of identity based on race and ethnicity (Gevisser & Cameron, 1995). The gay liberation movement arose of First World notions of sexual freedom and gay subculture, together with local imperatives of struggle, resistance and social transformation.
GLBT uses of media

The gay community has a long and rich history of media use and there has been much research on the representation of gays on radio and television. The BBC documentary, *A World in Your Ear* (08/23/02) highlighted gay and lesbian radio around the world. Profiled shows included *Leaping Lesbians* which airs on Stockholm Community Radio; *Out on the Rez*, which targets gay Native Americans; *Dykes on Mykes* airing on Brisbane community radio station; and the U.S. based show *Outspoken*, which airs on KDHX in St. Louis, Missouri, just to name a few. *In the Pink* was also featured on this program.

Gays and lesbians in the United States have used public access cable television and video extensively, with the blurring of the boundaries between audience and producers as a key factor in challenging mainstream television (Freedman, 1998). Similarly, Capsuto (2000) provides a comprehensive account of gay representation within the media in the United States, from the positive portrayals of the early 1970s, to more negative portrayals in the 1980s; showing how these negative portrayals were challenged through protests, negotiations and positive reinforcement. Several further studies show that television coverage of gays and lesbians in the United States largely perpetuates stereotypes, with little involvement of gay people in the process (Keller, 2002; Tropiano, 2002; Walters, 2001).
Similarly, United Kingdom based studies conclude that media portrayals of lesbians on television serials in the United Kingdom are stereotypical and that these serials do not portray their relationships as normal (Collins, 1994; Nye, et al., 1994). Johnson & Keith (2001) survey the explosion of gay and lesbian broadcast stations in the United States, England and Australia, through interviews with producers and program directors.

In the arena of print media, a formal network of newspapers and periodicals has been an essential part of gay subculture, particularly in North America, Britain and Europe (Bronski, 1984). In South Africa there have been several attempts to publish periodicals dealing with gay issues dating as far back as Equus in 1975, to publications such as Exit, published by the Gay Association of South Africa - GASA (Isaacs & McKendrick, 1992).

The advent of the Internet has seen an accompanying rise of web-based radio stations with gay content for a gay audience. Joy Melbourne 90.7FM and Free FM (www.freem.org.au/) in Australia, Generation Q (www.generationq.org) based at Rutgers University in New Jersey, Gay Radio in Sweden (www.rfsl.se/gayradio/ggr/) and Hong Kong’s first and only gay Internet radio and gay radio station, GayStation.com (www.gaystation.com.hk), to name a few. Moreover, the Rainbow Amateur Radio Association (www.rara.org) provides Internet based assistance to gay, lesbian and transgender radio producers in North America and Europe. In
Africa, Bush Radio’s *In the Pink* is arguably the only program produced for and by the gay and lesbian community.

**The radio program: In the Pink**

A number of programs were formed to serve individual interest groups at Bush Radio’s inception, some of which still air today. These included a program called *Memory Maker*, which used music and nostalgia to reach older people forcibly removed from the District Six after the Land Act of 1954; *Along Gender Avenue* gives a voice to women and deals with issues such as sexual harassment and rape; several programs over time have given a voice to local and black poets and writers; a host of specialist music programs featuring hip-hop, blues and jazz create a space for those communities to articulate themselves; several different children’s programs allow children and youth access to the airwaves to discuss issues which affect them; and *In the Pink* was created to give a voice to the gay community.

According to Louw,

> It was also felt that it’s needed simply to give people their rights. The programs changed a lot from being about your rights, what are you entitled to, etc to being more inclusive now. In five, six years time I see the program hopefully being absorbed [into all programs]. Now it deals a lot with identity issues and it’s also a support function for people. People in the townships don’t know whom to turn to if they think they’re gay (A. Louw, personal communication, 08/2002).

Certainly, the main motivation behind the creation of the program was as Alberts articulates, “a platform to voice the
struggle from the perspective of gay identity” (A. Alberts, personal communication, 06/03/03). The program has undergone several transitions over the years, as the political context in South Africa changed.

While this country was still struggling with issues of human rights, gay rights were probably up there amongst them, right on the top. And I think maybe the nature of the program has not necessarily changed, but certain issues in terms of discovering our identity have maybe shifted on some level. Certain emphasis has maybe shifted. Now I think it’s more about reclaiming an Africanized or an African sense of what it means to be gay. Almost from a cultural or a sense of home level where we’re still asking ourselves whether intrinsically within our cultural experience of who we are there is room for us to be gay. Where it’s not just a political pseudonym, or a politicized identity but a more personal identity that can be celebrated as much as anything else that we’ve celebrated in recent times (A. Alberts, personal communication, 06/03/03).

In the Pink airs every Thursday night at 9pm. Topics have included: gay rights, coverage of the gay and lesbian film festival, homophobia and growing up gay, among many others. Programs have also dealt with how parents can cope with their children coming out and what teenagers should do if they feel suicidal as a result of their sexuality. The program follows a talk show format with interview guests, a news bulletin featuring gay related items, and a predominance of music with perceived gay themes of identity or courage, by gay artists or by those that subvert traditional sexual boundaries. The program is produced and presented by members of Cape Town’s GLBT community, most of
whom are members of gay service organizations. *In the Pink* also
has a website at www.inthepink.co.za, that provides information
to supplement the radio programs and gives listeners the
opportunity to email feedback.

During June 2003 the program started discussions with the
*Triangle Project*, a gay and lesbian service organization, to form
a partnership, which would allow the program to draw on their
numerous resources, including human resources to expand the
production team. The *Triangle project* states its mission as to
“empower gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered persons
through health and social development programs that promote
individual and community well-being and pride, and build
individual and community capacity” (www. triangle.org.za). In
general, the production team has tended to be larger than most
other programs (more than 3 people), with the team often
comprising up to 10 members.

I attended the very first meeting between *In the Pink* and
*Triangle Project* during which the two organizations discussed how
each envisaged their collaboration. While Bush Radio and *In the
Pink* have always worked with local organizations and non-
governmental organizations, this particular meeting was held
specifically to “save” In the Pink. With Raynard indicating that
he was planning to resign his position as producer of the
program, there was some concern about the fact that the numbers
of the production team were dwindling. In particular, it had been hard to involve black women in the program; and one solution would be a concrete partnership with an organization like Triangle Project, to increase numbers. The main issue at this and subsequent meetings seem to be explaining the roles that members will be required to play within the production team. The representatives from Triangle Project seemed eager to get on air, while the Bush Radio/In the Pink representatives seemed reluctant to yield control, and more eager to encourage people to fill roles such as researcher and field producer; and to explain why these are important to the program. The relationship between the radio station and the program was also discussed during these meetings. This refers to the fact that previous production teams of In the Pink had sought funding and sponsorship without informing the radio station, and without using its banner, merely referring to themselves as “In the Pink Radio on 89.5fm”. The outcome of these meetings was a formal training program for the new members, led by Bush Radio’s Broadcast Training Institute.
In the Pink and community

Like many of the other programs on Bush Radio, particularly the ones discussed in this dissertation, In the Pink is about the creation of a particular community. Instead of targeting a perceived homogenous population, the radio station targets diverse groups within this population with its rhizomatic programming. Alternative spaces of resistance are created through this kind of programming, of which In the Pink is one example. Former producer Raynard explained how the program creates an alternate space for the legitimization of gay identities,

People always ask me why In the Pink, doesn’t it create exclusion? Maybe it does, but I feel that if you as a gay individual have something that recognizes you and your group, you feel empowered in that way. Maybe sometime in the future when there’s proper integration then your gay issues can be spread out to other programs. So if you get people coming in and reinforcing and endorsing that kind of different sexual orientation on a community radio station, then it does have a large impact.

This may be one reason to have a program dedicated to gay rights. But as with all other social issues such as health, AIDS and gender, Bush Radio attempts to integrate these throughout its programming. Instead of relegating an issue to a one or two hour slot per week, the station attempts to integrate these issues throughout its programming. This is achieved partly through its campaign of public service announcements, pre-packaged thirty and sixty second jingles and stings that are scheduled to air every
10 minutes, and which are played throughout all programming, including music. This is also achieved by talking about gay rights on programs other than In the Pink as well. Topics related to sexual equality have been dealt with on the daily talk show, Sakisizwe (Building the nation), which airs between 12-2pm; and issues of youth sexuality are dealt with by CREW.

Furthermore, In the Pink plays an important role in the sensitization of Bush Radio staff who might otherwise have had little or even no contact at all with gay individuals. The station environment provides a space where gay people can interact without fear of discrimination. Interaction among the group and with other volunteers on the premises is relaxed and easy-going. The more flamboyant members of the team are sometimes regarded with bemusement, but I never witnessed any derogatory comments or jokes during my fieldwork periods. Gay volunteer producers were always accorded the same respect as all other producers. Moreover, the program itself attempts to be inclusive by dealing with topics that might affect or interest other individuals too. As Raynard said,

It also extends further than just the gay community. We have a mental and physical health slot – last night we did schizophrenia and bipolar – so it caters for more than just the gay community (personal communication, 08/23/02).
Indeed, the program appeals to a broader audience including heterosexuals. *In the Pink* has always been one of my favorite programs on Bush Radio, for its entertainment value, and because it is a well produced program. Many of the Bush Radio staff listens to the program and they often discuss content of the program the next day. When asked about the program, staff members express pride to be associated with the only radio station in the country that acknowledges gay relationships to the extent that the gay community is given space on the airwaves.

Both straight and gay teenage listeners are also targeted. Raynard said:

You can have your teenager who’s just slightly curious, and without having to come out, can ask questions or can listen to the radio in the corner of their room in a private place and still get the information, without having to go through the traumas of coming out (L. Raynard, personal communication, 08/23/02).
While affirming a gay identity, the program does not alienate straight listeners. Straight interviewees often appear on the show as well. Another part of this broad audience appeal is that while many of the people involved in the program are gay activists, the program does not take any particularly political stance. Raynard said:

Our approach is to cast light on a specific issue. I like to just shed light on issues instead of being a lobbyist for gay rights (personal communication, 08/23/02).

For example, one particular program focused on an organization called the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA), which was trying to form a political party to compete in national elections. GALA believed that there was an increased need to lobby in parliament despite post-apartheid gains such as a progressive constitution. Most other gay organizations were against this position. The production team scheduled interviews with GALA representatives, as well as representatives from opposing organizations, leaving the audience to make the final decision.

The program also occasionally steps outside the boundaries of radio to participate in other activities that may be appealing to listeners.

In the boldness of In the Pink we initiated an Interfaith service as part of Pride Week last year. We sense the need from people to speak about religion and gay people still being spiritual. So we organized this Interfaith service and we had five different world religions present; and it was held in the Catholic church right next to Bronx [gay club] which is in the gay village (L. Raynard, personal communication, 08/23/02).

Producers intend the audience to extract specific information from the program, e.g. specific information about events in the gay community, such as meetings or film festivals. Also,
producers want to create a supportive and enabling environment, and want listeners to feel that their choice of sexual orientation is supported. Producers also want listeners to be entertained by the program. Discussion topics and music are often approached with humor.

**The intersection of race and class**

Issues of race and class frequently intersect with sexual identity. The volunteer team of *In the Pink* appears to be run by a largely middle-class group of people, many of them members of gay organizations or activists within the gay community. This raises several issues, including frequent claims by the general population that being gay is a white, middle-class luxury, or that it is not African to be gay. The problem of class permeates throughout Bush Radio programming since it is usually those of a slightly more advantaged economic class that have the resources which allow them to volunteer their services.

The claim of African culture excluding the possibility of being gay has been dealt with repeatedly on the air, with many discussions about what it means to be gay and whether or not one can be a “gay African” i.e. whether one can identify with African culture and simultaneously choose an alternate sexual orientation.

We’ve gone into black gay communities and had a program called the black gays and there are lot of men sleeping
with men and not necessarily identifying themselves as gay (L. Raynard, personal communication, 08/23/02).

In the Pink has explored the normalization of homosexual relationships among black communities, particularly on the mines in South Africa where migrant workers were removed from the wives and families in the rural areas for long periods of time, leading to homosexuality as an alternate sexual practice (Isaacs & McKendrick, 1992). In fact, homosexuality in Cape Town dates back to the drag shows and gay dances that were all part of a vibrant gay scene in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly among the so-called Colored mixed race population in District Six (Helm, 1973). For In the Pink, this is a constant issue, with which the producers grapple on, and off-air.

For Alberts, there is no doubt that there is space for a gay identity within the geographical space of Africa:

There’s always the question of whether being gay is African - the concept or the idea of it being un-African among sectors of the community who perceive themselves as being representatives of what African is. There seems to be a very deep and rich celebration within African communities if one looks at the turnout at competitions like Miss Gay Western Cape, of precisely that -being gay, that it is a celebrated phenomena or expression within culture or within African culture. The current winner is a Setswana man who is gay (A. Alberts, personal communication, 06/03/03).

When asked by a local newspaper how she reconciles her African cultural belief systems with her sexual orientation, black lesbian activist Nomfundo Luphondwana said:

Culture is as dynamic and challenging in Africa as it is anywhere in the world. Our problem at the moment, as black
Africans, is that we're taught to think of culture as being cast in stone. "It's simply not true that homosexuality is un-African. Why should it be? Part of our pre-colonial history included a knowledge and acceptance of people who had same sex relationships (in Ferguson, 2001).

Similarly, Zanaele Muholi is a computer web-page builder specializing in women's issues for the Behind the Mask, a website for gay and lesbian affairs in Southern Africa. In a local interview she talked about being Zulu and gay.

Many Zulus, or those who aggressively espouse what is projected as Zulu culture, accuse those of us in same-sex relationships of being possessed by demons and in need of treatment by a sangoma. There's a lack of understanding generally around these issues because most people don't know how we feel and pigeonhole us as just going through a phase or, naively, as being frustrated by members of the opposite sex (in Ferguson, 2001).

One particular program that I listened to interviewed a black hermaphrodite. Talking to Raynard about this afterwards he said that:

She told us about her experience about being a hermaphrodite and how at the age of 17 her mother came home, and they decided to remove her penis and testicles and make her a woman or choose that sex for her. And a couple of years later she realized actually it’s the male sex that is most dominant, so now she’s a lesbian. Hearing her life story and the reactions that we got on the website, it brought some of the presenters to tears (L. Raynard, personal communication, 08/23/02).

This issue of race is also dealt with off air. Bush Radio constantly pressures the production team to remain diverse in terms of race and gender. I stood in as studio engineer one Thursday evening, and witnessed the presence of black lesbians in
the studio who were hesitant about going on air, and preferred to engage in tasks such as compiling music or doing research.

There was a strong gap between the lesbian and gay male population and part of the benefits of HIV and AIDS, if you can put it that way, was actually closing the gap because you find a lot of white lesbian women fighting for HIV or AIDS or fighting for the right of people living with HIV, and that closed the gap. But what still exists is that a lot of the NGOs and gay organizations are still led by white lesbian woman (L. Raynard, personal communication, 08/23/02).

It seems as though the composition of the production team constantly shifts based on the high turnover of volunteers at Bush Radio. When I first observed the program, the production team consisted mainly of white lesbians. Currently, the production team seems to consist of white gay men and black lesbian women. Certainly there is no way to create an ideal balance of individuals that work on a volunteer driven program at a community radio station. What remains important is that In the Pink attempts to present a picture of the diversity of the gay community in Cape Town, simultaneously including heterosexual people. One listener that I spoke to after the program aired said that:

The program is really amazing to me in that I never thought I could be gay because I didn’t like to dress like a moffie [local slang for effeminate or gay man], you know in women’s clothing. But through listening to the radio program I realized that there are many different ways you can articulate a gay identity as a colored man” (personal communication, July 2003).

Furthermore, in society where gay identity is also still often associated with whiteness or affluence, it is important
that *In the Pink* airs on a radio station that targets a township, largely black and working class audience.

**Conclusion**

Through the program *In the Pink*, Bush Radio once again creates a discontinuous space for the articulation of a marginal identity. Much like its broadcast of kwaito music, or its creation of a platform for youth identity, *In the Pink*, creates a space for the affirmation of an alternative sexual identity. Through the radio program, the GLBT movement in Cape Town extends their struggles for equality and acceptance. Radio becomes an extension of the resistance that occurs in the individual; as well as an extension of collective action such as street marches and protests, or debates at policy level. The program builds community by bringing people together to produce the program, by creating a community of audience members who listen to the program, and by creating a synergy between the producers and the audience members.

The gay community in South Africa, particularly in Cape Town, had already succeeded in building a powerful independent community at spatial, economic, cultural and political levels. The creation of an additional space of resistance, radio, impacts upon the larger struggle for gay liberation, by allowing the simultaneous coexistence of personal and public forms of resistance. Furthermore, the radio program acts as a bridge
between the GLBT community and others, both within the radio station and on the air.
Chapter 10: Conclusions

This chapter offers final thoughts and conclusions on the dissertation process and on Bush Radio. This dissertation has traced the history of Bush Radio, starting with its origins as the cassette production and distribution facility, CASET; and ending more than a decade later with its first four-year community broadcast license. The research question, “What political structures and objective social conditions gave rise to Bush Radio?” has been answered by tracing the emergence of Bush Radio within the broader political and social context of apartheid South Africa.

Documenting a people’s history of Bush Radio, this dissertation attempted to tell its story through the voices of the station’s founders and staff, together with other sources of historical data. While the apartheid state constructed essentialist racial and ethnic categories, CASET and later Bush Radio, constantly positioned themselves in a space of liminality (Turner, 1969) to interrogate and redefine these categories. In post-apartheid South Africa, Bush Radio both reflects and to some extent shapes broader societal concerns of community, social and national identity. Privileging an instrumentalist approach, this dissertation has shown the connections between ideology, politics and economics as they intertwine to form the industrial
structure, the political environment, and the cultural product of broadcasting (Meehan, 1986).

Furthermore, the methodology of this dissertation has been rhizomatic. Using traditional ethnographic methods of participant observation and in-depth interviewing, I used the approach of narrative ethnography to incorporate my experiences into the ethnographic description and analysis of Bush Radio, emphasizing the ethnographic dialogue or encounter between the staff members and myself. Guided by the rhizomatic theoretical approach of Deleuze and Guattari, this dissertation has drawn on a range of theories from different disciplines. I propose that community radio may be best understood through the theoretical lens of Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s writings on the rhizome, as well as feminist scholar Donna Haraway’s work on the cyborg. I intended to invert the usual hierarchical, arboric tendency to ownership and authority in my ethnography of Bush Radio through a rhizomatic approach. I hope that this has been achieved by writing a text that is accessible to the members of Bush Radio, as opposed to one that excludes the very subjects of the study. In this way I own the text as researcher, but I share ownership with all my subjects of study. Through this rhizomatic and ethnographic approach to Bush Radio, it is clear that the central themes that run through this radio station are community and identity. In terms of my research questions: “How has the nature
of community changed over time and who is the community that Bush Radio speaks to”; and “Does Bush Radio play a role in building community?” – this dissertation has shown that Bush Radio assists in the creation of various communities in Cape Town, as well as providing a bridge between artificially constructed or imagined communities, to build a new common identity in a post-apartheid South Africa, as it has been demonstrated through the discussions on hip-hop, kwaito, children, youth and the GLBT. This dissertation has also shown that a rhizomatic approach to community radio, as well as to the study of community radio, makes for a more comprehensive study of such organizations. Furthermore, the station operates as an organism working towards a common goal, with members participating in collective action e.g. the Bush Against War protests.

This dissertation has also used the theoretical concepts of communitas and habitus to deconstruct the term community, outlining how this category was politically invented and how it carries certain political connotations in South Africa. Furthermore, it has argued that the development of Bush Radio in South Africa can be explicated as the formation of an alternative communication medium by a liminal group of activists who developed a sense of communitas in response to apartheid structures. This communitas has been maintained by the habitus of the city in which Bush Radio operates, thus leading to the
consideration of community as a concept “under-erasure”, in a Derridean sense, constantly challenged yet currently used and widely understood.

This communitas among the staff who work at Bush Radio is still experienced today, with staff members working towards and held together by common goals. However, this internal cohesion does not translate into external organization. The elites who perform on the radio do not share communitas with the intended audience. Perhaps this is the next step for Bush Radio and for community radio: to work more concertedly toward building stronger relationships with and among the groups that they set out to serve, especially since, as Brenda Leonard said, they see themselves as a social movement.

If you look at Bush Radio you don’t only see a radio station but you see a radio station that’s involved in the community and that had the courage to adapt to the conditions within the community. We call it a social movement. The issues we address whether its gender, whether its political issues, labor issues, all the issues we address from a social perspective. So we think it’s more a social movement than a radio station (B. Leonard, personal communication, July 2003).

In terms of the questions posed by Hocheimer (chapter 2), Bush Radio is not a conduit for all who step before the microphone. Instead, certain individuals become representatives of their communities, whether geographical or political. As
mentioned previously, the story of Bush Radio is rhizomatic. This is it, at this particular moment in time, but it may change drastically over the next few years. In terms of the research question, “How has Bush Radio transformed over time?”, this dissertation has clearly outlined its growth from CASET into a radio station. As current director, Ibrahim, said,

> It grew into what it is today. We’ve never been able to plan Bush Radio’s future. The future was always planned by the needs. But it became so top-heavy where the tail was wagging the dog, so to speak. Most of the projects that we are now involved with are far bigger than Bush Radio itself, the little radio station (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, July 2003).

As a result of this, the station has diversified into a project called Bushworks, which is still currently still under discussion by the staff and board of directors. But as Ibrahim explains, this is an acronym that encompasses the various components of the organization.

> There’re four projects now in Bush Works. It’s B-U-S-H, the first one is Bush Radio on its own, the second one, U, is Upliftment projects, this is the Township Heroes Program where we make it clear to young people that they don’t have to have the drug dealers and the gangsters as their models. It’s also our disaster relief project where we have to collect 3000 blankets every winter, and canned goods, in case of emergencies. Then there’s the “S”, which is scholarship; we have the BTI, we have training projects on a regular basis, starting from the beginning in 1993. And then the “H” is “Human Potential projects”, and that essentially is the development of children and youth in both social awareness and broadcasting, how broadcasting can be used, particularly radio can be used to develop these social programs, that’s the H, the human potential side of Bush Works (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, 07/03).
This dissertation has looked at several key themes that emerged in Bush Radio: children and youth radio, hip-hop and entertainment-education, kwaito and black identity, and the use of radio by the GLBT community. In particular, these chapters have answered the research question, “Who are the people that make up Bush Radio and what is their collective and individual consciousness and identity?” Hopefully these individuals are present throughout this dissertation.

In the case of radio for children and youth, this dissertation argued that the on and off-air projects targeting children and youth, provide an outlet for their creative and political expression, Bush Radio helps youth in the new South Africa to form a kind of generational consciousness, providing a physical and ideological space in which they can forge a common identity, develop a sense of community, and gain membership to a new social generation. Furthermore, the presentation of these ideas on the airwaves allows intergenerational awareness, allowing parents and other adults to listen to the program and to increase their awareness of the discourse of the youth.

In terms of hip-hop and entertainment-education, this dissertation argued that Bush Radio’s use of hip-hop music, both on and off the air, to target youth with messages about HIV/AIDS, further builds community and uses an innovative approach to
health education. This dissertation also dealt with kwaito music, showing how this new hybrid musical form developed out of hip-hop in post-apartheid South Africa. In particular I intend in this chapter to demonstrate how Bush Radio’s use of kwaito music establishes it as a site for the articulation of variable identities; and succeeds in building a more unified youth community than hip-hop, although its potential for use in entertainment-education strategies remains untapped.

In the case of uses of radio by the GLBT community, this dissertation argued that the program In the Pink creates a space for the articulation of a marginal identity, and yet simultaneously builds gay community while acting as a bridge between gay and straight. Through the program In the Pink, Bush Radio once again creates a discontinuous space for the articulation of a marginal identity. Much like its broadcast of kwaito music, or its creation of a platform for youth identity, In the Pink, creates a space for the affirmation of an alternative sexual identity. Through the radio program, the GLBT movement in Cape Town extends their struggles for equality and acceptance. Radio becomes an extension of the resistance that occurs in the individual; as well as an extension of collective action such as street marches and protests, or debates at policy level. The program builds community by bringing people together to produce the program, by creating a community of audience
members who listen to the program, and by creating a synergy between the producers and the audience members. These projects all answer the research question of whether Bush Radio achieves all it sets out to achieve.

**Further research**

This dissertation is probably by far the most comprehensive case study ever conducted of one community radio station in South Africa. But it is by no means complete. As mentioned in chapter 6, children were not interviewed because the Institutional Review Board categorizes research conducted with minors (children under eight) as Level III, i.e. “possible risk to human subjects.” Further research should involve in-depth interviews and more participant observation with the children of CREW. Further research should also conduct more in-depth interviews with more individuals involved in *In the Pink*, and gay identity issues in Cape Town.

This dissertation has also not explored all the musical forms that are heard on Bush Radio, or the roles that they may play in terms of identity construction or community building. For example, drum ’n bass or jungle is one musical form that is expanding, with the country’s only specialized drum ’n bass show airing on Tuesday nights between midnight and 2am. The show is produced by Sublime, one of Cape Town’s drum ’n bass collectives, who play locally produced music that cannot be heard elsewhere.
Drum ’n bass emerged in England in the early 1990s and is digitally created electronic music. With its overt reggae, dub, and rhythm and bass influences, drum ’n bass is one of the most rhythmically complex of all forms of dance music, relying on extremely fast polyrhythms, breakbeats and looped asynchronous rhythms. The Jungle Show producers are all young white South Africans and jungle music is not heard in South Africa’s black townships, this does indicate yet another community that is represented on Bush Radio. Similarly, this dissertation has not explored Bush Radio’s Monday night program of electronic music called ‘ardkore.

Further research could explore these musical forms as they relate to identity construction in South Africa through Bush Radio. Studies of jungle music in the United Kingdom have demonstrated its role in the assertion of a marginal black identity (Gilroy, 1993; Hebdige, 1987; Quinn, 2002). Other studies have shown how rave trance music in South Africa critique the dominant social order (Martin, 1999; Marlin-Curiel, 2001). In particular, it would be interesting to explore the appearances of coloured groups that rap in gangster Afrikaans at these events.

This link between music and identity is essential to constructions of culture in South Africa. Further research should also focus more on race, culture and identity in South Africa, particularly in Cape Town. This dissertation has briefly
mentioned the cultural dynamics of black and coloured communities in Cape Town, without going into too much detail. Further research should explore the constructions of coloured identity in Cape Town within the context of postcolonial studies, exploring to what extend it is proclaimed and reclaimed. A full exploration of the politics and psychology of coloured identity may be essential to any further studies of media or society in Cape Town.

Furthermore, the picture of Bush Radio that I have painted has been generally positive, highlighting the role the station plays in building and bridging community, and most importantly, transforming the nature of the broadcast industry in South Africa. As Ibrahim said,

For the most part, radio was used here to speak at people, not with people. Radio was used here to deliver edicts from the government. Radio was used here as jukeboxes to lull the people into a false security, so they can forget their inconveniences, their struggles and hardships. That’s how radio was used in the past. We’ve changed that (Z. Ibrahim, personal communication, 08/03).

However, further research could focus on some of the shortcomings of community radio in order to improve them. For example, issues of funding, adequate participation and community empowerment are not explored here. Further research could explore this through conducting quantitative and qualitative audience research.
Conclusion

Hopefully, this study of Bush Radio has shown the potential of participatory communication projects for the development of the community radio sector globally, and particularly within South Africa. It is clear that the community radio model can work in South Africa – the example of Bush Radio demonstrates this clearly – perhaps it is time to transfer this model to other contexts.

What we see through this case study is that the organization of Bush Radio has transformed over time as the political context in South Africa has changed over time. CASET transformed into a radio station from a radical, subversive audiocassette production facility challenging the status quo of the apartheid government. Licensed soon after the first democratic elections and the official end of apartheid in 1994, Bush Radio at first, like other politically based NGOs, organizations and media groups, struggled to redefine its role in a new democracy. In the 1990s it firmly entrenched its role in the breaking down of old apartheid notions of community to assist in the building of new, more representative communities, which are both individual, yet connected through the medium of radio.

Bush Radio builds bridges between various communities, allowing audiences to move between these communities with relative fluidity and ease. While there were many spaces of
resistance during apartheid, the dissertation positions Bush Radio as one of these spaces of resistance. Though not a traditional space of resistance such as a political organization, CASET represented a space in-between and beyond more traditional forms of resistance. Similarly, in 2003, Bush Radio continues to represent a form of resistance. Many of the socio-economic inequalities of the old regime still exist even though a democratically elected government runs South Africa.

Today Bush Radio continues to act as a space of resistance, working toward the conscientizing of its audiences towards greater understandings of global poverty and the integrated nature of the world economy; while providing information on everyday issues such as health, HIV/AIDS or gender sensitization as well as providing a space for the articulation of popular views. Bush Radio has become an autonomous power center, and a space while allows cultural identities to continue their processes of becoming, rather than assuming a state of being.
Epilogue

When I started writing this dissertation I thought that I was setting out as a critical outsider to tell the “truth” about the history of Bush Radio. Two years and over two hundred pages later, I’ve discovered many things, the first of them being that there is no objective truth, or any kind of truth for that matter, in reflexive, ethnographic, work.

I find myself writing this epilogue with kwaito music playing through my headphones, streamed online from the Johannesburg based South African radio station, YFM. Wearing the same bright red Bush Radio T-shirt I wore to Perseverance High School not too long ago, I find myself mesmerized by the pictures of Bush Radio and Table Mountain plastered in my workspace. What comes to mind immediately is that I could be accused of “going native” – after all, I am now, more than ever, a part of the organization that I thought would be only a focus of study. But I conclude that it would be superfluous to argue the merits or demerits of my involvement in Bush Radio, or speculate as to how differently these 200 odd pages may have turned out if I had not been a “backyard researcher.”

What we have in the end is, as all research is, merely a story, one of many. As I mentioned at the outset, there are many interpretations of history told through a multiplicity of stories. This particular one, I hope, is as close to a mirror
image as is possible at this moment in time. I have written the story of Bush Radio as I saw it during the fieldwork period, and there are sure to be many who disagree with my particular perspective. Sadly, just before I sat down to finish writing this epilogue I received an email from Adrian Louw informing me that Edric Gorfinkel died of a heart attack on Sunday October 6th 2003. Gorfinkel, a key figure in the story of Bush Radio, has not had the opportunity to read this account of his project, but I dedicate this work to him and hope that he would have enjoyed reading it.

I had always wanted to be involved in revolution or social change of some sort, and have always felt that I “missed out” on the opportunity to participate in political action during the height of resistance against apartheid. However, perhaps Leonard is correct when she said the struggle is not over.

At that stage we knew who the enemy was. It was the White Nationalist Party government and we had to overthrow them. Now, we have different enemies. Poverty is an enemy of our people, we have HIV/AIDS as an enemy of our people, the fact that people don’t have access to things like water and electricity, and housing for instance, basic needs that aren’t met, they’re definitely issues that we need to raise as a radio station. Yes, we have a democratically elected government, but in some ways the people that we serve still live in the conditions that they did (B. Leonard, personal communication, July 2003).

So while Bush Radio attempts to fight a new struggle against the new emerging enemies presented by the era of
globalization, corporate domination, and the liberal democracy; perhaps researchers like myself can play a role in this by documenting their activities from the inside. Community radio has always been described as the “voice of the voiceless”. However, perhaps this kind of research is really what gives a voice to the voiceless – telling the story of community radio projects from their own perspective, using the voices of the community radio workers, and including as much detail as possible – as opposed to telling it from the sterile, traditional vantage point of theory at the expense of praxis.

As I write this conclusion, my mind wanders to my planned move back to Cape Town to take up a full-time job at the radio station. And so I find that I’ve come round full-circle, in true realization of the linearity in methodology, theory, thinking and life that I rejected in favor of rhizomatics.
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Appendix 1. Lyrics to Canibus' *AIDS is gold, HIV is platinum.*
From [http://www.musicsonglyrics.com](http://www.musicsonglyrics.com)

Yo, Yo!
I just appeared outta no where
1980 was the year, engineered as a biological weapon of warfare
Now with this I generate with more fear
Even though back then nobody cared and people wasn't a scared
I never use to get so much attention
Most of the top contenders at the time I was good friends with
For instance my man small pox was hot
He you to soundscan ten thousand a week and that was a lot
That nigga hepatitis, he was hyper then me
He use to get between twelve and twenty thousand a week
Alcohol was the neighborhood star
Bubbling, drugs had niggaz juggling
All kinds of controlled substances
My man cancer was like Charles Manson
Cigarettes almost made the surgeon general ban them
Homicide was buggin' cause he had guns to amp them
And I was on the low amp cause I had a plant kid

Chorus
Aids is gold and HIV was platinum
Sit down and ask them where you get your facts from
Five hundred thousand niggas in the hood with it
And a million more niggas is getting ready to get it
(repeat)

Yo
Now that millions is dead IM considered wide spread
Number one on the top ten
And considered a world wide threat
To all the kids, thirteen to twenty three tryin
Safe sex, unsafe sex, you niggaz need to use latex
H-I-V will progress to A-I-D-S
And transform your warm blooded bones to dry flesh
By stressing the immune system
Permiscuase men and women trying to avoid,
Getting the micro organism in them
From running up in they bra
Ready and willing, a couple of minutes of a good feeling
Is what'll kill them
Break ya body down in steps
Breathe for breathe and the hospital wit less then a dozen
C-cells left

Chorus (repeat 2x)
Verse 3:
Yo
I went from killing them softly to killing them harshly
Minorities from twenty to forty cant afford to ignore me
They do my dirty work for me
Going to raunchy ass parties where they be having
Orgies to transport me
Threw the semen and blood, needles and drugs
Choose which one of the demons in evil you trust
Cause the only way I could be detected
Is by getting tested and most people
Don’t question the person they having sex with
Is to whether or not they infected
Even the people you already slept wit
Wouldn't suspect that they can catch it
Forty percent of the aids patients is afro Americans
And we only twelve percent of the population
That statement is a fact ,Latinos and blacks face it
It came straight from the world health organization
Its the iron fist, scientist, last rhyme kyatrist
Here to diagnose that we dying quick

Chorus: (repeat 5x)