RECONCEPTUALIZING LATIN AMERICAN THEORIES OF
ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA PRACTICE:
AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF BOLIVIAN TIN MINERS' RADIO

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

The Ohio State University
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Approved by
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To my Bolivian collaborators,

the compañeros of Radio Nacional de Huanuni,

Radio Pío XII, and the Centro de Investigación y Servicio Popular
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I want to thank my adviser, Dr. Brenda Dervin, a superb theorist who never underestimated my potentialities nor overestimated my capacities. Dr. Dervin's generous commitment of time, energy, support, and encouragement of this project—from early discussions of Latin American communication theory, through numerous funding proposals, and down to the final drafts—is something for which I will remain forever grateful. I also want to thank my other committee members, Dr. Sonja K. Foss and Dr. Joseph Pilotta. I value Dr. Foss' detailed readings of my papers and draft chapters over the years and admire her critical comments of my work. Her efforts have helped me to write and think more clearly. Dr. Pilotta pushed me to deal directly with the methodological tensions in this project, which resulted in the writing of chapter three, an addition that has made this a better dissertation. Additionally, I thank Dr. Eric S. Fredin for his continued encouragement and enthusiasm for this project—even when mine waned—and Dr. James Darsey for his comments on early drafts of this dissertation.

I have been helped enormously over the years by fellow graduate students but want to single out the Thursday evening critical/cultural rap group for its helpful comments and suggestions on the research that I have presented over the past three years. Members have included Rich DiCenzo, Sam Fassbinder, John Higgins, Priya Jaikumar Mahey, Jamie Newmeyer, Chris Rajendram, Pete Strimer, and Mi-Kyung Sung. I want to pay special thanks to two other members of the group—Kate Clark and Vickie Rutledge Shields—for their careful reading and thoughtful commenting on recent chapters and for talking me through the dissertation experience. Additionally, I have
learned a great deal with my phenomenology seminar partners and good friends Kellie Hay, Dave Lawrence, and Chris Richter, and have appreciated and enjoyed the social and moral support of fellow graduate students Gail Chryslee, Lynn Hallstein, Terry Monnett, Roopali Mukherjee, Art Ranney, and Tom Schumacher.

This dissertation could not have been completed without the support of many people in Bolivia, who are too numerous to name and who must remain anonymous for their own privacy. They are the people of Radio Nacional de Huanuni, Radio Pío XII, and the Centro de Investigación y Servicio Popular to whom this dissertation is dedicated. In addition, I thank Dr. Luis Ramiro Beltrán, Lupe Cajías, Ronald Grebe, Gridvia Kúncar and Victor Baldivieso of La Paz for helping me to make contacts at the tin miners' radio stations that were critical to the success of this project. The financial burden of this study was lightened considerably through the generous support of my fieldwork by the following programs: the Committee on Institutional Cooperation's International Studies Fellows Program, Champaign, IL; The Ohio State University Latin American Studies Program Foreign Field Research Grant; and The Ohio State University Latin American Studies Program-Tinker Foundation Foreign Field Research Grant.

Finally, I want to thank my parents, August and Janet Huesca, for their continued interest in my education, my wife, Myung-Hye Kim, for her support at home, and my daughter Gabi, who kept me grounded in the important aspects of living outside of academia.
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Huesca, R., & Dervin, B. (1994). Theories of and for practice in Latin American

Toward a communication theory of dialogue. Media Development, 40, 2, 54-61.

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Communication
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CHAPTER I
THE LATIN AMERICAN CHALLENGE TO COMMUNICATION THEORY:
LITERATURE REVIEW, ANALYSIS, AND COMMUNICATION RECONCEIVED

Introduction

Since the early 1970s, Latin American communication scholars have developed theories of and for media practice that have strived for both participatory structures and transformative consequences leading to societies that are more egalitarian, just, and dignified. Collected under the umbrella term "alternative communication," this body of research constitutes a long and rich tradition known for combining critical and empirical approaches that honor the dialectical nature of theory and practice.¹ Despite its rich tradition and many theoretical contributions to notions of alternative communication, this literature finds itself faced with a conceptual difficulty that stems from both its intellectual history and recent political changes sweeping Latin America.

Historically, this research has developed in opposition to dominant, sender-receiver notions of communication that reached Latin America primarily through development programs of the 1950s and 1960s. This body of scholarship developed by generating a series of conceptual dualisms of the dominant and the alternative concerning communication processes (e.g., monologue-dialogue) and outcomes (e.g., domination-liberation), which ultimately resulted in the conflation of the two. The conflation of

¹ Critical research in this area has been named, among other things, "horizontal," "grass roots," "participatory," "democratic," and "alternative communication" (McAnany, 1986). Throughout this study, I will use the terms "participatory" and "alternative" interchangeably. See Protz (1991) for a discussion of the nuances between the terms participatory and alternative.
processes and outcomes accounts for the conceptual difficulty currently faced by alternative communication researchers, as they have been unable to explain empirical evidence of alternative processes that result in dominant outcomes and of dominant processes that result in alternative outcomes. This difficulty has been confounded further by the elimination of authoritarian political regimes during the 1980s--regimes that provided a foil for dualistic concepts. The purpose of this dissertation is to break apart the process-outcome conflation to develop a better understanding of communication practice oriented toward participation and transformation. Specifically, I propose to study an exemplary media practice--Bolivian tin miners' radio--and examine how communication practices achieve both participation and transformation.

The importance of this study reaches beyond Latin America and the particular concerns of alternative communication theory. In the United States, for example, scholars share a concern that the democratic system is in crisis due in large part to the dominant media system (Chomsky, 1989; Kellner, 1990). This concern is echoed worldwide, where scholars are searching to develop understandings of communication that will help revitalize democratic systems (Becker, Hedebro, & Paldan, 1986; Keane, 1991; Raboy & Bruck, 1989; Splichal & Wasko, 1993). This concern is also evident in recent scholarship devoted to understanding the role of communication in reconstituting the public sphere (Aufderheide, 1991; Calhoun, 1992; Habermas, 1989; Hauser, 1987; Peters & Cmiel 1991). All of this attention is fixed on concerns shared by Latin American alternative communication scholars (participation, transformation), yet their work is seldom acknowledged by North Atlantic researchers. Nevertheless, many of the same intellectual paths and struggles are being walked and fought--the move toward dualistic thinking, the difficulty of process and outcome conflation. The findings from my study will contribute to this larger body of work concerned with communication and democracy because of the overlapping concerns between the two literatures.
In order to break apart the process-outcome conflation, I have adopted the theoretic position of communication-as-procedure, which is apparent in much of the Latin American research but never explicitly identified as such.\(^2\) By adopting this position (which I describe later in this chapter), I am trying to zero in on dynamic communication processes that transcend dualistic categories and allow communication actions to be traced to notions such as participation and transformation. The specific questions guiding this dissertation are the following:

- How are communication procedures—freed of the dualism and conflation legacy—related to participation and transformation in the practices at Bolivian tin miners’ radio stations?

- How do the relationships between communication, participation, and transformation inform the contradictions that have made the process-outcome conflation problematic for contemporary alternative communication theory?

- What direction can be given to practitioners concerning communication procedures that are both participatory and transformative?

Although I maintain a close allegiance to scholarship from Latin America in constructing my theoretical position, I acknowledge related research in non–Latin American alternative communication studies, as well. This additional body of research is helpful at expanding the relevance of this study and at pointing out the unique strengths of the Latin American scholarship.

This chapter is a synthesis of the alternative communication literatures from Latin America and elsewhere. The review leads to a specific problem in the literature and points to the communication-as-procedure theoretic, which guided this study. The remainder of this chapter is divided into seven main sections as follows:

- History of the Latin American Critique—an account of the early concepts in alternative communication theories including their roots and characteristics that distinguish this body of work as unique.

\(^2\) The construct, communication-as-procedure, will be developed more fully later in this chapter. I have taken this term from Dervin and Clark (1993).
• The Evolution of Alternative Communication Theory—the development of communication dualisms and cracks within the literature.

• North Atlantic Alternative Communication Studies—parallel concerns from studies outside of Latin America that inform the literature.

• Moving toward Communication Procedures—evidence from within both literatures justifying the reach for the communication-as-procedure theoretic.

• The Communication-as-Procedure Theoretic—an explication of this central construct used to interrogate the problem in the alternative communication literature.

• Tin Miners' Radio in Bolivia—an introduction of the exemplar of this study, review of relevant studies, and justification for its selection.

• Outline of Chapters—an overview of subsequent chapters in this dissertation.

History of the Latin American Critique

In the mid-1970s, Latin American scholars challenged the traditional conceptualization of communication as a sender-receiver transmission and called for the development of an alternative theory to guide media practice. These initial challenges precipitated a flood of critical research on multiple levels—macro and micro, observational and theoretical—and in diverse arenas—development, policy, popular culture, social movements, and new technologies. As a result, a robust body of literature now exists that examines alternative media theories and practices.

Nevertheless, Latin American and U.S. scholars today continue to search for theories of practice helpful to the aims of democratic media. The answers to the central questions of this dissertation, concerning participatory practices and transformative outcomes, are as elusive and compelling now as they were when the dominant theories of communication were challenged. In order to understand why these answers have eluded scholars, a brief history of the theoretical challenge from Latin America is of value.

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3 Several benchmarks of alternative media studies now exist. See Atwood and McAnany (1986), Reyes Matta (1983b), and Simpson Grinberg (1986c).
Early Latin American critiques of the dominant communication model were both denunciatory and propositional, mapping out both the arguments against the sender-receiver transmission model and proposing alternatives for democratic potential in communication (Beltrán, 1975, 1980; Freire, 1970, 1973; Pasquali, 1963). In terms of denouncing the dominant model, Beltrán (1975, 1980) offered comprehensive critiques, noting the entry of false premises and alien ideologies into Latin American practice through the training of communication scholars and practitioners and through the financing of development communication projects. He summarized the critique by citing a paper he had written in 1974 for a development conference:

What often takes place under the label of communication is little more than a dominating monologue in the interest of the starter of the process. Feedback is not employed to provide an opportunity for genuine dialogue. The receiver of the messages is passive and subdued as he is hardly ever given proportionate opportunities to act concurrently also as a true and free emitter; his essential role is that of listening and obeying. . . . Such a vertical, asymmetric and quasi authoritarian social relationship constitutes, in my view, an undemocratic instance of communication . . . we must be able to build a new concept of communication--a humanized, non-elite, democratic, and non-mercantile model. (1980, p. 23)

The importance of the critique rested on the premise that definitions and models, to some extent, orient practice. Conceptualizing communication studies like this set up exciting prospects for scholars interested in initiating and studying practices and in developing theories in harmony with the historical, cultural, political, and economic realities of any given public. Chaffee, Gomez-Palacio and Rogers (1990) reviewed two generations of Latin American communication scholarship and described it as a unique hybrid of critical and empirical scholarship. They also noted that an emphasis on cultural production in media studies distinguished Latin American scholars from European and U.S. researchers, who traditionally have been more interested in media-society

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4 Ambrosi (1991) has noted the reactive nature of alternative media theory in general and has identified Latin America as a region that has contributed to proactive, pluralistic approaches recently.
relationships as constructed in uses-and-gratifications or effects studies. The Latin American approach to alternative media theories has few counterparts among researchers in the United States (McAnany, 1986). The cultural production bias and the critical-empirical hybrid status, then, has created a coherent identity for this body of work, which is particularly well suited to guide the research questions central to my study.

More than merely bringing a critical perspective to bear on empirical phenomena, this early critique also foregrounded the dialectical nature of theory and practice, privileging neither but bringing to consciousness the mutual shaping of each on the other. Ensuing research sensitive to this critique was neither wholly theoretical nor wholly applied, but encompassed both approaches. This combination also has distinguished Latin American communication theory as a coherent body of work.

In addition to foregrounding the dialectical nature of theory and practice, the Latin American critique noted the foreign ideological determinations on communication concepts that invaded media practices and development programs. The critique suggested that alternatives--more sensitive to and compatible with the Latin American context--were needed to counter alien conceptions and premises of communication. By acknowledging the ideological differences in research, the critique, in a sense, created the conditions for examining the problem of pluralism and of creating media systems responsive to multiple voices. This early critique hinted that the daunting challenge of accommodating multiple voices could be surmounted only in communication. In fact, the alternative communication literature has never confronted the difficulty of accommodating multiple and competing voices in media. Rather, the ensuing clamor for

5 The suggestion that pluralism could be dealt with in communication was not unique to Latin American theorists, as this position was at the heart of John Dewey's project. But Dewey's philosophy of communication was clearly "the path not taken" by the discipline as it developed in the United States (Peters, 1989). Hence, Latin American scholars have contributed more to building a theory of democratic media than have scholars from the United States.
democratic media systems focused less on issues of communication than it did on inegalitarian structures within cultures and between nations.\textsuperscript{6}

Finally, the emphasis on contextual considerations in the Latin American critique raised questions concerning the relevance of this body of work to media practices outside of this cultural milieu. Many of the critiques of media domination formed part of a larger movement to bring democracy to nations that were under authoritarian rule (Fox, 1988). The resulting theories could be viewed as pertinent to particular moments in time, irrelevant to practices constituted under the emergent, more democratic social arrangements of the 1980s.\textsuperscript{7} Indeed, the restoration of representative democracies throughout most of Latin America has underscored the theoretical uncertainty among advocates of an alternative communication theory.\textsuperscript{8}

Nevertheless, recent reflection has reaffirmed many of the premises of alternative communication theories, especially as they relate to pro-active solutions. The need for a theory of alternative media practice is evident in recent calls to democratize communication outside of Latin America, as well (Downing, 1984; Kellner, 1990; Raboy & Bruck, 1989; Splichal & Wasko, 1993). The denunciatory qualities of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{6} Marques de Melo (1988) concluded that most early scholars adopted a perspective congruent to dependency theory, which was popular in Latin America at the time.
\item \textsuperscript{7} For overviews of media in Latin America, see Alisky (1981), Pierce (1979), and Salwen and Garrison (1991).
\item \textsuperscript{8} This theoretical disarray is evident, as well, in the intellectual stocktaking among (a) international development communication workers rethinking the New World Information and Communication Order in Lima, Peru (positions published in Media Development, February/1992); (b) international community radio practitioners reevaluating their mission in La Paz, Bolivia, July 1992 (the La Paz declaration is available from the author); (c) international communication scholars reevaluating the mission of critical communication research in Sao Paolo, August 1992; and (d) individual scholars agonizing over failed leftist strategies and the future of alternative media in the period of transition to democracy (Fadul, Lins da Silva, & Santoro, 1982; K. Kunsch & Fernandes, 1989; López Vigil, 1989; Marques de Melo, 1985; Martín Barbero, 1982; Mattelart, Delacourt, & Mattelart, 1984; Seminario, 1989).
\end{itemize}
original critique served an important purpose but one of limited utility under contemporary conditions.

The Evolution of Alternative Communication Theory

The body of work generally called "alternative communication" is varied, heterogeneous, and complex, cutting across analytic levels and across media. Nevertheless, it is interlaced and conceptually connected (Cassigoli, 1986; Díaz Bordenave, 1985; Paiva, 1983; Simpson Grinberg, 1986b). Several essays have mapped out the complexity and connections within this body of work, breaking the work into substantive themes such as empirical, structural-linguistic-semiological, and media imperialism (Chaffee, Gomez-Palacio, & Rogers, 1990); the transnational, cultural imperialism/dependence, Marxist/neo-Marxist, technology and society, policy, alternative (McAnany, 1986); the eight types of radio popular (O'Connor, 1989, 1990d); and the five meanings of critical (Schwarz & Jaramillo, 1986). While this work is useful in separating different camps, it has not illustrated the diversity and unity of this work in an encompassing analytic frame that would be useful for assessing and/or designing media projects. In this section, I will map out some central theoretical considerations with the goal of building a framework that captures its complexities and unity. This framework will serve two purposes: first, it will act as a diagnostic tool, helpful in determining the strengths and weaknesses of the alternative communication literature; and second, it will serve as a springboard for constructing a modified framework to be applied deductively in my study of an alternative media practice.

A Legacy of Dualisms

Within alternative communication theory, researchers have demonstrated a tendency—what Portales (1986) calls "a genetic impulse"—to conceptualize in opposition to the dominant (see also Simpson Grinberg, 1986a). This tendency has operated as a powerful heuristic device, generating many ideas and metaphors. But the tendency to
frame concepts in opposition to the dominant has resulted in a body of literature that is full of dualistic thinking. The purpose here is not to review exhaustively the many dualisms in this work but to map some predominant ones in terms of where they fall conceptually. I have organized the dualistic concepts in three clusters: processes and structures, goals and content, and essence (summarized in Table 1, p. 13). The goal of organizing the many dualisms into a more coherent set of clusters is to begin to draw some unity in this heterogeneous body of work, as well as to identify its fractures.

Communication processes and structures. The first conceptual category addresses communication processes and structures through the pervasive and tenacious metaphor of horizontal versus vertical communication (Beltrán, 1980; Freire, 1970, 1973). The metaphor comes embedded with histories that contribute in two very different ways to its significance. On one hand, the metaphor grew out of dependency theory prominent in Latin America and influential in shaping the New World Information Order. As such it was concerned with directions and flows of communication, referring to problems of unidirectional information flows (versus bidirectional, horizontal communication), usually from North to South. A secondary focus of horizontal communication stemmed from Liberation Theology, also prominent in Latin America. This version of the metaphor, more recognizable in Freire’s work (1970, 1973), emphasized dialogue (versus monologue) as the communication process by which to attain critical consciousness. The vertical-horizontal metaphor, then, contained both structural and psychological dimensions, bringing with it a prescribed theory of both society and the human subject.

As the metaphor of horizontal communication has evolved, it has been incorporated into larger struggles against authoritarian systems. Participation and democratization have become baseline assumptions, essential concepts, and motivating principles marking alternative media theory throughout Latin America in the 1980s (Fox,
1988; Martín Barbero, 1988; Reyes Matta, 1986b). This work has given way to a litany of dualisms that both describe and guide media structures and practices. They include: authoritarian-democratic, industrial-artisanal, centralized power–self-managed, top-down–grass roots. Structuring media along democratic principles and incorporating participation have been the concepts dominating alternative media theory in the last 10 years.

**Communication goals.** Another important set of dualisms has downplayed communication processes and structures and placed more emphasis on content and goals. Communication projects taking up the slogan of dialogue have been criticized for (a) operating out of a UNESCO development frame that was out of synch with social and political realities of many countries; and (b) for emphasizing communication for its own sake, in the spirit of liberation theology (O'Connor, 1989, 1990d). Indeed, many of the proponents of participatory communication who were guided by dialogic principles were affiliated with religious or development institutions that freed them from the social and political constraints lived out at the grass-roots level.

This critique never denied the possibility of achieving horizontal processes and, in fact, stressed the importance of democratic structures. Rather, the critique viewed horizontal structures and processes as luxuries not particularly useful for strategizing social action and social change. On a more abstract level, it cautioned that limiting the theoretical focus to dialogue, without attending to larger social goals and manifest content, erroneously assumed a linear progression from liberating process to liberating content. Development practitioner Mario Kaplún noted that communication projects that failed to link themselves to larger social movements ran the risk of degenerating into “communication parties” (Kaplún, 1980, cited in Roncagliolo, 1986).9

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9 Raboy (1991) has called this dangerous possibility the “obsession with process” (p. 170).
As with structures and processes, the category of alternative goals and content has been generated in a dualistic manner. The resulting dualisms dovetail with the aims of alternative structures and processes. Many authors have noted that the social-functional goal of mainstream media is to fragment audiences into isolated viewers and autonomous consumers, while alternative theorists have attempted to create connections between listeners and viewers (Reyes Matta, 1983a; Simpson Grinberg, 1986c). Other authors have conceptualized on a less abstract level, differentiating between the goals of transferring data versus educating (Martínez Terrero, 1980). This kind of thinking is pervasive in the alternative video for development literature, which prescribes vertical processes for immediate, short-lived, task-oriented training, and horizontal processes for long-term, consciousness-raising education (Decker, 1988). An assumption across the literatures is that concientización leads to liberation and social solidarity that oppose dominant power structures.10 Among some writers, then, the sine qua non of alternative media is to wed liberating content with the goal of building solidarity opposed to local power (O’Connor, 1989, 1990b; Simpson Grinberg, 1986c). This version of alternative media theory emphasizes communication as a tool of a larger social praxis (Paiva, 1983; Lozada & Kúncar, 1986).

**Essence of communication.** The final conceptual category comprising alternative dualisms coheres around the theme of the essence of communication. One of the earliest works reaching into the arena of essences pitted communication against information (Pasquali, 1963). Working out of a phenomenological frame, Pasquali tied communication to meaning that was forged through coexistence, copresence, and

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10 The Spanish verb concientizar has been adopted in the English cognate, conscientize. This translation fails to capture the full sense of the verb in the Spanish, which indicates both awareness (consciousness) and a moral dimension (conscientious). Because I want the reader to retain the twin meanings in the word, I will use the Spanish term throughout this dissertation.
collaboration in a common world. To forge meaning, people had to engage in dialogue, which emerged as the central tenet, or essence, of communication. The centrality of dialogue to alternative communication has been adopted by numerous scholars since then (Freire, 1970, 1973; Beltrán, 1975, 1980). Placed in the arena of media practice, Pasquali labeled the contemporary epoch as a period of communication atrophy and called on dialogue to guide the revitalization of radio, television, film, and publishing.

Looking to the essence of communication has led some scholars to declare that the mission of designing alternative communication theories requires a completely different paradigm than the one driving linear, sender-receiver models (Cápriles, 1986; O'Sullivan-Ryan & Kaplún, 1978; Simpson Grinberg, 1986d). At the heart of the shift is “the permanent dialogue, participation that is at once spontaneous and pertinent, never arbitrary or conditional, the source of collective decisions, and the instructor of production and its products” (Cápriles, 1986, p. 172). Within this paradigm shift, Cápriles sought to distinguish alternative communication from alternative uses of communication. This distinction has led several authors to suggest that "participatory communication" is redundant, while "mass communication" is an oxymoron (Kaplún, 1986; Pasquali, 1963).

The reach toward an essential nature of communication was both illuminating and bewildering. The discussion around the essential quality or nature of communication was valuable inasmuch as it provided concepts to assist sorting out alternative communication practices from mere appearances, or alternative uses, of media. As such, these concepts will serve a teleological function for this dissertation; they will provide a basis for distinguishing, or at least problematizing, the alternative from the nonalternative practice. At the same time, however, the reach for communication's essence seemed to posit that a "genuine" quality or single touchstone could be applied to judge alternative practices. This tendency toward an absolutist definition of the
alternative runs the danger of closing down practical, as well as theoretical, options that
gave rise to the literature in the first place.

The range of dualistic concepts has been brought together in Table 1, which is
designed to accomplish several things. First, it serves as a topical portrait, laying down
concrete and diverse aspects of alternative media as constituted in the literature over the
past 20 years. Second, the table organizes the concepts thematically, which reveals the
commonality amid the diversity in this body of work. Finally, the three clusters draw
some distinctions that identify potential tensions and theoretical diversions.

Table 1. Alternative communication dualisms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process and Structure</th>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Alternative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vertical</td>
<td>Horizontal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>industrial</td>
<td>Artisanal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elite</td>
<td>Participatory</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top-down</td>
<td>Grass roots</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Centralized power</td>
<td>Self-managed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals and Context</td>
<td>Train</td>
<td>Educate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transfer Data</td>
<td>Liberate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dominate</td>
<td>Concientizar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fragment audience</td>
<td>Unify audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extend local power</td>
<td>Oppose local power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Anti-authoritarian content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essence</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monologue</td>
<td>Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mass comm. is an oxymoron</td>
<td>Participatory comm.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>is redundant</td>
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</table>

The portrayal of these concepts in this dualistic framework is a function of the
tendency in the literature to generate ideas in opposition to the dominant. Even so, this
organization is in some sense an unfair caricature. Nevertheless, I think it is a useful
starting place that leads to the next section, which finds complexity underneath the
overwhelming dualisms.
Beyond Dualisms: A Call to Incorporate the Oppositional

Although many alternative communication concepts were generated in a dualistic manner, this very same literature simultaneously called—implicitly and explicitly—for the end of dualistic theorizing and the collapse of simplistic models. The philosophical groundwork, for example, contained clear strains of phenomenological influence that rejected the subject-object dualism and called for its transcendence (Freire, 1970, 1973; Pasquali, 1963). The phenomenological influence is illustrated in some basic notions concerning consciousness, described by Freire:

Our consciousness is “intentional” toward the world, is always consciousness of, in permanent movement toward the world. . . . Human relations, in which subjectivity embodies itself in objectivity, constitutes a dialectical unity that generates a solidarity of knowing in acting, and vice versa. This is why both subjectivist and objectivist explications that break this dialectic, dichotomizing that which is not dichotomizable, are not capable of understanding critical consciousness. (1973, p. 85)

Despite this fundamental thinking, both Freire and Pasquali reincorporated dualistic concepts into their communication prescriptions, as already noted. The apparent contradiction between dualistic concepts and the calls to collapse polarities is a tension running throughout the literature. Of course, the tension between dualistic categories and the call to bridge the divide permeates the social sciences and can be seen in concepts such as Bernstein's (1983) objectivism and relativism, Giddens' (1984) structure versus agency, Habermas' (1987) system versus lifeworld, cultural studies' text versus audience (Radway, 1984; Morley, 1986), and anthropology's authoritative ethnography versus dialogic ethnography/fiction (Clifford, 1983; Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Marcus & Fischer, 1986). At issue is how to account theoretically for structural constraints while explaining human resistance, as well as acquiescence, to them. Rather than review the various responses to this tension, I will focus on three broad research streams from Latin America: popular culture, transnational studies, and praxis and social movement theory. I have selected these three streams because they form coherent and programmatic
areas of study, and they represent the most articulate and forceful challenges to the
dualistic legacy.

**Popular culture.** Studies of popular culture in Latin America articulate the most
explicit challenge to the legacy of dualistic thinking, and offer a new paradigm for
guiding theory and practice. They also propose the study of popular culture as a window
into power and as a springboard for strategies to meet the new challenges posed under
the political transition to democracy.

Alternative communication theories of the 1970s criticized the dominant models
of communication as instrumentalist. Ironically, studies of popular culture have accused
the alternative models of doing the same thing.11 Historically, theories of alternative
communication in Latin America have been based on instrumentalist conceptualizations,
albeit in Marxist guises of liberation (Martín Barbero, 1982). The instrumentalist notion
of communication has been challenged most forcefully in popular culture from the
findings of reception studies (Fuenzalida, 1990; Fuenzalida & Hermosilla, 1989).
Empirical studies positioned audiences as active in their own oppression, resistance, and
opposition through the complex process of cultural appropriation, consumption, and
production. Within this framework, the move from dominant to liberating models of
communication through a restructuring of message flows was viewed as problematic
and simplistic. The lines between oppressor and oppressed—assumed to be demarcated
clearly in much of the alternative communication work—were seen as blurred and
moving (Fuenzalida, 1990; García Canclini, 1988; Martín Barbero, 1987, 1988; Torres,
1989). To assume otherwise led alternative communication theorists to run from the

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11 This argument also was made outside of the popular culture literature by Dervin
(1980), who warned that although Latin American writers called for “turning away from
the source-sending-messages-to-receivers model to a model where receivers are the
initiators, as a body of literature it has not generated a cohesive theoretic way of looking
at receivers so as to avoid the very pitfalls of the model it abhors” (p. 85).
simulacrum of domination to the simulacrum of democracy (García Canclini, cited in Martín Barbero, 1987).

This literature not only faulted dualistic concepts but called for more sophisticated theories, offering the concepts “hybridization,” “syncretism,” and “mestizaje” (the mixture of Spanish and Indian blood) as the paradigm to guide inquiry. Mestizaje was proposed as a concrete cultural product that avoided the dualisms of indigenous versus alien, grass roots versus top-down, and democratic versus authoritarian (Martín Barbero, 1987, 1993). In addition, mestizaje was posited as an ambiguous ontological state that represented inherent contradictions congruent with the popular practices of appropriation and rearticulation of cultural products, and the examination of “the thick texture of hegemony/subalternity, the interlacing of resistance and submission, and opposition and complicity” (Martín Barbero, 1988, p. 462). Others have preferred the alternative concept, “hybridization,” which operates much as mestizaje and “syncretism” but avoids the biological essence of the former and the historical link to religion of the latter (García Canclini, 1990). These three overlapping terms, however, suggest that dialogue be abandoned as the guiding principle of alternative theories, subordinating communication to popular culture as the repository for the analysis of instrumental media practices and the formulation of empowering responses. "The alternative must be popular, or it will degenerate into a toy and/or machine of domination. And popular means that which makes possible the expression of collectively produced expectations and aspirations of and by popular social groups" (grupos de base) (Vidal Beneyto, cited in Martín Barbero, 1982).

Indeed, studies of popular culture have revealed insights into power in Latin America and generated strategies for communication action. In general, studies of popular culture have emerged from two streams of research: one focusing on material practices, the other resulting from audience studies. Of the first stream, popular culture
has been conceptualized as a space or a moment of transaction where both history and contemporary structure are manifest and open to analysis. "The revaluation of cultural space is part of the same movement that is rediscovering the popular. In the field of communication the popular signals more than an 'object [sic], it is a place from which to rethink the processes, the locus from which the conflicts that culture articulates come to the surface" (Martín Barbero, 1988, p. 458). Within this locus, "the transaction is a constant mechanism in the formation of popular cultural and artistic products. . . . Iconography, dance and rituals are spaces in which social contradictions are symbolically 'resolved'' (García Canclini, 1988, p. 489). The "transaction" is a moment of political struggle in which traditional culture and contemporary social and political structures come into play and reveal accommodation, passive acceptance, exploitation, and moments of resistance.

The second research stream examines audience reception in studies patterned after those of British and U.S. cultural studies (Ang, 1985; de Melo Silva, 1989; Fuenzalida, 1990; Lull, 1988, 1991; Morley, 1986; Radway, 1984). This work has shown an ambiguity and incongruity between the intended meaning of media content and the sense people make of it. These studies suggest that mediated messages cannot be viewed as authoritative carriers of stable meaning but as open texts subject to multiple understandings. The work in Latin America has clearly shown that authoritarian regimes exercising full control of media were minimally effective in shaping the ideas, attitudes, and behavior of the public (Fuenzalida & Hermosilla, 1989). This research should serve as a cautionary signal to alternative theorists, who run the risk of incorporating linear, absolutist assumptions about communication and reception into their work.

At the same time, both of these streams of research have generated a variety of intervention strategies for media designers and practitioners, calling for a widening of genres, practices, and beliefs that guide alternative media. Reception studies have been
useful in identifying critical points of intervention among alternative practitioners (de Melo Silva, 1989; Torres, 1989). Rather than promoting solely participatory media with oppositional manifest content, this line of thinking is open to conventional (dominant) forms of production and diverse genres of presentation, such as entertainment, that are located within popular cultural practices (Fuenzalida, 1990; Fuenzalida & Hermosilla, 1989; Kaplún, 1989). In the most ambitious program to effect the popular will on program production, Fuenzalida and Hermosilla (1989) ran a laboratory that created a horizontal linkage ("una vinculación horizontal") between popular groups and professional producers to place relevant social issues within popular formats, such as the telenovela (Latin American soap opera).

Furthermore, reception studies have suggested that ambiguous content—open texts—nested within popular genres facilitates audience bridging between everyday life and larger social structures affecting them. The notion of mass communication, formerly rejected as an oxymoron, has been reclaimed as a legitimate concept and positive value. Finally, popular culture has been posited as a generator of ideas and the criterion for judging alternative communication (Martín Barbero, 1982, 1986). Semiotic and anthropological studies of markets, cemeteries, shop windows, and border cities have revealed the language, codes, and images of popular culture (García Canclini, 1990; Martín Barbero, 1986). Within this framework, communication can be judged as alternative to the extent that it encompasses and assumes the complex process of popular social practices (Martín Barbero, 1982).

The greatest contribution of the popular culture literature was the empirical evidence that countervailed instrumentalist notions that alternative theories had reinscribed in models of communication. In addition to revealing the complexity of communication, this work suggested spaces for analysis and intervention. Nevertheless, the body of work came no closer theoretically to explaining how consumers of popular
culture negotiated their way out of authoritarian structures set on maintaining the status quo. An area separate from popular culture studies, but one that has called on the collapse of dualisms, as well, relates to the transnationalization of culture and communication.

Transnational studies. Although transnational studies raised many of the same concerns evident in the popular culture literature, their contributions to alternative communication theories were quite distinct. On an abstract level, this work suggested that transnationalization formed a backdrop--"a wider plane"--on which to situate alternative communication theory and practice (Reyes Matta, 1986a). Transnational political-economic relations and cultural products, characterized by expansionist, vertical, homogenizing, and atomizing qualities, manifested themselves on all levels—from cultural expressions to international communication arrangements (Reyes Matta, 1986a; Roncagliolo, 1986). The reallocation of resources to allow marginalized voices to produce messages in a particular format, with an oppositional political focus, could not avoid the reach of transnational culture. Moreover, "to define [alternative communication] in terms of size, technical characteristics, or political stance as related to current circumstances inexorably leads to utter confusion of the issue" (Roncagliolo, 1986, p. 85).

The suggested path out of the dualistic confusion was to map alternative communication theories on this wider plane of relations—"the great communication battlefields"—seeking strategies to respond to the atomizing dynamic and developing tactical opportunities to initiate practices (Roncagliolo, 1986, 1989). Those strategies and opportunities, having been placed on this wider plane, were mandated to incorporate the dominant in alternative communication practice, effectively collapsing the dualisms previously enumerated (Reyes Matta, 1986a). In other words, the alternative had to
incorporate ever-present differences, rather than strategizing simply in opposition to dominant forms and content.

Aside from providing a wider contextual plane for strategizing action, transnational studies raised issues germane to contemporary Latin American--indeed, world--politics. The current wave of neoliberal economic policies and restoration of representative democracies have confounded earlier dualisms, especially that of state versus private models of media ownership, which emerged from the international communication arena. Indeed, transnational studies have demonstrated that corporations have eclipsed, perhaps subsumed, the state, rendering it conceptually irrelevant (Martín Barbero, 1982). This is not to say that unequal, even dependent, relationships do not exist, but that the relationships are complex when viewed on a transnational plane. A recent Latin American reassessment of communication inequities sustained and defended a dependency analytic framework but recognized similarities in struggles for pluralism within industrialized, as well as developing, nations (Pasquali, 1991). Struggles such as the Cultural Ecology Movement in the United States and the contemporary academic interest in reclaiming the public sphere are testimony to this shared problematic.12 Although it did not do away with a dependency framework altogether, the recognition of this shared problematic clouded the traditional notion of the dominant north reigning over the subordinate south.

Several empirical projects embody the spirit and theoretical imprint of transnational studies, yet place emphasis in different areas (Reyes Matta, 1986e; Roncaglio, 1989; Schulein & Robina, 1983; Underwood, 1987; Viezzer, 1986). All

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12 See the following for a sense of the vitalizing impact of the public sphere on theorizing media: Auferheide (1991), Dahlgren and Sparks (1991), Habermas (1989), Hauser (1987), Peters and Cmiel (1991), and Rosen (1991). In addition, Pauly (1991) issued a deliciously cynical warning of the innate problems of all efforts to "recover the public."
of the empirical studies have stressed connecting alternative movements across borders, and several have established networks to enhance distribution of alternative publishing and video production (Roncagliolo, 1989; Schulein & Robina, 1983; Underwood, 1987). The assumption is that alternatively produced products “are expressions of concrete practices that transcend, but at the same time, contain communication” (Schulein & Robina, 1983). Small, isolated movements are nested within distribution networks, all of which “constitute complementary arms and fronts; they are like the infantry, cavalry, and artillery of our cultural army” (Roncagliolo, 1989, p. 66). While these projects focused on gathering and distributing alternative products, other movements have given more attention to production across borders (Reyes Matta & Richards, 1985; Viezzer, 1986). They have conducted regional and international meetings that generate alternative modes of practice, and build distribution networks. This work has not merely entered the wider plane of relations as a competitive venue but has extended research into alternative ways of communicating, as well (see Reyes Matta, 1986d). (The construction of this book exemplifies the spirit of alternative production with its internal dialogues.)

The principal contribution of the transnational studies literature was to highlight the global context in which alternative media theories must be situated. The notion of transnationalization is at once ubiquitous yet unclear in terms of the lines of subordination and domination. It is in the ambiguities between subordinate and dominant, previously analogous to developing and industrialized nations, that dualistic thinking is challenged. But these studies focus less on daily cultural practice than do the popular culture researchers, turning more attention over to global political strategies for transforming the status quo. The area of strategizing, however, is where this work relates to studies of social movements and praxis.
Social movements and praxis. A final research stream calling for the collapse of dualisms has tied alternative communication to social movements and social praxis. This is the longest-running and most consistent theme in the alternative communication literature, tracing its roots to the introduction of theoretically guided and self-reflective action—or praxis (Freire, 1970, 1973).

Fundamental to a theory grounded in praxis was the notion that education, politics, culture, or communication could not be distanced from the social bases, which must serve as their own example in the struggle for conscientización. Communication practitioners could never view themselves, then, as "proprietor[s] of revolutionary wisdom" (Freire, 1970, p. 47). To do so would deny a trust in people and their ability to think critically. Liberating models of pedagogy and communication linked to Freire’s thinking were conceived as an alternative and escaped the traditional approaches founded on expertise targeted at the social bases. Given this fundamental premise and turn away from tradition, the theoretical slip into dualistic thinking--bottom-up versus top-down, horizontal versus vertical, and so on--is easy to understand.

Nevertheless, scholars linking alternative communication to praxis have been very clear in recognizing the need to move away from the legacy of dualisms. Locating communication in praxis allowed practitioners and theorists to avoid the conceptual and practical tendency either to focus very locally on horizontal processes (e.g., small-group, consciousness-raising discussions) or to theorize globally without attention to processes (Portales, 1983). Communication work grounded in praxis permitted--in fact, required--a synthesis of local process and global referent through reflective practices:

The global referent should help to clarify the great dependency between the capacity to communicate and the place communication occupies in society, and to relate communicative accomplishments with their collective possibilities for transforming the system; the communicative referent should help to clarify the nature of the mechanisms of domination and hegemony exercised in transnational communication, and to propose the paths through which the right
to communicate continually resurfaces, producing communicative democracy. (Fortales, 1983, p. 61)

This thinking effectively collapsed the conceptual tension between process and outcome, agency and structure, and so on. It posited that structures could be accessed, examined, interpreted, and changed in praxis. Likewise the link between structures and their limiting effects on processes could be understood and acted upon through praxis. Within the dialectical synthesis of this thinking, the dualistic categories from the dominant and alternative schools collapsed, giving way to practices that encompassed both.

One prescription for moving from the conceptual to the practical world has been (a) to bind communication to organic social movements; (b) to maintain a class orientation ("class" here used broadly to encompass economic, ethnic, and gender divisions); (c) to operate as a substantive antidote to dominant communication; and (d) to share power in production (Paiva, 1983). While no authors invoke this prescription in a linear manner of moving from "a" to "b" to "c" to "d," a widespread tacit assumption in the focus on praxis is that these phases build on one another (Festa & Santoro, 1991; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983, 1986; Mattelart, 1986; O'Connor, 1989, 1990b; Paiva, 1983; Santoro, 1992; Unidad, 1986). The primacy given over to social movements is reflected in the pithy summary: "There is no alternative communication without a determining and ratifying social praxis" (Lozada & Kúncar, 1986, p. 204).

The emphasis on praxis assumed that participation and self-reflection were implicit by definition. This assumption foregrounded the dynamic need to build coalitions and networks between groups with shared concerns, and to background dialogic processes. Toward this end, alternative media was expected to manage both horizontal and vertical communication flows, and to articulate industrial and artisanal modes of production capable of responding to the interests of specific social groups
while building large audiences (Portales, 1986). This thinking rejected the previous dualistic belief that industrial production inevitably resulted in homogenization. Scholars in the areas of popular education and video, in particular, have tried to wed vertical and horizontal processes to transformative consequences (Fontes, 1992; Santoro, 1992; Valdeavellano, 1989a; all talk about this tendency).

The three bodies of literature calling for the collapse of dualisms overlap one another yet contribute in different ways. The popular culture studies provided evidence that undercut many of the instrumentalist assumptions guiding alternative communication and revealed points of contradiction and tension in cultural practices that could be used strategically for communication action. Transnational studies have emphasized that alternative communication is not impervious to global influence, requiring it, theoretically, to incorporate the oppositional. Empirical projects have sought to do this, primarily, by making a contextual move, binding actions across borders. Some evidence indicates, however, that scholars in this area recognize the need to develop alternative modes of communication rather than merely to target new venues. Finally, the focus on praxis has recognized an implicitly dialogic and participatory aspect to social movements, directing communication theories to develop broad strategies that link groups with shared goals. The critical contributions from these three bodies of work serve to demonstrate the contradictions between the neat world of dualistic categories and the untamed terrain of practice. While successfully questioning the tidiness of early alternative communication thinking, the work failed to provide a coherent means of explaining—or even approaching—media, culture, and praxis in a way that would lead to some conceptual clarity. The next section explains why conceptual clarity was not forthcoming.
Picturing the Critique

The collective criticism offered by the work calling for the collapse of dualisms can be represented pictorially (Figures 1 and 2). Doing so helps to clarify the issues under criticism, the nature of the criticism, and the conceptual difficulty left in the wake of that criticism. Figure 1 depicts the traditional dualisms conceptually by placing processes against goals/content. The thinking of early alternative communication theorists posited that the alternative was a response in opposition to the dominant, in both process and content. The mandate for theorists and practitioners was to move diagonally from cell 1 to cell 4 by putting horizontal processes into action. Figure 1 attempts to represent the move from the simulacrum of domination to the simulacrum of democracy. Ample empirical evidence from popular culture and development studies has indicated that the shift from dominant to alternative was not such a simple matter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals/Content</th>
<th>Dominant Processes</th>
<th>Alternative Processes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain Status Quo</td>
<td>Concepts: Information, monologue, vertical, industrial, transmission, transfer data, dominate, authoritarian</td>
<td>Concepts: Communication, dialogue, horizontal, artesanal, exchange, liberate, conscientize, antiauthoritarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge Status Quo</td>
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Figure 1. Alternative media dualisms in their conceptualization.

13 The process versus product dichotomy is confusing in the way it continues to be used in the literature. Roncagliolo (1991a) and Santoro (1992) position process and product both as teleological ends (i.e., video that is used for self-discovery--process--versus video that is used for mass broadcast--product). This kind of substantive separation of process and product does little to help clarify the theoretical difficulty of binding processes and outcomes.
Indeed, the empirical evidence found that (a) horizontal practices at times resulted in oppressive content; (b) in everyday life, people negotiated with dominant processes in liberating ways; and (c) liberating groups often used dominant communication modes for counterhegemonic purposes. The mandate for the alternative to take in the opposition effectively removed the lines separating the four cells in Figure 1. Alternative communication theory was cast as something larger than the conceptual divisions established through dualistic categories (Figure 2). It was cast as a set of theoretical beliefs that encompassed all four cells at once as a source for both strategic invention and framework for analysis. The contributions from the three research streams previously reviewed are plotted inside the modified version of Figure 1 (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Three entry points to the collapse of alternative media dualisms.

The more sophisticated thinking generated in the popular culture, transnational studies, and praxis research complicated the neat assumptions contained in the early alternative theories. Communication processes per se were divorced from outcomes.
Dialogically based strategies could lead to both maintenance and challenge of the status quo. Likewise, linear strategies could be put efficiently and efficaciously to work for counterhegemonic purposes. The work here was important to jar alternative communication out of prescriptive simplicity. Also, it may have been useful as an analytic framework to accompany the cultural archaeologist in the interpretation of the popular. But the literature is now adrift theoretically, inasmuch as it cannot explain the movement around the terrain. What accounts for movement of alternative processes to oppressive consequences? On what basis can practitioners design media to fulfill varying goals? In essence, the call to collapse dualisms has enfolded dominant and alternative process within both oppressive and liberating goals/content, without providing any sense of how this occurs (Figure 3).

<table>
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<th>Goals/Content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain Status Quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant Process</td>
<td>←</td>
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</table>

Figure 3. The current predicament of alternative communication theory.

All of this work made clear the shortcomings of conceptualizing dualistically, yet neither the popular culture, transnational studies, nor praxis research offered a clear or powerful way of conceptualizing communication. The three bodies of work have identified what might be communicated, by whom and in which context, but they have not addressed how practitioners actually communicate and how they might strategize communication to achieve liberating, empowering or transformative outcomes.\(^{14}\)

\(^{14}\) This flaw—focusing on whats, not hows—is not limited to these scholars, but permeates the communication field (Dervin, 1983; Dervin & Clark, 1989). Whether work has focused on the macrostructures of political economy or microphenomena of
The popular culture literature posited a litany of what—marketplaces, border regions, cemeteries—as the "spaces" where the keys to the alternative reside. Transnational studies summoned "a wider plane" and great communication battlefields as the places from which to empower alternative movements. And the praxis literature pointed practitioners to organic social movements as the starting place for building an alternative communication project. Lost in all of these directives is any sense of how the alternative project is to be carried out. Without a sense of the how of communication, alternative projects will merely supplant manifest content without changing processes, "leaving the world of citizens as isolated from the mainstreams of power as ever" (Dervin, 1980, p. 106).

While Latin American communication scholars have a long, heterogeneous, and rich tradition of theorizing alternative communication, their concerns run parallel with many of the issues raised in the North Atlantic alternative media literature, as well. Curiously, these bodies of work virtually never inform one another theoretically or empirically.¹⁵ In an effort to bring the two bodies of work together in a mutually informative way, I will review the North Atlantic alternative media literature and then turn to an area where both bodies of work seem to be pointing: communication procedures.

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¹⁵ The Latin American literature usually contains citations of U.S. and European theoretical scholarship that is either from the development field or that is highly abstract. There is a total absence of scholarly dialogue, however, between alternative media researchers. Commonly cited North Atlantic authors in the Latin American literature include T. Adorno, A. Gramsci, K. Marx, D. Lerner, E. M. Rogers, H. Schiller, and W. Schramm. See Chaffee, Gomez-Palacio, and Rogers (1990) for one citation analysis. Alternative media literatures among U.S. and European scholars virtually never cite theorists from Latin America.
North Atlantic Alternative Communication Studies

The study of alternative media, primarily in the United States, has tended to focus along the lines of specific media genres rather than developing an alternative model of communication per se. That is, the majority of alternative communications studies focus on community radio (Barlow, 1988; Dixon, 1988; Schulman, 1992), the underground press (Armstrong, 1981; Glessing, 1970; Kessler, 1984; Lewis, 1972; Tomaselli & Louw, 1989), or public-access television (Blau, 1992; Devine, 1992; Halleck, 1984; Kellner, 1990). Few scholars strive to develop an alternative theory of media practice (Bruck & Raboy, 1989; Enzensberger, 1970; Kellner, 1989, 1990; Mulgan, 1989; Raboy, 1991; Raboy & Bruck, 1989; Rucinski, 1991), and fewer still conduct comparative empirical analyses across media to draw theoretical implications for practice in general (Downing, 1984).

Most empirical studies have been done as broad overviews. Whether looking at radio, press, or television, studies generally have examined the history, development, and characteristics of the field of the particular practice. For example, Glessing's (1970) analysis of the underground press was based on an examination of 457 underground newspapers, with closer focus given to 30 of the more prominent publications. A complementary strategy has been to focus on particular subcategories—such as the black press, the new age press, and so on—within the larger field of the alternative press (Kessler, 1984). A final, more unusual approach has been to conduct in-depth case studies of a variety of alternative media, drawing on interviews, observation, historical artifacts, and secondary source materials (Downing, 1984). The goal of these studies, which constitute the majority, is to draw out some general understanding of the guiding principles, qualities, and characteristics of alternative media and their practice.

A second—less widespread—approach has been to analyze closely a particular media practice (Halleck, 1984; Kellner, 1990; Schulman, 1992). These studies all have
been conducted more from an action research frame of trying to effect some kind of social change, rather than attempting to extract generalizable statements concerning alternative media practice. For example, Halleck (1984) described the practice of Paper Tiger Television productions on public-access television, reserving most of the discussion for how the group works to create its shows. Likewise, Schulman (1992) spent considerable time talking about the "inventions" enacted at a particular radio station starting up in Harlem. Finally, Kellner (1990) discussed his continued involvement on a public-access television show, explaining his attempts to widen its distribution. All of these studies feed their specific data into a larger theoretical understanding of alternative communication practices (especially Kellner), but their approach to conducting research is fundamentally different from the majority of alternative media researchers. The difference in approach has important ramifications for the communication-as-procedure perspective developed later in this dissertation. Before turning to those ramifications, however, I will summarize the findings of alternative communication studies.

**Tendencies of Alternative Media Practice**

Regardless of the specific methodological approach used to study alternative media, researchers have identified a number of common characteristics. One of the most frequent statements of researchers is that alternative media must be understood as part of sweeping social changes and larger social movements (Armstrong, 1981; Barlow, 1988; Bruck & Raboy, 1989; Downing, 1984; Enzensberger, 1970; Glessing, 1970; Kellner, 1989, 1990; Lewis, 1972; Tomaselli & Louw, 1989). The relationship with larger social movements is posited as both a substantive feature and a theoretic property of alternative media.

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16 It should be noted that Kellner also provided a very broad macroanalysis of mainstream broadcasting before reporting on the particular program that he has produced over the last decade.
The underground press best exemplified the substantive feature in its identification as part of the antiwar movement and counterculture of the 1960s (Armstrong, 1981; Downing, 1984; Glessing, 1970; Lewis, 1972). The underground press formed part of the antiwar mobilizations and the countercultural lifestyle changes involving rock music, drugs, sexual behavior, and fashion that were in opposition to the dominant culture. As a theoretic property, alternative media have been viewed as being energized by their dialectical relationship in social movements (Armstrong, 1981; Barlow, 1988; Downing, 1984; Enzensberger, 1970; Kellner, 1990; Rucinski, 1991; Tomaselli & Louw, 1989). As such, alternative media are activist in nature, creating a central place for the issue of power. Studies of alternative media share an awareness for the indissoluble links between power, culture, and communication. Downing (1984) is the clearest in identifying this relationship and naming the goal of alternative media practitioners as creating new social relations that overcome oppression in race, class, and gender divisions. Alternative media are viewed as fundamental in the struggle for power.

Although this literature may seem at first to treat power as transparent, it actually problematizes the issue in two ways. First, many scholars imply or state directly that the alternative media draw their raison d'être precisely from their location in society's margins (Armstrong, 1981; Barlow, 1988; Downing, 1984; Glessing, 1970). Downing is representative of other scholars in writing, "Alternative media flourish in the wastelands left by official media. . . . [They attend to] issues that are shut out of the established media or are so distorted that the original voices are lost" (p. 35). The issue of power appears paradoxical, then, as marginalized positions in society are the very wellsprings of power. A second problematic in the discussion of power was identified by Kessler (1984), who wrote, "It is important to note that many of the dissident marketplaces were no more free and open than the conventional media" (p. 15). That is,
an examination of production practices and organizational features of many alternative newspapers revealed that their structure was no different from the media they sought to oppose. Some scholars have identified this issue—how to prevent the emergence of a new elite group in building alternative communication—as one of the major questions facing theory (Tomaselli & Louw, 1989). The reproduction of power is an important issue and one that should be included in any study of alternative media.

Nevertheless, many studies highlight that alternative media are democratically organized, noncommercial, and deeply concerned with heightened community involvement (Armstrong, 1981; Barlow, 1988; Blau, 1992; Bruck & Raboy, 1989; Devine, 1992; Downing, 1984; Enzensberger, 1970; Glessing, 1970; Halleck, 1984; Lewis, 1972; Schulman, 1992). The issues of economics and democratic organization are viewed as intertwined in many studies. Armstrong (1981), for example, equated financing with entering into dependency relationships that altered content and democratic potential. Likewise, Barlow (1988) viewed community radio as caught between democratic potential and economic constraint. Commercialism is viewed as a threat to the possibilities of decentralized organization of many media. And decentralized organization is often seen as a barometer of the quality of a medium that facilitates community involvement and participation. Some researchers have put forth the vision in which "mass media would be part of a communal public sphere and alternative media would be made accessible to all groups and individuals who wished to participate" (Kellner, 1989, p. 143).

The issue of participation is thorny, however, and is a point of contention within this literature. On the one hand, scholars have emphasized the need for community involvement and participation on several theoretic grounds. First, involvement is viewed

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17 This theoretical concern has not been pronounced in the Latin American literature, though Cassigoli (1986) raised this issue, as well.
as part of the dialectical relationship that sustains noncommercial, alternative communicating (Armstrong, 1981; Devine, 1992; Dixon, 1988; Halleck, 1984; Lewis, 1972; Schulman, 1992). Second, given that power is not transparent and is assumed to reproduce itself, participation is seen as a way to gain multiple views of reality that continually interrogate the status quo (Barlow, 1988; Downing, 1984; Kessler, 1984). Typically, the proposed way toward achieving participation is by making communication facilities accessible to the public (Barlow, 1988; Downing, 1984; Kellner, 1990; Schulman, 1992).

The notion of participation, however, has been challenged on two points. First, the call for multiple perspectives has been critiqued as harking back to the liberal notion of the free marketplace of ideas. Many alternative media scholars recognized the simplistic seduction of the so-called free marketplace, calling instead for radical pluralism. But this notion has been challenged as falling into the same liberal trap and being grounded on false premises. Enzensberger (1970) argued that availing media to any and all voices theoretically entered a neoliberal, technocratic trap, ultimately ushering in the "pre-ordained harmony of social interests" (p. 23). Likewise, Blau wrote, "If the goal is to foster democracy, the point of speaking cannot simply be the right to talk" (p. 24). Finally, Sénécal (1991) noted that the term “democracy” is used for multiple purposes with multiple logics and that it should be used by alternative theorists with great vigilance. The implication of all writers is that criteria must be established to separate legitimate from illegitimate participants and that access must be overshadowed by a praxis that develops effective, critical communicating abilities. A second critique of the proponents of participation is the suggestion that multiplicity can lead to further fragmentation, rather than unification (Rucinski, 1991). One scholar has gone so far as to suggest that the marketplace notion holds some merit as a criterion by which to judge alternative communication (Mulgan, 1989). Rather than reinscribing the
liberal marketplace notion, however, Mulgan problematized themes such as access, needs, and participation and suggested that an examination of audiences (markets) would reveal something about the reach and appeal of alternative communicators.

Despite their points of contention, alternative media studies have developed a set of principles, qualities, and characteristics that distinguish the alternative from the mainstream. The points summarized by Enzensberger (1970, p. 26) are presented below as one of the only attempts to summarize alternative qualities (Table 2). This summary captures the principle qualities of alternative media as they cut across the various studies. As already discussed, the two dominant themes here are that alternative media form part of a larger social movement and that they are marked by their decentralized structure. These roughly coincide with with the dualisms mapped in the Latin American alternative communication theory, especially concerning alternative, horizontal processes, and antiauthoritarian, liberating goals and content.

Table 2. Enzensberger's summary of alternative media qualities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repressive Uses of Media</th>
<th>Emancipatory Uses of Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centrally controlled program</td>
<td>Decentralized program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One transmitter, many receivers</td>
<td>Each receiver a potential transmitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immobilization of isolated individual</td>
<td>Mobilization of masses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive consumer behavior</td>
<td>Intervention of those involved, feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depoliticization</td>
<td>Political learning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production by specialists</td>
<td>Collective production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control by property owners or bureaucracy</td>
<td>Social control by self-organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The North Atlantic alternative media literature adds to the research from Latin America in a number of ways. The focus on media as part of larger social movements has much in common with the Latin American work and its emphasis on transforming the status quo. This is probably the most pronounced overlap between the two
literatures. In addition, the North Atlantic literature has generated a similar series of
dualistic concepts, most clearly evident in the alternative media qualities listed by
Enzensberger, but it has not pushed them as far in their development as the Latin
American researchers have. Where the North Atlantic research has added significantly to
theorizing alternative communication is in the consideration of power, specifically
rejecting the assumption that toppling an oppressive structure necessarily allows
equitable relations to emerge. This research has been less emphatic, however, on the
need for dialogic, participatory processes, perhaps because of the context of its theoretic
development--a context radically different from the one experienced in Latin America.

Indeed, the North Atlantic alternative media literature is devoid of the historical
critique of dominant communication that has pushed Latin American researchers to move
toward a procedural view of communication. In the next section I will display the signs
that point in this direction, signs clearly evident in Latin American research and also
present in the North Atlantic studies.

Moving toward Communication Procedures

The reach to the procedures of communication--the systematic focusing on how
humans make and unmake, reinforce and resist social movements, cultures, and
structures communicatively--is evident in both of the alternative communication
literatures. The reach to procedures becomes evident, however, only if one brackets the
construction and collapse of dualisms and focuses, instead, on the dynamic processes
captured in theories of and for alternative media practices. Tracing out the evidence for a
procedural view of communication from examples in the alternative communication
literature will lead later to the construction of a theoretic framework that will guide this
dissertation. But showing that the Latin American literature itself contains evidence of
the reach to procedures is important here theoretically. By reviewing the evidence
leading to procedure, I hope to obviate the importation in this study of alien premises
and values—a charge that was at the heart of the earliest critiques of dominant theories of communication.

**Recognizing the Problem**

The dualistic pattern of alternative communication concepts, as well as the calls for their collapse, led to theoretic confusion and an inability to explain how it was that both dominant and alternative processes could lead to both oppressive and liberating outcomes (see Figure 3). The weakness of this work, however, rested less in its dualistic or ambiguous nature than in its static quality.

Theories treating communication as if it were a raw material to be redistributed (dialogue), an implement to build social networks and popular movements (praxis), or an artifact in a nexus between the traditional and modern (popular culture) essentially froze the communication process into a state or entity. Centering on static states and entities has been identified as forming an inadequate base on which to design media for social change (Reyes Matta, 1986c). Moreover, attending to who was communicating what, and with what goals threatened merely to replace the dominant means-end model with an alternative means-end system (Cápriles, 1986).

The path out of this danger was not clearly visible from the critique, but Cápriles (1986) recognized that the response needed to operate on the level of a paradigm shift, not merely a rejigging of the sender-receiver model. That is, an alternative model of communication required a radical break from the focus on static state/entity conceptualizations.\(^{18}\)

**Reaching for the Solution**

Despite the ambiguity of the particulars of this new paradigm, scholars seem to be advancing toward a procedural view of communication that recognizes that the

\(^{18}\) This point is also at the heart of Dervin's work. See especially Dervin (1991).
The strongest place for theoretical progress is neither in the construction of dualisms nor in their collapse. Rather, the most promising research has landed on the hows of communication practice. The most systematic project in this direction has been Reyes Matta's attempt to wed transnational studies and journalistic practice (1983a, 1986b, 1986f). Transnationalization of communication has acted as an informative, contextual backdrop on which questions of practice can be cast. Questions have included (a) What forms of organization, production, and participation lead to structural change? and (b) What communication forms provide efficiency and efficacy in transforming society? (Reyes Matta, 1983a).

Even though this work foregrounds the transnational context, what emerges as most powerful is the push toward understanding the forms—the hows—of communication. This direction shines in Reyes Matta's analysis of alternative projects and recommendations for future research:

> It could be promising to analyze the ways in which this project [a micromedia project in Peru] acts in turn with the concrete reality of those it wants to awaken; to examine through which methodology a self-renewing communication process can be effected within a popular, social dimension [emphasis added]. (1986b, p. 367)\(^\text{19}\)

Placing communication ways, acts, and methodologies at the center indicated a reach toward understanding the range of communication procedures in a specific media practice.

Furthermore, Reyes Matta's work calling for a renewed journalistic practice has focused on procedural aspects of how news sources and article language are selected (1986e, 1986f; Collyer, 1986). For example, he suggested that journalists should seek

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\(^{19}\) Cápriles (1986) also expressed a concern for the method of enacting communication and suggested that it could be found in "the dialectical dyad, access-participation" (p. 173). This search for a method indicated a concern for communication procedures, but its reduction to a dialectical dyad effectively ignored procedure in both the concrete and the abstract.
diversity in choosing words and naming reality to avoid language determined by bureaucracies and to steer away from dogmatism in the use of terms. In choosing news sources, journalists should introduce new actors such as women, youth, urban popular organizations, unions, and guilds. Reyes Matta’s work has emphasized the importance of youth, and this indicates that these procedures should also be relevant to the context in which they operate. "This is where journalism’s constant theme appears: ways of making the news, modes of making information" (1986f, p. 30) 20

Whereas Reyes Matta's work represents the most systematic drive toward procedure, this reach is evident in the other research streams, as well. The popular culture literature was most successful at using empirical evidence to repudiate some of the simplistic assumptions of alternative practice, but it was also useful at pointing to everyday experience to learn how autonomous communication networks operated to resist, as well as acquiesce to, hegemony (Simpson Grinberg, 1986d).

This work has made the consumption and production of popular culture the focal point of research, so it contains rich detail on people, places, and things that embody the intersection of the traditional and the modern. The applicability of this work to alternative communication, however, is in the dynamic notions of the "mediation" or the "transaction" (García Canclini, 1988, 1990; Martín Barbero, 1987, 1993). The moment of transaction or mediation is when people make the communication moves that connect everyday life to the macro, social structures in ways that resist, as well as perpetuate, hegemonic ideologies and practices. 21 Exactly how hegemony is resisted and

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20 A focus on the specifics of making media was at the heart of Halloran's (1986) assessment of international communication research, too.

21 The applicability of the popular to alternative communication has been identified by Dahlgren (1991, 1992) and Keane (1991), who, in critiquing Habermas' notion of the public sphere, both identified "plebian, popular, informal public spheres" as areas of neglect in theorizing democratic media.
perpetuated is determined by the communication procedures at the moment of mediation/transaction. Although the popular communication literature is on the road to looking at communication-as-procedure, it has not done so explicitly, and the results have been to render static, albeit colorful and detailed, portraits of cultural activity.  

A final area pointing toward communication-as-procedure is within the praxis literature. Social praxis was posited as a process that binds horizontal communication to global issues, suggesting that structural matters are accessible through practice (Portales, 1983). For example, the literature documenting the emergence of radio stations from tin miners' unions in Bolivia assumed that the workers' organizations were energized through the collective participation and communication of the rank and file, which connected their movement to larger issues of capitalism, global trade, and exploitation (see selections in Gumucio Dagron & Cajías, 1989). Praxis was also seen as an activity that successfully combined horizontal and vertical processes that were both responsive to local changes and able to reach widespread audiences and build broad coalitions (Portales, 1986). This work suggested that procedures are involved in actualizing horizontal and vertical processes in ways that do not alienate participants. Yet the work never identified the steps in these processes explicitly as procedures. How social praxis succeeded in actualizing these processes remains unknown, but because they are part of a movement, the literature suggested that these procedures could be institutionalized. This contribution is an important element for developing alternative media, which, by definition, include institutional qualities.

22 Recall, however, that Martín Barbero (1988) emphasized that he explicitly wanted to rediscover the popular without hyostatizing it: "The popular signals more than an object [sic], it is a place from which to rethink the processes, the locus from which the conflicts that culture articulates come to the surface." But removing culture-as-object and replacing it with culture-as-place/locus, or more recently as a "living space" (1993), merely exchanged one static conceptual category for another.
Even though the praxis literature did not make the procedural aspect of communication explicit, it contained many clear examples of communication procedures in empirical studies (Alfonso, 1983; Kaplún, 1986; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983, 1986; Pareja Herrera, 1987; Schulein & Robina, 1983; Unidad, 1986; Valdeavellano, 1989b). Rather than listing all of the activities that illustrate the procedural aspect of communication, I will provide two examples in which I believe this concept is most clearly apparent.

The first example, from the popular education literature, was a practice known as video registro (a videotaping of a small group meeting that was replayed to the group at the conclusion of its meeting) (Valdeavellano, 1989a). The author found that this procedure (immediately replaying events) produced several results: (a) it unleashed reactions favorable to bringing to consciousness the problem or struggle under study; (b) it generated a more integrated vision of the collective action necessary to transform social conditions; and (c) it demystified the medium, opening up video as a popular tool (p. 109). Replaying a meeting appeared to be a valuable procedure in exposing and clarifying issues and in reinforcing goals.

A second example that illustrated procedural aspects of communication came from the Bolivian tin miners' radio literature. The evidence from several studies of these stations indicated that popular participation was intensified in times of crisis, such as during military coups (López Vigil, 1984; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983, 1986). Two participatory procedures developed during military crises were the emergent speaker (parlante emergente) and chain broadcasting between stations. Both practices emerged in response to the closing down of information resources and networks by the military.

The emergent speaker was basically an open microphone policy at stations, extended to the testimonials of people, who shared anecdotes, feelings, and inspirations in the face of coercion. Chain broadcasting linked emergent speakers through the use of
rudimentary equipment. Stations created information chains by having one radio station tune in the signal of its nearest miners' station on a portable radio. The station then held the appliance next to the broadcast microphone. This boosted the signal, which was then picked up by another station, which repeated the process. This technological procedure of chaining contained human communication procedures, such as connecting with other listeners, sharing information, building solidarity, and opening one's air space to another. These practices have been described in detail but have never been conceptualized as procedures that might be used in other places with completely different substantive form (Gumucio Dagon, 1989a, 1989b; López Vigil, 1984; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983, 1986).

The empirical evidence from scholarship focused on praxis has provided the clearest examples of media practices that lend themselves to analysis using the construct of procedure. As presented in each study, however, the many examples stand as isolated pieces of evidence intersecting with the particular concerns of popular education, resistant radio, and the like. The empirical examples are bound theoretically only by the philosophical notion of praxis. In a practical sense, the examples do not inform each other across the studies except as particular communication steps taken at a particular place and time that might be useful in different places and times. Binding the various examples together under the notion of procedure might be a useful way of understanding and analyzing the range of data. The procedural view also might provide guidance for determining whether a specific practice in one place and time is useful in other places and times.

Although each of the areas discussed above—transnational studies, popular culture, and praxis—seems to be striving for something that connects the disparate notions of alternative communication, they all contribute differently to the task of studying media from a procedural perch. The transnational communication literature,
with its emphasis on building journalistic practices, underlines the possibility and need for practitioners to experiment and invent participatory procedures. Involvement in newly democratized countries also indicates that alternative designs need to work within frameworks that are more complex than the merely oppositional, counterhegemonic strategies. Within the contemporary political context of Latin America, popular culture studies identify potential sites for excavating alternative strategies. This literature suggests that where the subordinate and dominant, traditional and modern meet is a place to find both empowering and subordinating transactions. Finally, the literature on praxis suggests social movements as another site for discovering participatory and empowering practices. Moreover, the praxis literature sends up a warning signal for alternative communication theories, inasmuch as it suggests that praxis may be more than a site for discovery, but actually may be a requirement for alternative media practice, as well\textsuperscript{23}

**Evidence in Other Alternative Media Studies**

As with the Latin American scholars, the other alternative media studies did not concentrate on communication-as-procedure. They contained signs, however, of the move toward procedure. In some cases, the move came as a call for strategies for implementing democratic media:

> We need to think of new designs which reduce the overbearing influence of the state and its dominating elites while permitting the address of national societies as a whole. At the same time, microsocieties within national boundaries need to be given room to develop and protect themselves from capitalist/commercial exploitation. (Bruck & Raboy, 1989, p. 11)

Likewise, Tomaselli and Louw (1989) suggested that one of the major questions facing theory is how to create practical structures to facilitate participation. They identified a useful distinction between dominant and alternative practices in naming journalists not as

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Recall Lozada and Kúncar’s (1986, p. 204) conclusion: "There is no alternative communication without a determining and ratifying social praxis."}
\end{footnotes}
originators of messages but as facilitators of them. Facilitating messages holds clear implications for participatory procedures in media practice, though neither study explicitly focused its work on this aspect of communication.

Likewise, the issue of communication procedures can be seen indirectly in the alternative media studies focusing on particular experiences from an action research frame. The work of Halleck (1984) and Schulman (1992) clearly demonstrated procedural aspects in their description of practices. In discussing Paper Tiger Television, for example, Halleck described a number of "practical requirements" for attaining success, including the establishment of a habitual air time (so that viewers get used to seeing a program at a regular time), the use of bright sets, and the maintenance of a fast pace. Viewed as practical requirements, these moves are at best techniques that other producers might adopt to establish a program. When thought of as procedures, however, they become culturally bound responses to particular situations that might or might not be appropriate to different contexts. For example, when viewed as a production procedure, maintaining a fast pace can be understood as a dynamic editing process responsive to the aesthetic norms of commercial media. Depending on the particular contexts, this procedure--editing/pacing--can be altered as suitable to various situations.

Schulman's (1992) description of a Harlem community radio station also revealed the procedural aspect of communication. He described the station's "conceptual manual," which delineated the rationale and organizational structure of the station. Part of the station's organization was to establish programming areas led by program teams. The areas were designed to respond to the particular issues of the Harlem community. Some of the categories were fairly standard--jobs, housing, youth--while other were innovative--local history, quality of life indicators, organizational outlooks (this programming team connected to local organizations). The procedure of determining
programming areas was specific to the Harlem community, but it could be replicated, albeit in different form, in other settings.

Not all scholars operating out of an action research frame touched on procedures as central to alternative communication planning. In fact, Kellner (1990) seemed to be a case of anti-procedures in his long-running work on public-access cable television. His work operates out of a hegemony framework that privileges the structural rearrangement of society, without any communication theory. "In a socialist society, mass media would be part of a communal public sphere and alternative media would be made accessible to all groups and individuals who wished to participate in media communication" (Kellner, 1989, p. 143). Here, communication was viewed, not as a dynamic process, but as a static channel that needed only be availed to the public in order to lead to democratic use. In a sense, his work runs parallel with early Latin American communication theory operating out of a dependency framework and calling for a rearrangement of information flows. The place of communication is seen as an ancillary to democracy. Lost is any sense of how participation would be effected, how difference and multiple views would not only be tolerated, but accommodated. For that, one would need to attend to communication procedure.

The reach to procedure evident in each of these areas of the alternative communication literature suggests that the disparate interests of the individual studies are linked by some common phenomenon. I am positing that each of these areas are pointing to the dynamic, procedural aspect of communication as the common phenomenon, but none of them explicitly have named procedure as such. Furthermore, I am suggesting that a procedural view of communication would be useful in conducting research of alternative media practice and would be fruitful in theorizing practice in a way that would be of value to practitioners in other settings. The next section of this
dissertation builds a procedural model that will serve as the theoretic framework guiding this study.

The Communication-as-Procedure Theoretic

Communication-as-procedure is not a widespread way of conceptualizing media design, journalistic practice, or human interaction. Within the communication discipline, numerous scholars have proposed a process view of communication phenomena, but few have been able to develop models that did not eventually slip back into some sort of static rendition. The focus on process and dynamics, however, has been theorized usefully by Dervin (1991, 1993) and Dervin and Clark (1989, 1993), whom I will borrow heavily from in this section, which focuses on an explication of the communication-as-procedure theoretic. In explicating the communication-as-procedure theoretic, I will separate out three component parts that operate as a shorthand reference for this idea--situations, actions, and consequences.

Communication-as-Procedure

I begin with the shorthand reference of this theoretic: human communication action is embedded in situation and consequence (Figure 4). Human communication actions are conceptualized as processes that are grounded in specific contexts, that make and remake social structures (defined broadly as including constructs such as race, class, gender, media institutions, and the like)--which often end up being the target of communication research (this was certainly the case of the rampant dualisms emerging from the Latin American alternative communication research)--and that derive some sorts of consequences. Holding onto this entire procedural chain--situation-action-consequence--is posited as a way of centering on communication processes without losing touch of contextual particularities or real-world consequences. I will discuss

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24 Berlo’s (1960) Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver model is the clearest example of this.
briefly some of the nuances of the three elements of the procedural chain, attending especially to the action component.

![Figure 4. The communication-as-procedure chain.](image)

Dervin and Clark (1989) conceptualize procedural actions as both iterative behaviors and invented tactics. They argue that these aspects are important for different reasons. Understanding actions as iterative behaviors (repeated communication routines) suggests that communicatings recur in patterns, patterns that help to sustain social structures and forms (Dervin & Clark, 1989). Yet these patterned behaviors were at one time invented in response to situational exigencies demanding attention. Communication procedures, therefore, are not immutable but are subject to modification and reinvention, in addition to blind reinscription and reification.

Dervin (1993) and Dervin and Clark (1989) have suggested that by focusing on human communication action--what they call the "hows" and the "verbs" of communication--researchers can begin to untangle many of the polarities dogging social scientists. Verbs are posited as standing between issues such as structure and agency, macro forces and micro processes, hegemony and resistance, rigidity and flexibility. Verbing offers a viable means of attending to static polarities that are often the focus of communication research because the verbs are the processes that mediate between the polarities. Dervin (1993) and Dervin and Clark (1989) have adopted the use of verbs of communicatings--observing, categorizing, defining, and the like--in admittedly
unconventional fashion to make the point that process is often relegated to second place in research while states and entities are given primary attention:

Communicating is where the micro becomes the macro, the macro the micro. It is the in between, the doing, the making, the experiencing. . . . where structure and agency meet, both in communicating. (Dervin, 1993, p. 52)

Inasmuch as the alternative communication literature is saddled with a legacy of static dualisms, I will adopt the verbing technique as a principal strategy for breaking out of them in this dissertation.

As an "in between" strategy, verbing does not deny the importance of structure. In fact, communication procedures themselves are conceptualized as culturally, historically, and ideologically situated. Communication action is always focused on particular moments in space and time, but it is not wholly determined by the surrounding circumstances. Rather, communication actions are both constituted by and constitutive of situational constraints:

. . . Life-facing involves daily constructings, even when some (or perhaps many or even all) of those constructings are repetitions of habitualized constructings used in the past. Since no moment in time-space has theoretically occurred before, each act of communicating is situated. (Dervin & Clark, 1993, p. 118)

Because situations are considered fundamental to understanding the communication actions taken by individuals, this component is important to include in this study. Nevertheless, the passage cited above is critical to the definition of situation in this study. Rather than being understood as merely given, contexts and circumstances are conceptualized as constituted by and constitutive of human communication action. Situation-constructing would be a more accurate term to represent this conceptualization, but I will use the shorter term, situation, when referring to the communication-as-procedure theoretic.

Finally, the communication-as-procedure theoretic takes into account the consequences arising from human actions. This component is a logical extension of the
notions of communication iteration and invention mentioned earlier. These notions have salience, in part, because of the consequences they derive. That is, a communication invention is considered useful, valuable, and worthy of repetition because it has yielded worthwhile consequences to problematic situations facing people. Nevertheless, communication actions that are reinscribed habitually often split off from their original situations and therefore become reifications of power and order that appear natural and immutable, even when producing negative consequences for large numbers of people. As in the cases of actions and situations, consequences are conceptualized as human constructings that often become future situations faced by people and mediated in communication. The situation-action-consequence chain, then, represents a cyclical dynamic in which each component is constructed, interpreted, and enacted procedurally. I am adopting it as the major conceptual template informing both data collection and analysis in this study because it appears to be a construct that is able to hold onto the dynamic aspect of communication and because it seems to be able to negotiate between the polarities that mark the alternative communication literature.

In using this template I will be attending to the contextual boundaries and particularities of situations-actions-consequences, but I will try to extract qualities and characteristics that are able to span space and time. What I mean by this is that I will describe detailed situations-actions-consequences as they occurred (drawing on field notes and interviews), but I will frame them in general dimensions that rise above their particularity. The reason for doing this is to maintain the descriptive richness so crucial to interpreting the data without getting mired in the minutiae of daily practice. Descriptive detail will serve to illuminate general qualities and characteristics of the data while grounding abstract categories to the contextual limits of this study. Furthermore, this approach will allow the details gathered across different research sites to inform one another, as procedural patterns, ruptures, and inventions are expected to emerge.
What I have in mind can be illustrated briefly by an example from the praxis literature already discussed. Video registro entailed a procedure of replaying group interactions immediately following a meeting (Valdeavellano, 1989a). The procedure emerged in the context of a beginning consciousness-raising group organized by a popular education worker. The video registro technique was described in detail and could be conceptualized as a procedure called "replaying." As a simple description it was a useful account that might be repeated elsewhere, but as a procedure it would be informed by a situation and consequences that would direct its application and modification. Practitioners would be aware of situational detail--videotape, a novice group--that could be expanded to include audiotape, journals, or photographs. A procedural understanding of replaying would force practitioners to monitor consequences, as well, with an awareness that changes in situation might radically alter outcomes. Replaying procedures accompanied by a change from a novice to an advanced group, for instance, might lead to consequences of boredom or disinterest, rather than the empowerment experienced earlier. Hence, successful communication procedure at time one can turn oppressive when blindly implemented without regard for changing conditions at time two.25

In summary, the communication-as-procedure theoretic is introduced as a perspective that retains the dynamic aspects--so often sought, so seldom retained--in the study of human communication processes. It views human communicating as actions--verbs--that occur in response to situations and that derive consequences. These three components--situations-actions-consequences--are conceptualized as human constructings made and remade habitually and repetitively, as well as creatively and

25 Dervin and Clark (1989, 1993) provide a fuller discussion of this theoretical difficulty. In essence, they argue that communication moves must be able to respond to changing needs and conditions if they are to keep from rigidifying into rote, counterproductive rules.
inventively. I used this understanding of communication-as-procedure in my study of the exemplary media practice of Bolivian miners' radio. The section that follows is a review of Bolivian tin miners' radio studies that have been made to date.

**Tin Miners' Radio in Bolivia**

I have chosen Bolivian tin miners' radio as an appropriate exemplar for this study because it is one of the longest-running and most successful alternative media projects (in terms of public participation and social transformation) documented worldwide. In addition, the precarious state of mining in Bolivia threatens to close down the few remaining miners' radio stations, making this study a valuable historical contribution to the alternative communication literature.

Tin miners' radio in Bolivia dates back to 1947, placing it among the oldest alternative radio practices in the world. Despite its long history, Bolivian miners' radio has received little scholarly attention until recently. By and large, the work on miners' radio has been qualitative and historical in method. In addition to several good overviews of the historical and contemporary conditions surrounding miners' radio, work examining the stations' structural placement in society also exist. In between these two approaches have been a few testimonial accounts of mining life, in which the radio stations figured prominently. This section of the chapter presents the findings of the historical studies and structural analyses, making mention of the testimonial literature where appropriate.

**Historical Development**

Several accounts trace the beginning of miners' radio to 1947 in the town of Siglo XX, where a station was built at the workers' initiative (Cajías, 1989; Gumucio Dagron, 1989a; López, 1989; Reyes Velásquez, 1990). The emergence of miners' radio is viewed as a continuation of the struggle against literally centuries of exploitation and the result of a fortuitous historical conjuncture of the 1940s. Bolivian mining of the early
20th century was concentrated in the hands of three tin barons, collectively known as "la roscada" (Cajías, 1989). This oligarchy owned virtually all media outlets in the mining areas and exercised enormous influence on the metropolitan government.

But a coup in 1943 brought to power the contradictory regime of Gualberto Villaroel, who allowed union organizing in the tin mining region. Miners convened the Congress of Pulacayo (a town in the Bolivian altiplano) and drafted a class-based organizing plan called La Tesis de Pulacayo. Following this historic conference, the first miners' radio was established to publicize La Tesis de Pulacayo and to continue in the struggle to organize workers (Cajías, 1989; Gumucio Dagron, 1989a; López, 1989; Reyes Velásquez, 1990).

The stations served as a counterforce to the mine owners' media, which downplayed the repression of workers while sensationalizing the labor movement as radical and irresponsible (Cajías, 1989; Miranda, 1989). In addition to broadcasting their perspectives and rallying workers to form networks of solidarity, the miners also engaged in a vigorous lobbying effort aimed at gaining sympathy from universities, nonoligarchy media, and the government. The miners and their radio stations are credited with playing a leading role in the nation's revolution of 1952, which resulted in land redistribution and the nationalization of the mines.

Despite their ascent to power and success at dismantling the mining oligarchy, life in the mining sectors has remained impoverished, with rates for life expectancy lower and infant mortality higher than those experienced in the rest of the country (Nash, 1979; Reyes Velásquez, 1990). Indeed, power has been paradoxical for the miners in that their ability to threaten economic havoc by staging work stoppages has been met with military aggression to force concessions. What this has meant for the radio stations is periodic censorship, military crackdowns, and even bombardment. The development of radio stations surged after 1952 to such a point that a military
crackdown in 1967 resulted in 57 stations being closed under charges of subversion (Cajías, 1989). The prolabor politics of the stations also drew opposition from the Catholic Church, which financed the construction of a competing radio station run by an Oblate priest in the key mining town of Siglo XX (López Vigil, 1984; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983). The Oblates viewed the workers as communists and attempted to rally union members away from labor leaders. The introduction of the Oblate station, Radio Pío XII, led to "a war of the microphones" between the miners' station and the priests' station; both radics hired radio professionals from urban Bolivia to engage in battle (Lozada & Kúncar, 1986; Miranda, 1989). Within a few years, however, the church replaced the Oblate priest who opposed the workers, and the radio station has been regarded as an ally with labor ever since. In fact, Radio Pío XII has suffered many military attacks since it became a pro-union station.

Tin miners' radio, then, arose in the context of resistance to persistent economic exploitation coupled with sporadic, though recurring, violent opposition from the government. Within this general context, miners' radio has been identified as fulfilling three roles: (a) offering cultural programming and providing a link between miners and the union during normal times; (b) resisting military oppression during emergency times; and (c) organizing clandestinely against repressive governments during dictatorships (Lozada & Kúncar, 1986; O'Connor, 1990a). In all three contexts, the radios have been hailed as exemplars of participation for their organizational structure, their role in social praxis, and their ability to incorporate distinct social sectors.

Organizationally, the stations in the mining region were financed though monthly contributions from all workers. The stations generally fell under the supervision of the cultural sector of the local union, though some stations elected a separate three-member board from the membership at large to oversee daily operations (O'Connor, 1990c). The stations, then, were worker owned and managed (though not worker operated), leading
to a "self-governing spirit" or "participatory will" (Gumucio Dagron, 1989b). I say the
stations were not operated by workers because they have hired professional broadcasters
since their early days of operation when they were engaged in competing broadcasts
from the Catholic Church.

The stations have also been interpreted as highly participatory because of their
role in social praxis. That is, the stations formed a fundamental part of the labor
movement in Bolivia by broadcasting union news and workers opinions on a daily basis
(Cajías, 1989; Gumucio Dagron, 1989a, 1989b; López, 1989; López Vigil, 1984;
Lozada & Kúcar, 1983, 1986; Vía Flores, 1990). They played an integral role in
rallying workers to assemblies and in broadcasting the resulting proclamations and
activities. This has led to a sophisticated understanding of participation, wherein social
praxis is assumed to provide ratifying testimony to its implementation. All workers need
not speak in order to be regarded as active in radio production, for the social praxis itself
implies participation in the concrete situations defined by the medium. "Participation
implicates, therefore, understanding and consciousness that is critical and transformative
of one's reality" (Lozada & Kúcar, 1983).

Finally, the stations have been viewed as participatory in their ability to
incorporate actors that were not part of the union movement but who occupied a
subordinate role in society and therefore shared the common goal of effecting social
change. On one level, this has been the official view of the union: to draft proclamations
in opposition to the dominant broadcast ideology of competition and toward the
revitalization of popular, collective traditions that lead to participatory journalism
(Cajías, 1989). On the level of practice, the stations have opened their studios to rural
peasants to broadcast their concerns in the Aymara and Quechua languages. Indeed, the
practice of broadcasting in native languages has grown so pervasive that "radio Aymara"
has been identified as a distinct dialect in Bolivia (Briggs, 1981). Incorporating
campesino (peasant farmer) programming has led to the fomentation of traditional, collective forms of social organization, as well (Gumucio Dagron, 1989b; Kúncar, 1989; Lozada & Kúncar, 1986). In effect, the miners' stations have become cultural centers where the industrial and traditional meet, reproducing, circulating, and valorizing local beliefs, views, and customs (Gumucio Dagron, 1989b).

Historically, miners' radio has been viewed as emerging out of resistance to economic exploitation and embodying participatory practices in at least three ways (organizational structure, role in praxis, and incorporation of distinct social sectors) and in at least three contexts (peacetimes, crisis times, and repressed times). The most innovative forms of participatory programming, however, have come during periods of crisis, not during peacetimes, which, theoretically, offer the most flexibility.26 The most frequently cited participatory procedures—that is, specific production practices—all emerged from crisis situations. For example, the widely recognized chain of democracy, where one station boosted the signal of another to form an instantaneous communication network, was a spontaneous response to military aggression (Gumucio Dagron, 1989b; López Vigil, 1984; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983, 1986; World Communication Report, 1989). Likewise, the open microphone and emergent speaker were in response to military crackdowns, which closed down traditional channels of information, and was met by the miners' radios with more flexibility, in terms of access to broadcast facilities (Barrios de Chungara, 1978; López Vigil, 1984; Lozada & Kúncar, 1986; Reyes Velásquez, 1990). Participation has been assumed to operate in some form during all

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26 Practitioners are aware of the relationship between crisis and invention. Ernesto Miranda, codirector of Radio Pío XII, cited in López Vigil (1984), said, “The truth is that we know how to work best in times of repression and not so well in times of democracy. It is riskier but easier: the enemy is much clearer. The goals of our work are clearer, too” (p. 302).
three times identified above, but its intensification during periods of crisis is a factor that has yet to be discussed in an explicit and theoretic manner in the literature.

**Structural Analyses**

Although the historical body of work has been valuable in situating miners' radio within Bolivian society, a more theoretical understanding has been advanced by scholars working out of a structural framework. These scholars have interpreted miners' radio practices as being able to incorporate local cultural forms while reflecting larger relations of production and the miners' class position (Kúncar, 1989; O'Connor, 1989, 1990a). According to this argument, the emergence of miners' radio resulted from a combination of their identity as an important industrial class, their geographical isolation, and their pre-Inca forms of collective production, known as the ayllu. The struggle of the miners has been particularly well served by radio's ability to respond to indigenous collective forms of production, oral traditions, and high levels of illiteracy, as well. The genre of radio has been well suited to the particular cultural system and has been usefully managed by the miners, as reflected in the organizational and programming structure.

At the same time, the stations have constituted a counterhegemonic force within the larger relations of production, both national and global. They have done so in two ways. First, they have rallied workers and forged collective strategies on the local level. Second, they have established connections between stations through the use of rudimentary technologies to build broad-based coalitions necessary to foment a labor movement. Within this class framework, participation was implied in the concrete social praxis of defining working-class reality and building a transformative movement (Arce P., 1983; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983).

The macro, structural analyses have resulted in a view of resistance that by and large presented power as a transparent case of the underdog miners against the oppressive managers (Gumucio Dagnon, 1989a; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983; O'Connor,
1990c). But several authors have pointed out the heterogeneity of opinion within the labor movement that has resulted in marginalization of some actors. Within the broader, national workers' movement, tin miners have tended to remain detached from specific political parties and other labor unions. This relationship has tended toward "sectarization" and protection of the particular interests of miners, rather than an openness that would allow other political issues—with indirect, perhaps competing, connection to the miners—on the broadcast agenda (López, 1989). Even within the mining union itself, power has tended to concentrate in the hands of the secretary of culture, eclipsing ordinary workers from direct participation and relegating the radio producers to "second-class unionists" (López, 1989; Kúncar, 1989). These findings have come to the surface only recently in the examination of tin miners' radio, indicating that more sensitive attention must be paid to issues of power within this alternative practice.

**Contemporary Situation of the Mines**

Since 1985, Bolivia's economy has been guided by neoliberal policies of relaxing trade restrictions, reducing government subsidies, eliminating price controls, deregulating currency, and privatizing state industries (see Dunkerly & Morales, 1986, for background of the policy, and NACLA Report on the Americas, 1991, for a recent overview of its impact on the working class). This shift in governing policy has coincided with the depletion of the mines and the collapse of the world tin market and has had devastating effects on the mining sector. The national mining company (COMIBOL), for example, employed 27,500 miners in 1985; by 1990 it employed only 6,500 (Bolivia Country Profile, 1990). Despite the rapid dismantling of the mining sector, the Bolivian government has received continuous criticism from the World Bank that privatization is moving along too slowly, jeopardizing development loans (Latin American Monitor, 1992). The government policy and international pressure have been
countered with hunger strikes and protests by organized labor, which have been met with a mixture of military threats and some government concessions, mainly to consult with the unions prior to dismissing workers. The impact on miners' radio has been devastating; only seven stations continue to operate, and their future is in question (Murillo, 1989; Rivadeneira, 1987). The survival of the stations, according to one author, will depend on their ability to join forces with social actors not tied to the mining sector (O'Connor, 1990b). In any case, the critical status of the mining industry makes the study of tin miners' radio more urgent than ever.

The conjuncture of tin miners' radio as a counterhegemonic force with a tradition of collective production provides the opportunity for a rich contribution to theories of transformative and participatory media. The historical background and structural analyses provide ample evidence that Bolivian miners' radio stations acted as an unusual nexus of both industrial and traditional forms and practices. The recognition of these stations as a social force with a keen desire for participation seems to confound the tension that marks alternative media theories from Latin America.

Yet the studies offer little in the way of alternative communication theory. They provide little sense of how radio practitioners make and remake, duplicate and invent, change and rigidify participatory media through daily practice. Furthermore, relations of power, largely treated as if they were transparent, raise new questions regarding intracommunity discord and the responses of participatory media. In essence, previous studies have not generated a communication theoretic that allows them to describe practice in a way that avoids the pitfalls of the sender-receiver model that was challenged in the first place (Dervin, 1980). This dissertation will attempt to respond to the lack of attention to everyday practice and to avoid the pitfalls of structural analysis. I will do this by focusing, not on organizational structures, historical events, or coalition linkages--the
whats of communication—but on the daily production procedures—the hows of communication.

Outline of Chapters

The remainder of this dissertation is divided into six chapters as follows:

• Chapter two presents the methodology and methods used in this study. I outline criticisms from the Latin American literature that were relevant to the methodological choices I made for conducting this study. The methods I used were derived from ethnography and sense-making, an interviewing theory and method that complemented observations, participation, and collection of artifacts.

• Chapter three is an account drawn mainly from my personal journal kept while in the field. The purpose of the chapter is to situate myself in the study and to describe the conditions under which observations were made and interviews conducted. The information in this chapter has a bearing on the credibility of the data, analysis, and conclusions of this study.

• Chapter four is the foundational data chapter in this dissertation. It presents the theoretical vision of communication and social change derived from the perspective of the practitioners whom I interviewed. The theoretical visions articulated by practitioners help frame the specific communication procedures mentioned in this and subsequent chapters.

• Chapter five focuses on problematic differences arising in media practice. The chapter is drawn from 22 cases where practitioners identified a difference that stood out as significant in their media experience, documenting how difference arose, were handled, and led to various consequences. This chapter speaks to a principal weakness in both the alternative media literature in general and the Bolivian miners' radio research in particular, that of treating power as undifferentiated within social praxis.

• Chapter six centers on successful procedures of participation. I present an exemplar from the field involving the training of rural reporters by one of the stations. This chapter contains material that is central to our understanding of alternative media practice and useful to practitioners striving for public participation in programming.

• Chapter seven contains conclusions from the data, recommendations to practitioners, and directions for future research.
CHAPTER II
METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The theoretical critique of the sender-receiver communication model outlined in chapter one was accompanied by an explicit rejection of imported research methods, as well. In this chapter I will outline the methodological objections of Latin American scholars and explain the implications for this dissertation. These implications helped determine appropriate methodological choices in my study, which are presented in the following sections:

• Methodological Critique—an overview of the objections from Latin America to dominant research methods.

• Conceptual Framework—a presentation of the general methodological assumptions and goals of this project.

• Data Sources and Methods—a description of the research settings and the specific data gathering methods.

• Analytic Techniques—a description of the steps taken to analyze data from this study.

Methodological Critique

Beltrán (1975, 1980, 1985, 1991) provided a coherent and early critique of dominant methods in Latin American communication research, noting that adopted methods of inquiry tended to analyze communication outside of the context of the political, economic, and cultural structures surrounding the phenomena under study. Abstract constructs, like "development," were correlated to rates of technological adoption, which were never examined in terms of surrounding social, economic, and political factors and their constraints on behavior. Research findings predictably located
blame and/or praise in individual attitudes and behaviors and suggested solutions in functional adjustments to the existing system of relations. The approach held a conservative, pro-status quo bias that effectively eclipsed alternative and new systems of production from being proposed.

The critique of the dominant research ideology provided clear evidence that theories and methods are infused with cultural values and assumptions (especially revealing is Beltrán, 1980). Communication development research, for example, valued individualism and privileged technological solutions across research settings, reflecting the values and assumptions of primarily U.S. scholars. The critique of imported biases and research deficiencies were not contested by mainstream researchers, but, in fact, were recognized by the most influential scholars in the development field (Rogers, 1976). In discussing implicit biases, the critique pointed up the political nature of research, which is assumed always to represent specific interests, even under the guise of scientific neutrality. Stripping away the cloak of scientific objectivity has been proclaimed one of the major contributions of this research:

This politicization of communication research, which breaks with the aura of scientific neutrality, undoubtedly has been the crucial step forward by Latin America [sic] researchers and has significantly influenced their North American and European comrades to revise their guiding assumptions. (Marques de Melo, 1988)

Indeed, the critique of dominant research methods was an indictment of the scientific approach that assumed separation between the researcher and the object(s) under study in the neutral quest for understanding. The creation of knowledge was assumed to have political implications (i.e., not neutral in selection, construction, or presentation) that implicated the situated researcher in its creation. The turn away from

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1 Beltrán (1980), citing conference papers and public addresses, has gathered the mea culpas registered by Daniel Lerner, Wilbur Schramm, and Harold Lasswell.
detached observation led to a turn toward dialogic participation. This move was based largely on the writing of Freire (1970, 1973) in the area of critical pedagogy, which mandated educators to engage dialogically with students and to assume the role of both teacher and student, effectively removing the subject-object distinction.

Freire's methods were applied to a specific research task: liberation and concientización (consciousness and conscientiousness) of the disenfranchised through problem-posing education. Nevertheless, his work was adopted on a paradigmatic level. That is, the Freirean approach provided general orientation that was useful across specific questions and goals in the social sciences. The approach rejected a subject-object, knower-known division in the quest for knowledge and mandated dialogue as the "existential necessity" for understanding the human condition. In short, the Latin American critique of the communication research tradition coupled with the contributions and assumptions from Freire demanded that academic investigation be premised on involvement, not invasion (Atwood, 1986).

The critique of dominant research methods followed a logical progression and resulted in several implications. The emphasis on the context of communication phenomena stressed the situatedness of social reality. At its base, this premise stated that human behavior could not be understood in isolation of its surrounding social, political, and cultural milieu. The situatedness of understanding contained a double edge, however, as it pointed to the situated researcher, who brought values and assumptions to the task of creating knowledge. This realization revealed the political nature of research, debunking the claim that knowledge could be neutral or value free, and it

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2 For an early assessment of the vitality of this turn, see the review of participatory research programs in development communication conducted by O'Sullivan-Ryan and Kaplán (1978).

3 See mainly chapter three of Pedagogy of the oppressed for the methodological mandate.
implicated the researcher in the construction of understanding. With the loss of the detached researcher, dispassionately observing and recording human behavior, came the collapse of the subject-object separation and the turn toward dialogue and participation as a methodological mandate. The implications for contemporary researchers are that: (a) inquiry must attend to context surrounding the phenomena under study; (b) researchers must acknowledge their situatedness in the construction of understanding; and (c) methodological procedures must provide a structure for intersubjectively determining meaning in the research setting. In the next section I will discuss the methodological framework used in this dissertation, which was adopted in response to the Latin American critique and its implications.

Conceptual Framework

The critique of traditional social science methods is not unique to Latin America. The same methodological concerns raised above are shared by numerous researchers outside of Latin America. The rejection of the subject-object division in the construction of understanding is a common assumption in qualitative studies (Anderson, 1987; Carey & Christians, 1989; Denzin, 1989a, 1989b; Hammersley, 1992; Leiter, 1980; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mishler, 1986). The political nature of research also has been discussed in diverse research genres--action science, audience, education, feminism (Argyris, Putnam & Smith, 1985; Lather, 1986; Lindlof & Grodin, 1990). The adoption of qualitative methodological assumptions, however, does not define the specific, chosen methods, which must be appropriate to the research questions of a given study. Because of the specific research questions and the methodological implications stemming from the Latin American critique, I have adopted ethnography as the specific method for this study. More specifically, a subset of concerns raised recently in dialogic anthropology guided the study.
On Ethnography and Dialogic Ethnography

The precise definition of ethnography is "up for grabs" (Geertz, 1988; Van Maanen, 1988). Minimally, however, the method is defined as a way of knowing that is experientially driven and elevated to a level of reflection (Geertz, 1973; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Rose, 1990; Spradley, 1980). That is, understanding culture ethnographically means participating in the day-to-day activities that give rise to the specific phenomena of interest—in this case, media practice. Through detailed observations, focused interviews, and the collection of artifacts, ethnographer's strive to construct a "thick description" of the actions and experiences and to elevate them to a level of reflection able to rescue the meanings in human situations on their own terms (Geertz, 1973; Denzin, 1989b). The methodology is deeply concerned with contextualizing research in attaching meanings to behaviors, events, and artifacts.

Ethnography's direct experience, contextual mandate might suggest that it implies "involvement, not invasion," but, in fact, quite the opposite has been true historically. Ethnography has been roundly criticized as an accomplice to colonialism, which not only invaded cultures but reified them into frozen stereotypes that served only to bolster and justify Western prejudices (Asad, 1985; Harrison, 1991; Said, 1978, 1989). The critique of traditional ethnography has sparked an energetic intellectual movement, however, to recover anthropology's promise of cultural critique in a way that displaces the authority of the ethnographer and draws, instead, on competing constructions of reality.

This body of anthropological work shares the concern raised in the Latin American critique and has seized on the concept of dialogue as a paradigm to guide ethnography. Part of this group has concentrated on the field encounter between the researcher and subjects, emphasizing the intersubjective negotiation and construction of meaning (Dwyer, 1979, 1982; Pool, 1991; Roscoe, 1991; Schrijvers, 1991; Tedlock,
Dialogue is posited as a way of guiding conduct that implicates the scholar's role in constructing knowledge, undercuts the researcher's "contemplative gaze," and exposes subject-object vulnerability and the contingent nature of knowing (Dwyer, 1979, 1982; Webster, 1982). Another school of dialogic anthropologists has concentrated on the production of texts to avoid portraying abstract, a-historical others from the perspective of the privileged authority (Clifford, 1983, 1986; Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Crapanzano, 1982, 1990, 1992; Marcus & Fischer, 1986; Rabinow, 1986; Tyler, 1986, 1990; Van Maanen, 1988). Again, dialogue operates as a paradigm for construction through hermeneutic principles of intersubjectively determining interpretations of the objectifications of life, which "is only made possible by plumbing the depths of subjective understanding" (Bruner, 1986 p. 6). Ethnographic texts produced in this method strive to incorporate multiple views, voices, and perspectives when (re)presenting reality.

In both cases--dialogue in fieldwork and dialogue in textual production--the result has been to reject the simple matters of making detailed observations, interviewing key informants, taking good field notes, drawing accurate maps, and writing up the results to derive patterns in behavior and meaning. The critique of traditional ethnography has not suggested the abandonment of these methods per se but has revised the assumptions guiding their use and the modes of implementing their collection. Assumptions about culture traditionally held that objects of study could be accurately and transparently described as a unified corpus of symbols with a definitive interpretation (Clifford, 1986). The mode of gathering data was the authoritative gaze, which captured observations and organized them into domains and taxonomies. The revised assumptions view objects, behaviors, and meanings as contested, contradictory, temporal, and emergent, containing moments of pattern and rupture, stability and flux. The rejection of an authoritarian, singular view of culture has at least two
methodological implications: (a) it points fieldworkers in specific directions when collecting data; and (b) it suggests a particular mode of data collection that is cognizant of the critique.

Following these implications, fieldworkers are pointed to make observations and collect data from multiple and competing perspectives on a given culture or phenomena. In addition, observation and collection should be done in a way that recognizes—perhaps enhances—multiplicity, contingency, and ambiguity as well as pattern and stability. The mode of data collection has moved from the “contemplative gaze” to dialogue as a way to de-center the authority of the ethnographer and to open up a space for contest and multiplicity (Dwyer, 1977, 1979, 1982; Roscoe, 1991; Shostak, 1981; Tedlock, 1983; Webster, 1982). The move from observation to interaction implies shifting from detachment to collaboration, from viewing at a distance to listening while drawing near, from the security of scribbling down observations to vulnerability of expressing thoughts, ideas, and questions (Conquergood, 1991; Bruner, 1986; Dwyer, 1977, 1979). The dialogic ethnographer is posited variously as collaborator, archivist, scribe, and critical observer.

The dialogic approach to ethnography would seem to require systematic triangulation in data collection and analysis to destabilize the researcher-as-authority and to gather competing constructions of reality. Multiple techniques of collecting data—observation, participation, interviews, artifact collection, social activism—and maximally different perspectives of related phenomena in interviews and observations are called for by the dialogic approach. The specific methods that I adopted will be explained in the next section.

Data Sources and Methods

Data for this study were collected in two phases: a 6-week reconnaissance trip in July and August 1992, and a 3-month participant observation from September to
December 1993. The first study was designed primarily to establish contacts in mining towns and to explore the feasibility of this project. Virtually all of the data presented in this dissertation came from the second trip to the field. The goal of selecting particular research sites and specific methods in this second trip was to reflect the call for methodological pluralism described in the conceptual framework above. In the sections below, I will describe the research sites, interview subjects, and data-collecting tools and sources, which included a deductive framework, a reflexive journal, observational field notes, interviews, artifacts, and videotapes. I have summarized the data sources and methods in Figure 5.

![Table: Research Sites]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Sites</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio Nacional de Huanuni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration: 4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Interviews: 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Pío XII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration: 5 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Interviews: 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CISEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration: 3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Interviews: 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data-collecting Tools and Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deductive framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject-made videotapes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The blacked out cell in means that no data was collected at the identified site.

Figure 5. Summary of data-collecting tools and sources, research sites, and time as a participant-observer.

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4 The use of the term "reflexive," instead of "reflective" is used here and in chapter three to retain the meaning of reflexivity.
Research Sites

Three research sites were selected for this study: two radio stations—Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII—and a nongovernmental organization (NGO)—the Centro de Investigación y Servicio Popular, CISEP (Center for Popular Research and Support). Each of these sites is identified with tin miners' culture, identity, and political struggles, though only one is a radio station owned and operated by Bolivian tin miners. I included these three sites—rather than selecting three union stations, for example—in order to incorporate maximal structural difference and variety between the facilities. At the same time, I felt that each of the sites fit within the framework delimited by the literature focusing on Bolivian tin miners' radio stations. I will give only a brief description of each site here as I discuss them in greater depth in chapter three.

The first site I visited was Radio Nacional de Huanuni, a short-wave radio station owned by the tin miners' union in the town of Huanuni. This station was selected because Huanuni, population 17,000, was the most viable state-owned mine in Bolivia, having suffered least under the government's privatization policy, which has eliminated 75% of the mining workforce since 1985. It was the only mining center left with a fully staffed radio station that broadcasted on a daily basis; the remaining eight miners' stations in the country transmitted programs with very few employees and on an irregular basis. Radio Nacional de Huanuni was the only miners' radio station representative of the alternative practices that have been written about over the years. During this portion of the study I lived for 1 month in a miners' compound with other union members and with a few radio station employees. I visited the station every day and night, accompanying employees as they went about their daily routines. Living in the same conditions as the miners and radio producers—a 9-by-12-foot adobe room, a single commode shared 15 families, a common faucet providing water only 3 hours a day, no bathing facilities—gave me intimate access to important, casual conversations.
and instilled in me an appreciation for the difficult circumstances endured in the mining towns.

The second research site was Radio Pío XII, an AM and short-wave station in Siglo XX, a town approximately 2 hours south of Huanuni. Radio Pío XII was started by Catholic Oblate priests in the 1950s to combat perceived communist tendencies of the miners' radio station there. After several antagonistic years between Radio Pío XII and the union station, the church removed the priest responsible for the anti-communist crusade. Since then the station has forged an alliance with the miners and suffered multiple attacks by the military. It is the most studied radio station in Bolivia and is referenced as an example of miners' radio in virtually all research (Beltrán, Suárez, & Isaza, 1990). Radio Pío XII was more financially secure than the miners' union radio station, which I believed may have given it more flexibility to respond to the changing economic and social circumstances in the region. In fact, circumstances of mining have changed most radically in Siglo XX, which was once the largest tin producing and processing center in Bolivia but was decimated in the government restructuring of 1985. The radical shift in employment in the town made this an important site to include as miners' radios have been criticized for being unable to respond successfully to changing conditions. In all I spent 5 weeks at Radio Pío XII, living in one of the rooms in the church rectory at the station. Living on the station premises greatly facilitated my access to production routines at all times of the day.

The third research site was at CISEP, an NGO in the urban center of Oruro, located 1 hour north of Huanuni. Among other things, CISEP produced daily programs for cassette distribution to miners' radio stations that continued to broadcast. CISEP was formed in 1984 to work primarily with miners and the urban poor in literacy training, research, vocational courses, and radio program production. The organization was affiliated with the Jesuit order of the Catholic Church and was founded on principles of
liberation theology, one of the theoretical streams that influenced much of the Latin American theorizing of dialogue. I included CISEP in this study believing that its financial autonomy, integration with rural and urban community groups, and ancillary tasks of coalition building, education, and research would add comparative depth to this project. During this part of my study, I lived in a hotel near CISEP for 3 weeks, gathering data during business hours for the most part. My living and working arrangements with the institution were more formal and less integrated than they were in Huanuni or Siglo XX.

Interview Subjects

During my 3 months in the field I conducted interviews with 21 people (Table 3). Most of the interviews were conducted individually and during the last week or two that I was at each site, giving me time to establish a degree of rapport with each respondent. Three of the interviews—one at each site—were conducted in groups ranging from two to three persons. All of the interviews were tape recorded and transcribed word for word from beginning to end.

Table 3. Summary of interviews conducted in the field.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Radio Nacional de Huanuni</th>
<th>Radio Pío XII</th>
<th>CISEP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Station and Dept. Directors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Producers a</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time, Former Workers b</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Transcript Pages c</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Interview Time (minutes)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a “Program producers” includes announcers, reporters, and technicians.
b “Part-time” includes people’s reporters—discussed in chaptr six, and volunteers.
c Transcript pages were single-spaced, laser-printed copies.

In selecting interviewees, I consciously tried to incorporate multiple perspectives that would reflect the methodological concerns discussed earlier in this chapter. Indeed, I was able to include respondents from all administrative levels of the radio stations,
including managers, reporters, announcers, technicians, part-time producers, volunteers, and former workers. Nevertheless, the set of interviewees could have been enriched by the inclusion of more women; only 4 of the 21 respondents were women, which reflected the male-female ratios of the staffs at all of the research sites. Each of the interviews lasted almost an hour, except for those with people's reporters which averaged 28 minutes (the average time of Radio Pío XII interviews was 49 minutes when the people's reporters interviews were removed). The reason that these interviews were shorter was because the people's reporters primarily spoke Quechua, making the interviews--conducted in Spanish--somewhat abbreviated.

**Deductive Framework**

Based on the communication-as-procedure theoretic described in chapter one (see the Situation-Action-Consequence chain in Figure 4) I developed a data-collecting framework that included categories derived from 1992 pilot study data and from media production research. The structure of this framework was inspired by a similar chart in Dervin and Clark (1993, Table 7.1, p. 115) but was modified to suit the specific features of my study. Dervin and Clark's framework plotted situation-defining strategies on the vertical axis by communication tactics on the horizontal axis to produce a general scheme for generating communication inventions useful to the broad goals of constructing more democratic practices.

Because my study was much more specific, I developed a framework specifically to guide data collection at Bolivian tin miners' radio stations. The framework plotted media production cycles on the vertical, situation axis and journalistic practices on the horizontal, communicating actions axis. Consequences resulting from the intersection of situation and action were not defined prior to entering the field, but were expected to arise as the study progressed. The purpose of this framework was to facilitate the collection of data in a way that would retain the focus on dynamic
processes, a focus that is evidently difficult to maintain (if previous attempts are any clue). Indeed, the framework was helpful at directing my field observations initially, but as the study developed, I adopted a more flexible framework for guiding the data collection and, eventually, analysis (Table 4). The journalistic categories on both the horizontal and vertical axes were too confining for the myriad practices that I experienced, observed, and attended to in interviews. I found that I needed to develop a framework that was more open to inductive categories and patterns.

Table 4. Deductive framework for guiding observations and recording data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communicating Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Situation 3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation 4</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 constituted a flexible framework that was essentially a skeletal exemplification of the communication-as-procedure theoretic introduced in chapter one. It became the dominant template that I used across research sites to focus on the various radio production activities. Aside from guiding observations, this framework helped to tease out relationships and understandings of the collected data. As I analyzed these relationships and understandings—both in the field and after leaving—I developed specific categories based on the inductive force of the data. Nevertheless, these inductively derived categories were informed by the communication-as-procedure theoretic, which provided a basis for cross comparison and analysis. The specific
categories will be developed more fully in subsequent chapters as I present findings from the data. I have included this framework here as a matter of accountability of how my data collection was guided during the study.

**Reflexive Journal**

Continuously in my study, I kept a journal of personal thoughts, ideas, concerns, questions, and feelings that might have had a bearing on the research. These thoughts etc. were useful in determining the direction of the research--data collected, interviews conducted--as I reviewed them in the field and attended to perceived gaps and needs. The journal was also of use after leaving the field, as I was able to review systematically my notes and speculate on the impact my involvement had on the data. I have written up this material in chapter three, which situates me in each research setting and provides enough detail to allow readers to make judgments regarding the validity and reliability of the data collected in this study. Finally, the reflexive journal was well suited to the collaborative spirit of this study, as it documented relations of production between me and the practitioners, making my own involvement problematic at times.

**Field Notes**

Whenever I visited one of the research sites or accompanied a practitioner on the job I carried a memo pad with me and jotted down notes publicly. I focused my observations on the communication procedures that were enacted by practitioners, noting situational details and potential consequences of their actions. As was the case with interviews, I selected my observations based on the principal of maximizing diversity. In Huanuni, I spent approximately 1 week with the news director, 2 weeks with regular, full-time producers, and 1 week with part-time producers. Likewise at 2 Pío XII, I spent 2 weeks in rural areas where the station recruited and trained campesino [peasant farmer] volunteers, 2 weeks with the miners' outreach department, and 1 week with the news department (Radio Pío XII was divided into five main departments--
news, miners' affairs, rural affairs, women's issues, evangelization). Because of situational factors and time constraints, I was unable to spend time with practitioners in the women's issues and evangelization departments. Employees from both of these departments were on vacation when I first began my work at the station. As my study progressed, the station employees enlisted my help on several projects that took time away from those other departments. Finally, at CISEP I spent my entire 3 weeks with the radio production department, observing its work in the studio and in the town where information was gathered. Focusing observations on procedures and accompanying a diversity of practitioners on the job resulted in a set of field notes that was both comparable across sites and rich in the variety of documented experiences.

**Interviews**

Dialogic anthropologists make extensive use of interviews but seem to defy their own theoretical mandate when carrying them out. By and large, they enter into conversation with no theory of the interview. Rather, interviews follow a fairly conventional line of asking key informants to describe, at length, specific objects and rituals or to tell traditional and important stories (Crapanzano, 1982; Dwyer, 1982; Shostak, 1981; Tedlock, 1983). What seems to differentiate the dialogic from traditional ethnography is the liberal space given over to direct quotations and the inclusion of the researcher's questions. This study diverged from the anthropological tradition by structuring interviews along a communication theoretic outlined below.

Open-ended, in-depth interviews in this study were guided by the principles and assumptions of the sense-making method, which was compatible with the overall aims of this study (Dervin, 1983, 1989, 1992). As a subject-centered method, sense-making was particularly compatible with this study and with the critique raised by Latin American communication scholars in its sensitivity to the social, economic, and political
context that factored into communication practice. Furthermore, it provided systematic
guidance for interviews that facilitated the cross-comparison of data.

Sense-making adopts a dynamic view of communication behavior falling out of
the same conceptual framework as that of the communication-as-procedure theoretic
described in chapter one, thus providing continuity between interview and observational
data, as well. The sense-making method assumes that information is constructed, not
independently existing, and that communication behavior is responsive to, mandated by,
and constitutive of changing situational conditions. Furthermore, sense-making assumes
that communication behaviors can be both flexible and inflexible to changing conditions
and that those behaviors have real-world consequences for people. In addition to the
assumptions listed above, sense-making has adopted discontinuity as a universal human
condition that informs communication behavior. That is, sense-making rejects any
notion of isomorphism between concrete reality, perception of reality, and expressions
of reality. Rather, the method suggests that human experience is filled with gaps—in
perceiving, understanding, expressing—but that humans bridge these gaps in
communication and with real-world consequences for people.

Taken together, situations, bridging of gaps, and consequences constitute the
sense-making triangle that served as a metaphor for the construction of interview
protocols.\(^5\) In this study, I used the metaphor of the sense-making triangle to guide
interviews with radio managers, producers, and former or part-time producers (see
sample questionnaires in Appendix A). The interviews were conducted in two parts,
each of which explored specific media experiences in terms of their situations, gaps

\(^5\) I use the term consequences here to establish clearly the continuity between sense-
making and the communication-as-procedure theoretic I am using in this study. In fact,
consequences are often referred to as helps and hindrances in the sense-making
literature. They have also been framed as uses, effects, impacts, and so on in various
articles on sense-making over the years.
(difficulties, problems, confusions), and bridging behaviors (actions that helped and hindered completion of the experience). In the first part of the interview, I asked participants to tell me about a memorable media experience that they considered successful, valuable, or important. I used the sense-making triangle to learn what allowed that single program to happen, how the program was helpful (to self, community, specific groups in community, radio), not helpful (to self, community, specific groups in community, radio), what the practitioner found helpful to making the program successful (before, during, and after production), not helpful (before, during, and after production), how the program was related to past experiences (of self, community, specific groups in community, radio), and future aspirations (of self, community, specific groups in community, radio). In the second half of the interview I used a similar series of questions to flesh out a second experience, only this time I asked participants to describe a memorable occasion that they considered difficult, problematic, or unsuccessful.

I developed a questionnaire for this study that I used as a flexible guide, rather than a standard protocol applied across respondents. This flexibility allowed me to probe specific responses that appeared fruitful without abandoning comparability across interviews. Because of the stability offered by the sense-making triangle and the repetitiveness of the questions, the interviews maintained a firm basis for cross comparison.

Artifacts

A minor source of data in this study was the collection of artifacts from all three research sites. In general, artifacts either supplemented observations and interviews or reflected information about the relationships between myself and the practitioners. Artifacts that supplemented observations and interviews included pamphlets used in the training of people’s reporters, booklets provided to miners working in cooperatives,
programs recorded from the radio, and agendas prepared for seminars and workshops. Artifacts that reflected on personal relationships included gifts and mementos given to me in the field. Both kinds of artifacts have been used to stimulate my recollection of events and to guide my interpretations of the data.

**Subject-generated Videos**

A final data source in this study was subject-generated videotapes, which were appropriate to the dialogic framework of this study. I brought a VHS camcorder and videotapes into the field and left them at each research site for practitioners to use at their convenience while I lived in each town.\(^6\) I will explain my methodological reasoning first and then will discuss the data that were generated during my study.

Subject-generated videos depart from traditional anthropological uses of film and video as authoritative documentaries of various cultures (see Collier & Collier, 1986, for a comprehensive methodological review). Images produced by traditional ethnographers, by and large, have been treated as raw data, used in the analysis of cultures and in the presentation of evidence in reports.

In contrast, subject-generated videos provide a way of generating data (see Chalfen, 1992, for a recent review of this work). Images as generators of data (as opposed to images as data, per se) have developed in two directions. The majority of work in this area has used images generated by researchers to stimulate discussion by subjects (Schwartz, 1989). This widely used practice, known as the photo interview, is useful in determining— from the subject’s point of view— data that are important, unimportant, connected, and missing (Collier & Collier, 1986, provide a complete discussion of the method). Less common has been the use of subject-generated images

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\(^6\) I did not use the camera at CISEP because they already had a camera that they used regularly. Also, most of their production occurred in the studio and not in the field as was once the case.
where researchers have introduced cameras into fieldwork with the goal of having the subjects themselves document their lives (the pioneering work in this area is Worth & Adair, 1972).

This method seemed to be responsive to the critiques leveled against traditional communication research from Latin American scholars. It placed subjects at the center of determining matters of importance, thus ameliorating the imposition of values from outside. Furthermore, it was the method of documentary most responsive to the cultural assumptions guiding dialogic ethnography. In tapping this research tool, I had assumed that the subject-generated videos would often focus on matters of importance to the research community that would expand the range of issues and topics under study, thereby fulfilling the methodological mandate to include multiple viewpoints and interpretive contests. Also, subject-generated videos periodically document events that are unobtainable by traditional methods. Finally, subject-generated videos are one of the few ways researchers can offer a tangible benefit to a research community, both in terms of hands-on skills and in final works that a community can keep.

Unfortunately, I was unable to collect many subject-generated videos in this study (I had much better luck collecting such tapes in my reconnaissance trip to Bolivia). In part, the rainy weather interfered with videotaping that practitioners had planned in the field. In addition, practitioners at both Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII recruited me to videotape various events occurring in their towns. My attempts to turn the cameras over to practitioners in both places were minimally successful, but I was able to contribute to 2 documentaries in the towns. Despite the lack of subject generated videos in the final part of my study, I have relied on several of the tapes from the field in this study, mainly as supplements to my field notes and interviews.
Analytic Techniques

I used an amalgam of sources when deciding exactly how to proceed with data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Wolcott, 1990). I did not follow the exact procedures laid out by any one of these scholars. In fact, I ended up wasting time and energy when I mechanically adopted specific procedures such as "unitizing data" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), building meta-matrices (Miles & Huberman, 1984), or logging categories, properties, and dimensions on index cards (Strauss & Corbin 1990). What I did find useful, however, were the general principles, directions, and clarifications given by these writers. These principles, directions, and clarifications included:

- Systematically and simultaneously obtaining and analyzing data in the field to sharpen both data collecting and category generating. This included seeking input from practitioners regarding preliminary analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Wolcott, 1990).

- Developing categories that could stand alone, be distinguished from one another, and be abstract enough to override and integrate specific cases, starting with the broadest categories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Wolcott, 1990).

- Logging memos of conceptual distillations to myself during early stages in the study as a first step of moving from description to analysis and keeping them for later reference (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

- Integrating categories by searching for relationships, patterns, and groups within and between them (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

- Tacking between data and theory (inductive-deductive) when searching for patterns and relationships, allowing the data to have a "disciplining effect" on theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

- Using a variety of analytic templates to pull fragmented pieces of data together. Miles and Huberman (1984) were particularly useful at providing examples of how to search across cases, sites, or respondents for unifying themes, characteristies, or qualities.

The principal sources of data for this dissertation were journal entries, field notes, and interview transcripts. Artifacts and videotapes were consulted only as they brought valuable information to bear on categories and patterns emerging from the data.
I will not discuss these secondary data sources, then, but will focus only on the analytic procedures used to examine journal entries, field notes, and interview transcripts.

**Journal Entries**

I recorded entries into my journal at least twice a week specifically reflecting on my own thoughts, ideas, actions, and emotions. contemplating how they were interacting with the practitioners in the study. I reviewed them irregularly--especially at the beginning of the study--but found them to be a growing source of comfort as my study progressed. The journal was useful at drawing my attention to certain issues needing my concentration, effort, and attention, but I did not examine its contents systematically until after I left the field.

In writing up my data chapters, I decided that I needed to situate myself in the study in order to be true to the methodological and theoretical premises that I had adopted. Before I began sorting through my personal journal, I had determined the structure of the reflexive chapter, which made the analysis of the entries simple and straightforward. I determined that I needed to focus on entries that reflected the relations of meaning production in the field and that documented the conditions under which the data were collected. I read through the entire journal sorting material by research site, significant experiences within each site, and repeated themes within and across sites. I selected and highlighted portions of the journal based on their representativeness of my experiences and on their ability to situate me vividly within the research settings. The resulting chapter was conceptualized as crucial to establishing the credibility and validity of the study.

**Field Notes**

Field notes for this study were kept separate from my reflexive journal and were collected and analyzed much more systematically. I took field notes each day and reviewed them every evening looking for significant procedures, important details,
potential gaps and questions that would help me to focus observations and note taking the following day. As the data began amassing, I clustered observations into coherent units defined as a story, event, occurrence, production, item, program, or session. I assigned each story-event-occurrence cluster a number and name, and I recorded the page numbers of my field notes that corresponded to that unit (Appendix B lists all of the clusters logged during my 3-month study). A sample recording of a completed cluster is displayed below (Table 5). In this example, unit number 3 documented the La Paz meeting between union officials and government ministers. The times when practitioners had dealt with the program were logged in my field notes in notebook 1 and on pages 22.5, 23-24, 25, 28.5, 36.5, and 37. Keeping track of coherent units this way in the field kept me aware of items that I needed to focus on each day. In analyzing procedures, I was able to examine holistic units in terms of their situational factors, communication actions, and consequences.

Table 5. Sample of log entry of complete data cluster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit #</th>
<th>Item/Event/Story</th>
<th>Notebook and Page Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>La Paz Meeting</td>
<td>1) 22.5, 23-24, 25, 28.5, 36.5, 37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the end of my fieldwork, I had logged 55 holistic units, which had been organized and analyzed in the field. The early patterns and interpretations I drew from the analysis done in the field were presented to practitioners in casual conversation, during formal interviews, and in presentations that I made to groups. The responses of practitioners--agreements, disagreements, additions, and so on--became part of my field notes and have been incorporated into this study.

When I returned from the field, I reviewed each unit 1 at a time, specifically looking for instances of communication procedures. Depending on the amount of pages corresponding to each unit, I read over my field notes two to five times, logging
communication procedures. For complex units, I recorded the range of events on a
chronological time line on a piece of notebook paper, abbreviating them in their entirety.
Once I completed the chronological time lines, I went back over the data, pulling out
procedures and logging them on a master sorted-data list. Categories on the list were
developed inductively during the analysis. I also wrote an abbreviated account of the
unit from start to finish on a summary-profile list that documented the situations,
actions, and consequences for every unit in the entire data set. I used the time lines and
the summary-profile list when I began searching for patterns in the procedures that were
collected on the sorted-data list. Both the time lines and the summary profiles were
designed to help me maintain a holistic sense of the data as I went about analyzing them.

Interview Transcripts

In addition to the field notes, the interviews were studied systematically, as well.
I reviewed each interview four times. The first review was a word-for-word
transcription of audio cassettes. Because each interviewee was asked to discuss two
specific incidents, I immediately assigned the interviews a unit number to correspond
with the holistic incident that had been discussed. Not all respondents were able to
identify two independent incidents, therefore some of them appear only once on
Appendix B as units 56 to 90. Aside from giving each incident a unit number, name,
and page number, I also recorded an abbreviated account of the incident on my
summary-profile list where like descriptions from field note data appeared. These were
useful later in the analysis to maintain a holistic sense of the data that were broken apart
into separate procedures.

After all interviews had been transcribed, logged, and summarized, I went back
to the beginning to read each transcript in detail, using a colored highlighter to mark
passages containing accounts of communication procedures. Immediately following this
detailed reading, I re-read the highlighted passages of the transcript, coded the
procedures, and logged them on the sorted-data list. I followed these steps for all of the transcripts, refining the categories contained in the sorted-data list along the way. Before settling on a final sorted-data list, however, I read all transcripts a final time in their entirety. On this final reading I looked for procedures that might have been missed on the initial detailed reading. I also gave the highlighted passages a final code, which I double checked against the original sorted-data list for discrepancies. Where discrepancies occurred, I re-read the entire passage to determine how it should be coded. Very few passages were double coded. This final reading and coding was valuable for it caught some careless, clerical omissions that would have gone undetected otherwise. It also forced me to clarify differences between categories that resulted in greater consistency in the sorted data.

Once all of the field notes and interviews had been sorted into procedural categories, I systematically reviewed these manageable chunks of data for themes and patterns. The chapters that follow reflect the themes and patterns that emerged from the data. I have not organized chapters around singular procedures but have presented multiple procedures as they informed the dominant themes and patterns running across and connecting separate communication procedures. I have done this with the intention of maintaining the holistic sense of the experiences I documented in field notes and interviews.
CHAPTER III

THE SETTINGS: PEOPLE, PLACES, AND RELATIONSHIPS

The participatory methodological aims of this dissertation warrant that the presentation of data and of analysis begins with a descriptive portrait chapter sketching out the general context of the research. This chapter is designed to do two things. First, it will provide the reader with enough familiarity of the different settings to be able to make sense of, or at least to process more quickly, the data in the succeeding chapters. Second, it provides me with a place to separate out and present my thoughts, emotions, and reflexions\(^1\) as recorded during the study in my personal journal—an important data source, but one that will be muted in the remaining chapters.

Placing this material here breaks with conventional ethnographic practice, which typically relegates confessional information to an appendix or to a completely separate monograph. Claiming a more central space for this information is a matter of both convenience and intellectual honesty. It is but a device of convenience for both the reader and myself inasmuch as it provides a way to begin untangling the complexity resulting from three months of intensive fieldwork. It is a debriefing mechanism that puts some flesh on data collection procedures outlined in the abstract in chapter two, paying closer attention to the interaction between the researcher and the researched. Furthermore, this narrative strategy serves my methodological purpose of placing

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\(^1\) The use of the term "reflexions" is not a typographical error. It is used unconventionally here to retain the meaning of "reflexivity." During the study I strived to examine my examining and to record my thoughts and feelings of how my conduct changed the research. My hope and belief is that this resulted in a reflexive journal, not merely a reflective journal.
myself at risk, of inviting both myself and others to scrutinize and evaluate how my involvement in the data gathering process has shaped the findings of this research. This strategy implicates an active role for readers of this dissertation. They (you) are expected to perform, in a sense, to cast themselves "into the skin" of the researcher who tried to get into the skin of the media practitioners of this study.\footnote{For the purposes of consistency, I used the term "practitioner" throughout this study to refer to the participants in Bolivia. Practitioners included high-level administrators, technicians, reporters, announcers, secretaries, part-time workers, and volunteers at the three research sites.}

This chapter is important as a contextual tool for readers; it is aimed at making them intelligent companion participant-observers, in the succeeding chapters. This chapter is not of central importance to the theoretical questions and empirical interests of the dissertation, so it will be a pen portrait, containing just enough information to serve as a pocket reference for readers. Reflections from my personal journal are included to help situate myself in this ethnographic project.

This chapter is ordered into five sections:

- **Overview** --a description of where I went and and explanation of why I went there. This is designed to give the reader a general context for situating the study.

- **Organizational Structures**--a detailed account of the people, programs, and routines at the research sites. In this section readers should start to get a "feel" for each location; they might begin to develop expectations regarding data collection and findings still to come.

- **Field Relations**--a discussion my living arrangements, day-to-day activities, and key events that help to situate myself in this project. My hope is that readers will get a sense of what it was like being there and that they will be brought a little bit closer to the data.

- **Data Collection**--an inventory of data collected and the rationale driving observations and interviews. This background information is important for laying the basis on which claims will be made in following chapters.

- **Final Reflections**--an evaluation of the ethnographic method and on how I think I drew near to alien concepts. Like the previous section, the aim is to provide information that will establish my legitimacy to make knowledge claims in future chapters.
Overview

The theoretical issues underpinning this study accounted for my selection of Bolivian tin miners' radio as a potentially rich exemplar of alternative media practice. Yet within this delimited empirical frame of Bolivian tin miners' radio exist enormous complexity and rich diversity. I attempted to incorporate as much complexity and diversity as possible when selecting the field sites to study. This section describes the three research sites to display their specific contributions to this study.

My study was conducted in two phases: a predissertation reconnaissance trip in July and August 1992 and a 3-month project conducted a year later. The objective of the first phase was to establish contacts, lay the groundwork, and explore the feasibility for a follow-up study. After surveying multiple locations in Bolivia, I identified three sites for the dissertation study.

From September 7 to December 7, 1993, I conducted fieldwork at three media production sites: 4 weeks at Radio Nacional de Huanuni in Huanuni, 5 weeks at Radio Pío XII in Siglo XX, and 3 weeks at the Centro de Investigación y Servicio Popular (CISEP, Center for Popular Research and Service) in Oruro (Figure 6). The first two sites are rural mining towns in the heart of Bolivia's tin mining region. The third site is in the urban center and capital city of the Department of Oruro, which serves as a commercial center for the mining trade. What follows is a brief description of each site, followed by the reasons for their incorporation into the study.
Radio Nacional de Huanuni

The first site I visited was Radio Nacional de Huanuni in the mining town Huanuni (population 17,000), located about 1 hour south of the city of Oruro. The town lived primarily from mining; however, the labor force and social atmosphere there were hardly homogeneous. At the time of the research, state-paid miners numbered 1,100, accounting for 17% of all state miners (Hoy, 1993). These miners were referred to as regulares (normal or regular employees), as opposed to the 2,000 independent workers who dredged the tailings of processed ore from Huanuni’s polluted river. The independent workers were organized into three cooperatives and were known as cooperativistas or relaveros (rewashers). In addition to independent mining, other sources of employment were nearby peasant farms and the trade they generated at Huanuni’s central market, and a sizable number of small shops and restaurants.

Radio Nacional de Huanuni, as it was referred to by locals, was the only research site in my study that was truly a tin miners’ station. I selected this site because it was the largest and best financed of the few remaining tin miners’ radio stations in Bolivia. The relatively large number of union members paid una mita (the indigenous
term for 1 day's wage) to the union each month. Half of the mita paid for the union staff and activities, and the other half went to pay for salaries and equipment of the radio and low-power television station owned and operated by the union in Huanuni. The dues from this large membership ensured that the radio station was staffed and maintained at a reasonable level—a luxury no other miners' radio station could claim. My assumption in selecting this site was that Radio Nacional de Huanuni would have been the most likely place to encounter the empowering qualities with which Bolivian miners' radio stations have been identified in the literature, simply because it was the only remaining station with a firm financial foundation.

Radio Pío XII

The second research site was Radio Pío XII, a Catholic station located in the rural town of Siglo XX, 2 hours south of Huanuni, but isolated by a treacherous, one-lane, winding dirt road. Siglo XX is next to the civilian town of Llallagua, a central trading center for campesinos (peasant farmers) in the northern Department of Potosí. A very short distance from these towns—popularly referred to as Llallagua/Siglo XX—is the once great tin-processing center of Catavi. Radio Pío XII was selected as a research site because of the diversity it added to the study: a mining center on the economic decline coupled with a religious-owned station.

Before the worldwide tin crash of 1985, the state mining company, COMIBOL, employed about 10,000 workers in Siglo XX and Catavi, which were considered the most combative mining centers in Bolivia. Government firings, or "relocalizations" as they are euphemistically called, reduced that force down to its current number, 300. Nevertheless, the principal mine, Cancañiri, has not been closed. Rather, it has been turned over to independent cooperatives (former state employees, by and large) who are organized into six different groups: Cooperativa Siglo XX; Cooperativa 20 de octubre; Cooperativa Dolores; Cooperativa Juan del Valle; Cooperativa del Carmen; and
Cooperativa 23 de marzo. The division of the work force into separate cooperatives has led to disunity and infighting, charges of favoritism and corruption. Even though they number 5,000, the cooperativistas (members of the worker-owned mining collectivities) have been unable to marshal any measurable social and political influence. As the largest and most complex cooperative region, Siglo XX magnified the general struggles for survival faced by Bolivian miners and their radio stations. It was an important place to study, therefore, in terms of specific media practices responding to devastating new circumstances.

Radio Pío XII was selected as a place to observe these media practices for several reasons. Even though it is owned and operated by Oblate priests, the radio has a tradition of struggling for miners' causes and, therefore, fit within the general "miners' radio" framework delimiting this study. Although there were two miners' union radio stations in Siglo XX–Catavi, neither one had the financial resources to guarantee stable personnel, programming, or even hours of operation. Meanwhile, Radio Pío XII continued to receive a fairly generous budget from a German foundation affiliated with the Catholic Church. The firm financial footing of Radio Pío XII opened up possibilities for innovating responsive programs to the crisis situation of miners and constituted a richer data source for this study. The political economic arrangements of this radio station created different constraints and freedoms from those operating at the union station. Seeing how these differences played themselves out in practice has added theoretic and empirical depth to the findings and has intersected meaningfully with the theoretic work on alternative communication.

3 Radio Pío XII began as a project to fight communism in the mining towns and was initiated by conservative Catholic priests. Its early years were full of conflict with the miners, but since the mid-1960s it has been identified with the workers and has been closed by the military several times. See López Vigil (1984) for a complete history.
The final field site for this project was in the urban center of Oruro, one of the poorest capital cities of Bolivia's departments. CISEP was a nongovernmental organization (NGO) funded by the Jesuit order of the Catholic Church working under the slogan "Bolivia sin oprimidos" (Bolivia without any oppressed). The eleven employees were divided into three departments: information, miners' affairs, and urban affairs. The information department included a small library that was open to the public and a recording studio that produced weekly programs for distribution on miners' radio stations. The departments of miners' and urban affairs conducted workshops and popular education courses in literacy, organization, and vocational skills.

I included this site in the project because its heavy concentration in both radio production and miners' affairs fit within the empirical frame of this study while incorporating organizational complexity not found at the union or Catholic stations. More specifically, the organization of CISEP afforded the opportunity to investigate how different sectors of a social service agency served, complemented, and, perhaps, competed with programming distributed on miners' radio stations. This combination held important implications for theoretical concerns growing out of the praxis literature described in chapter one in particular. That work envisaged alternative media practice as nested within a larger social movement, a vision that was approximated in the production arrangements at CISEP.

Organizational Structures

This section lays out the organizational structure of each site so that the reader can begin to attach some detail to the different people and places. In gaining a sense of what these sites were like, the reader should start to develop expectations regarding data collection and findings. The remainder of this section is divided by location, with an outline of the programming schedules and staffs of each place.
Radio Nacional de Huanuni

This station transmitted from 5 A.M. to 10 P.M. on weekdays, with a more restricted schedule on weekends, on the 5965 kilohertz frequency. This shortwave signal could be picked up anywhere in Bolivia and from most places around the world.\(^4\) Programming followed a regular master schedule and included music, news and information, community service, consciousness raising, and sports. Music programs totaled approximately 6 hours a day, combining requests with standard formats required by the union representatives. The formats included indigenous Bolivian music, national contemporary artists, and contemporary Latin American artists. Seldom were U.S. or European artists played. News and information programs totaled approximately 7 hours a day, encompassing a wide variety of shows. This included a formal morning and afternoon newscast, each lasting 1 hour, and an informal morning program where anyone could drop into the station to talk about local issues and events. On alternating days, the station made contact via radio with other miners’ radio stations in the country to share news of faraway regions. The station also broadcast three different programs produced by regional NGOs that focused on problems of the working class. Finally, in the news and information category, the station produced a daily program in native Quechua aimed at issues among campesinos. As a community service, the radio broadcast at no charge messages to and from listeners. These were generally sent from people in Huanuni to friends and relatives in other cities, taking the place of mail and telephone. The remaining broadcast time was taken up by a daily sports program and a show aimed at raising consciousness of the rights of children.

\(^4\) That the signal reaches all of Bolivia is of importance in understanding some of the station’s programming decisions, such as regular announcements made to listeners in distant Bolivian cities and the productions by NGOs in Cochabamba.
Although the station was financed largely through union dues, the day-to-day operations were conducted by a professional staff, most of whom came from Huanuni or other mining towns. This is in contrast to the early practices of tin miners' radio stations, which contracted with professional broadcasters from urban areas in order to compete with other stations (López Vigil, 1984; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983). Still, only one miner had a regular program at the station. Nevertheless, control of the budget and programming was overseen by an administrative body made up of three miners elected by the membership at large to 1-year terms. In addition to interacting regularly with their representatives, miners had complete access to the station and staff and circulated in and out of the station at all hours every day. Dropping in at the station was facilitated by its physical location; the station was situated on the main street about midway between the centers of labor activities (the mine) and of civilian activities (the plaza, municipal offices, the market).

The station had twelve full-time staff members and six part-time employees. Of these, four women and nine men were involved in making programs. The employees were introduced to me along strict hierarchical titles—"This is the station director," "This is the news director," and so on. I was surprised over the course of the study to see how regularly these hierarchical lines blurred. Everyone from the news director to the technician broke out of the strict job definitions that had been described to me during introductions and interviews. The news director could be found scrounging up the debts owed by local advertisers (this accounted for a miniscule portion of operating revenue). Announcers, at times, took over the controls of absent technical production operators. The technician doubled as a program producer and frequently filled in for absent announcers. And even the station manager took on a variety of menial tasks beyond the administrative duties of his position. In a very concrete sense, then, work practices were democratized in that employees regularly shared tasks without ever relinquishing the
responsibilities inherent in their positions. In addition, these practices were nested within the larger democratic organization of the union. Many of the decisions at the station reflected the organizational arrangements of the union.

Part of the democratization of tasks was due to the lack of personnel at the station. With only twelve full-time workers, the station was often short of staff when producing local programs. The assignments and responsibilities of the twelve employees were as follows: one station manager supervised daily operations, gathered news, wrote a daily editorial, and hosted an evening program; one news director was in charge of reporting, editing, and producing two daily newscasts; four announcers covered on-air shifts, did minimal news gathering; three operators were in charge of running tapes, records, and control boards; and three clerical/technical workers had occasional on-air opportunities. Although their responsibilities were clearly delineated, employees frequently had to cover for one another in periods of absence.

The station was housed in a two-story, whitewashed adobe building containing separate offices for the record collection, news department, station manager, receptionist, broadcast booth, and audio studio. In addition, an auditorium that could seat about 130 people was located next to the broadcast booth, which had a large, glass window looking out to the stage and first few rows of seats. The auditorium was used for meetings of housewives, campesinos, and miners, as well for variety shows involving children and local youth. Because the auditorium was adjacent to the broadcast booth, the station could easily extend a microphone to the audience to facilitate live programming. In front of the station was a small yard and a water faucet, which was in constant use by nearby housewives and children, who filled containers with water for cooking and cleaning. The combination of the station's location, auditorium, and water faucet encouraged a constant coming and going of a variety of people and gave the site a
feel of a vital community center where issues of politics, culture, and survival intersected.

Radio Pío XII

Radio Pío XII transmitted from 4:30 A.M. to 11 P.M. weekdays, with an expanded schedule on Saturdays and a more restricted schedule on Sundays. The station broadcast on the AM 710 and SW 5955 kilohertz frequencies. Its transmitters were twice as powerful as that in Huanuni (10,000 and 5,000 watts, respectively), and its shortwave signal could be picked up anywhere in Bolivia and from most places around the world. Like Radio Nacional de Huanuni, Radio Pío XII was trying to be a national presence linking workers and campesinos throughout Bolivia.

The station's programming followed a regular master schedule and included music, news and information, community service, education (what was called orientación), and evangelization. Its music programs totaled 1 hour and featured Latin American hits and dance music. Musical content was determined in part by listener surveys and in part by a conscious rejection of U.S. and European pop records that were prevalent on the two local FM stations that had begun broadcasting from Llallagua within the last 2 years. News and information programs, which often incorporated music, totaled 13 hours. These included two formal newscasts; two informal talk shows with music, invited guests, and phone-in commentaries, and two programs conducted in Quechua. The programs in Quechua attracted dozens of participants from the countryside each morning and evening; they were invited into the studio to talk periodically and were always able to air requests and opinions during an "audience speaks" segment. Whereas Quechua programming in Huanuni totaled 30 minutes a day, it occupied six hours at Radio Pío XII. The community service programs at Radio Pío XII consisted of three, 30-minute segments where listener messages and announcements were read for a small fee. In the education area, the radio worked as a subcontractor for
UNESCO and FAO—two United Nations agencies—to produce and broadcast literacy and forestation programs. The station also broadcast an evening novela (roughly translated as "soap opera") called "El derecho de nacer" (The right to be born), which I was told was educational. Finally, the radio set aside a fifteen-minute segment at midday to discuss a biblical passage in-depth.

Like Radio Nacional de Huanuni, Radio Pío XII was organized in a strict hierarchy. There were twenty-one full-time employees, including a sociologist who conducted audience surveys for the station. The employees were organized along specializations including departments of news (five people), miners' affairs (two people), women's issues (one person), evangelization (two people), rural affairs (five people), and technical/clerical support (five people). Like Radio Nacional de Huanuni, Radio Pío XII's job titles broke down in practice. Although the station manager had his own office and particular responsibilities, he often worked as a street reporter. Likewise, the recording engineer hosted a regular program featuring music from the 1950s. Even the receptionist, who had aspirations to work in radio production, was given a regular slot to read notices on the air. By and large, the radio workers were sons and daughters of miners from Siglo XX and Catavi or former campesinos from rural Bolivia.

A noticeable difference between Radio Pío XII and Radio Nacional de Huanuni was in the area of finances. The staff was larger and better paid, and the organization of operations was more bureaucratic. This was due in part to the conditions set by the funding agency. Its accountability requirements mandated each production department to develop a 5-year plan of goals and objectives, as well as methods for carrying them out. Typically these plans were reviewed by the outside funder, which visited the station once a year. The station had frequent meetings to discuss matters pertaining to these 5-
year plans, and each department had a large archive that documented its past and current plans.

Although Radio Pío XII has been identified as a miners' radio station in the literature, its ambience was radically different from that of Radio Nacional de Huanuni. Nestled within a church and rectory, the station had the feeling of a sanctuary. One sensed the firmer financial footing of the station immediately. There were no broken panes of glass and cardboard patches so characteristic and ubiquitous in Huanuni, and the physical plant was immaculately maintained. The building had an enclosed driveway in which two Toyota Land Cruisers were at the disposal of the two priests who were in charge of the station. Inside, the ample studios were equipped with professional microphones, mixers, reel-to-reel, cassette, and cartridge decks, a fax machine, walkie-talkies, and short-wave transmitters and receivers, which stood in stark contrast to much of the consumer-grade electronics in various stages of disrepair that were crowded into the cramped quarters of Radio Nacional de Huanuni.

In addition to the marked physical difference, Radio Pío XII had a distinct feel about it, as well. Rather than being the open, community gathering place and crossroads of traffic that defined Radio Nacional de Huanuni, Radio Pío XII was cloistered, protected. Its doors were always open during business hours, but they were often shut after that. Access in and out of the newsroom and administrative offices were controlled by an electronic buzzer operated by the receptionist. Irregular water supplies were as much a part of Siglo XX as they were anywhere in rural Bolivia, yet the station's faucet was protected in the inner, gated courtyard of the rectory. Finally, the station was built on a bluff almost at the periphery of the town, rather than centrally located between the union office, houses, and civilian sectors. The constant stream of miners and other residents circulating through Radio Nacional de Huanuni was absent at Radio Pío XII.
This is not to say that a popular presence was absent from the station (as will become evident later), but that it was not free-flowing and unregulated.

Aside from a radio station and church, Radio Pío XII included a rural outreach office not directly involved in making programs but working in agricultural development, literacy, and organization. The outreach workers were systematically incorporated into the radio's productions—especially those in native Quechua—though they were not themselves program producers per se.

Centro de Investigación y Servicio Popular

As already mentioned, CISEP was an NGO of eleven employees divided into three departments: information, miners' affairs, and urban affairs. The information department included a small library that was open to the public and a recording studio that produced weekly programs for distribution on miners' radio stations. The departments of miners' and urban affairs conducted workshops and popular education courses in literacy, organization, and vocational skills. The institution was housed in a three-story, colonial house in Oruro's old, central section. It had office space for its separate departments, plus a small auditorium and library that was open to the public in the afternoons. A surprisingly large number of people came to use the library and auditorium, considering that the institution's public was in the barrios (poor neighborhoods) on Oruro's periphery, and in the distant mining towns. Still, the overall atmosphere was one of a place of business.

CISEP's information department was of most relevance to this study and where I spent nearly all of my time. When I visited CISEP in my pilot study of 1992, the information department was run by three persons: a director/producer, a researcher/actor, and a technical assistant. In 1993, the number of employees and their activities were altered somewhat. The technical assistant had left the organization, and a replacement had not been found. In the meantime, the former researcher/actor had taken
over his duties and dropped his previous tasks. Filling in the research role was a national correspondent for Bolivia's Catholic radio network, who devoted part of his workweek to CISEP's programming. In another change, the director/producer had been in a motorcycle accident and was not working when I first established contact with the institution in 1993. Although he had returned to the job by the time I arrived in Oruro, his production activities—particularly field interviews and participation techniques—were curtailed as he was still on crutches.

During this period of transition, CISEP continued to produce its daily, 30-minute programs distributed not only to miners' radio stations, but to campesino and cooperative radios owned by local communities, as well. Every month, the director of the institution would meet with the three workers who produced the programs in order to discuss themes that would make up the content of shows for the upcoming 4 weeks. The workers would spend the latter part of each week researching and interviewing, so that at the beginning of the week, they could record the five programs that would be sent to the 13 participating stations. All of this work was done in a small studio equipped with consumer cassette decks and a low-grade reel-to-reel deck and mixer. Routines at CISEP were less complex, more contained, and more patterned and regular than those at the radio stations. For this reason, I adjusted my research schedule to spend less time there and more time at Radio Pío XII.

Field Relations

This section focuses on the relationships between myself and the participants in this study, including living arrangements, day-to-day activities, and key events that help to situate myself in this project. The intention of this section is to give readers a sense of what the fieldwork was like so that they can both understand the logic of analysis and make judgments relative to the validity of data and conclusions. Of the three sites described below, the one in Huanuni is where I had spent the most time in the
predissertation research trip described earlier. In fact, data gathered during the 2 weeks that I lived in Huanuni in 1992 have complemented material collected in the final fieldwork. As with the previous sections, I will discuss the relations by research site, drawing more heavily on my personal journal than I have up to this point.

Radio Nacional de Huanuni

I was taken into the community with open arms and many hugs upon my arrival at Huanuni. People seemed gratified to see me again, and I was told more than once, "We didn't believe you'd come back." The warm reception was due in part to my fieldwork conducted there over a month the previous year. I had not only established contacts the previous year, but I had maintained them by sending photographs, letters, and an edited video about the community (and shot largely by the radio employees) over the last year. Everything that I had mailed over the year had arrived safely, including the announcement of my return planned for September 1993. Above all, the videotape seemed to be highly valued. The miners had aired it several times on their television station, and the town mayor flagged me down within the first few hours of my arrival to request a copy of one of the bits of raw footage. Also, one sequence in the edited program—the funeral of two miners who died on the job—served as an important remembrance for the families, who requested copies of the tape.

Shortly after I arrived, the director of the radio arranged for the union to give me one of the rooms set aside for visitors. The room was located at the casa de huespedes de Santa María (Santa María guesthouse), a quaint euphemism describing the ancient adobe compound of 15 rooms housing miners, radio employees, and their families. All of the units in the compound were small, single rooms, which made life particularly uncomfortable for families. None of the rooms had running water, sinks, or toilets. Rather, two faucets at outdoor washbasins brought contaminated water to the compound for three to four hours a day. Each day, residents filled several green plastic containers—
recycled vegetable oil bottles—with water that they could use for washing dishes, cooking, or boiling before drinking. No one dared drink this water straight from the tap. A third faucet filled a 50-gallon oil drum in the bathroom, so that water could be thrown down the common commode after each use. We were among the lucky residents in Huanuni inasmuch as we had a commode to share. Each morning one could see less fortunate souls—children, adults, and elderly—squatting along the railroad tracks, which served as our neighborhood’s collectively determined latrine.

Aside from the miners there, the compound served as the home to one of the radio’s announcers and the station’s director Loren R. He and his wife, Ana L., had acted as my protectors the year before, and watched out for me again this year, insisting that I come to their room each morning for bread and coffee and inviting me regularly for meals. I brought groceries to their home frequently, shared in household work, and accompanied them and their daughter on many outings. We developed a very close relationship that provided a valuable, casual conduit for observation, discussion, and experience that brought me closer to being able to understand the media practice around me.

In addition to my daily interaction with Loren R. and Ana L., I listened to the radio and visited the station each day, accompanying practitioners on the job, taping interviews myself, hanging out in the studio, and attending union meetings. The most surprising occurrence in the field was the extent to which I was asked to participate in the production of programs. After less than a week in Huanuni, I recorded this encounter in my personal journal:

Sunday 9/19—Walked up to the radio with Martin A. today and he asked me out of nowhere "What have you thought of doing while you are here?" The question took me aback. Within the next hour we decided that I would produce news with Fernando E.* Again, much more participatory role than I had anticipated. I think
it will change my study; I really don’t care to produce news while I’m here; I think this obligation is necessary while I’m here.\footnote{The asterisk appearing in this passage actually appeared in my journal. I used this marker to set off unexpected, problematic, confusing, or otherwise noteworthy instances.}

The issue of my involvement and material contributions surfaced at least twice a week in my journal, either as one of Loren’s concerns or one of my preoccupations. Eventually I became an active participant in Huanuni, and by the time I had left I had gathered interviews for the radio news segment, taped part of the major annual festival that was later shown on the local television station, appeared as a guest on both the radio and television news shows, and recorded a music program that involved translating and interpreting pop lyrics aimed at local youth.

Based on my field notes and later reflexions, this involvement had both positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, my participation made material contributions to the people who were giving so much of themselves to me. This was an appropriate component to incorporate within the Bolivian culture, which privileges reciprocity in social relationships. By reciprocating in a material way, avenues of cooperation in general were opened and maintained. The administration of the radio recognized my contributions formally by issuing me a press card and a work certificate, which is akin to an employer’s letter of recommendation in the United States. The employees expressed their recognition in an informal and very moving way when they contributed ten bolivianos each (the equivalent of one to two days’ pay) for a going-away party and gifts.

Working in partnership with the people of Radio Nacional de Huanuni not only forged social bonds but contributed to my understanding of how work is conducted. However, the gathering of interviews or recording of programs often took precious time away from occasions that would have been better spent at the radio or with a
practitioner. Many of my tasks were routine, time consuming, and tangential to my principal task of conducting a study, yet they were essential to retaining the collaborative spirit of this project.

Radio Pío XII

During my first week in Bolivia I visited Radio Pío XII to solidify my research arrangements. I had contacted workers there during the 1992 pilot study, but I did not spend much time with them. Before beginning my study anywhere in 1993, I wanted to make sure that they were still agreeable to my spending a month with them. The priest in charge of the station was out of Bolivia on an extended trip to the United States, but the manager remembered me from 1992 and agreed to facilitate the study. He was particularly interested in the study because he had never finished his thesis in communication and hoped that I would share methodological insights with him that might get him closer to earning his bachelor's degree. He immediately began mapping an activity plan for me that would include experiences that he believed to be fundamental to my understanding of participatory radio practice.

The first experience he planned for me was an excursion with the station's rural affairs reporters on a 1-week training session for reporteros populares (people's reporters). In many ways, this first experience—the exclusive focus of chapter six—embodied many of the dominant themes running through my activities at Radio Pío XII. As in Huanuni, I adopted an active participant role, but the levels of participation at Radio Pío XII were much broader. As we headed out to the isolated town of Macha where the reporter's course was to be held, I helped to organize materials and prepare for the trip—no small task considering the equipment included heavy portable transmitters, a car battery, and cumbersome bags of posters and classroom materials that needed to be handled with care. But during the 9-hour ride in the back of a crowded, flat-bed truck, the two teachers explained how they expected me to participate on an
entirely different level. They wanted me to share my experiences in journalism with the students, some of whom would arrive at Macha only after walking for 10 hours from their even more isolated villages. In addition, they expected me to analyze the course and debrief them on the experience once we returned to Siglo XX. These experiences on different levels of participation—from working on a very material, here-and-now, daily grind position to a more abstract, academic consultant plane—surfaced repeatedly over the 5 weeks I spent with the Radio Pío XII practitioners.

The implications for the research were at least threefold. First, participating on both concrete/material and abstract/conceptual levels held ethical implications in that it positioned me as more than a data collector. I felt that I not only contributed manual labor to their media enterprise but that I returned part of my analysis in which they played a crucial role as contributors, thus addressing a moral mandate of qualitative research (Lather, 1986). Second, the intense participation in this project led me to a keener awareness, based in experience, that the findings of this dissertation are immanently constructivist. The daily engagement in work side by side with practitioners and the subsequent "miniseminars" that I conducted at the station led to an exchange of thoughts, ideas, interpretations, and perspectives that constructed my understanding of the data as it emerged in analysis in the field and in this dissertation. This realization dawned on me after several weeks, as illustrated in a diary entry written after cohosting a live radio program:

Is this VERY HANDS ON involvement changing my study? Indeed I feel it is. I hadn’t fully conceptualized my work as a "constructivist" project. But now I am quite certain that it is. I am reaching an understanding of the work by following, observing, doing, interviewing. This is clearly not a discovery of brute reality, but a reaching for understanding with, in, and through participation.

A third implication of this kind of participation is in the area of researcher identity. The participatory experience served to remind me that my status as "outsider" and "researcher" would not disappear in this study. The reminders came not only in the
formal requests for presentations that positioned me as "the specialist" but in the exchanges of everyday life where our relations were least contrived. While eating with the people's reporters one morning, for example, an innocent episode in the restaurant italicized this point. I wrote in my journal:

This restaurant has been real fun. A 10-yr-old boy, Ismael, waits on the tables and he has become good friends with us all. He calls me ingenierito, gringo, and Americano, which gives everyone great laughs. He is quite charming and gives everyone shit if they try to get cute with him. My status, indeed, is as gringo-outsider. This creates special privileges--people want to talk with me, share and compare experiences--and blocks--I don't understand their language, there is certain formality, one could say deference. One important thing is that I think we are all comfortable with my status.

Episodes such as this were helpful in maintaining a realistic sense of place and boundary as I conducted myself. It also made me more comfortable in engaging in activities that might otherwise have seemed off-task to me.

For the remainder of the study at Radio Pío XII, I lived at the radio station in Siglo XX. The manager, Alfredo, insisted that I live in one of the rooms at the rectory so that I could have constant and immediate access to the activities at the station. After living in a dark, cramped, and crowded miners' compound, the spacious and silent rectory was a luxurious change. I occupied a large room with a wide bank of four windows that looked out on the narrow courtyard separating the guest quarters from the production and broadcast facilities. The improved physical surroundings buoyed my spirits--as evidenced in my journal--to the point that I did not want to leave when I eventually ran out of time. Living on the premises of the station also facilitated the collection of material, which I will discuss in more detail in the next section.

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6 Literally translated, ingenierito means my little engineer, a term of endearment and respect. Ingeniero is a title and status symbol for one who has graduated college with an engineering degree. A business card might identify the holder as Ing. Name of Business Person, for example.
During one of the first weeks I was in Huanuni, I accompanied one of the radio employees on the hour-long ride to Oruro where we would pick up the weekly set of programs produced at CISEP. I wanted to meet with the director there to solidify CISEP's participation in my project. I had visited the organization in my pilot study but had spent very little time there and never made follow-up contact upon returning to the United States. When I walked into his office, he pressed his hand against his forehead and said, "Don't tell me. If I'm not mistaken your name is Roberto, but I can't remember your last name, and you were here last year to research miners' radio, and your return indicates that you were successful in getting your grant." I filled in my last name, confirmed most of my story, and discussed my intentions for continuing my study with the participation of CISEP. He told me that the doors of the institution were open but that there were some changes that might affect my study.

The changes he mentioned have been outlined above: mainly that a key producer/director of the programs was not working at the moment because of a motorcycle accident and that another worker had left the center. I explained my research timetable to the director, and he anticipated that programming would be back to normal by the time I wanted to return to the institution. Indeed, the injured producer returned to work the week I began to study CISEP's practices.

While I was in the field I determined that due to the complexity of the work at Radio Pío XII and the straightforwardness of CISEP, I would extend my time in Siglo XX and reduce it in Oruro. As it turned out, that was the correct decision. In fact, I could have adjusted the change even more. CISEP was run more like an office with a 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., Monday through Friday work routine. Most of the work that interested me was conducted on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, so I used Thursday through Sunday to travel to La Paz to take care of immigration and academic matters that
surfaced during my 3-month stay and to travel to remote towns to gather data on an unrelated subject.

As might be clear already, I did not establish a close relationship with the workers of CISEP as I had with the workers in the mining towns. During my time in Oruro I lived in a hotel a few blocks from the institution and had little contact with the employees after business hours. This was a radical change from my work in the mining towns where, at times, I longed for a moment of privacy and solitude. I used these blocks of free time in Oruro to analyze field notes, taking observations and questions back to the producers as they surfaced. Still, I tried to spend every possible moment with the radio workers either in the recording studio or on the streets where they gathered some material for their programs.

Despite the more regular, compartmental, and somewhat bureaucratic work schedule, activities at the institution were marked by an on-the-fly, by-the-seat-of-your-pants spontaneity and/or chaos. This opened up opportunities for me to participate and reciprocate as I had at the other research sites. As was the case in Huanuni and Siglo XX, participation and reciprocation claimed a central place in the Oruro section of my reflexive journal. During my three weeks in Oruro I videotaped a 3-day seminar sponsored by the CISEP, audio recorded a candidates' forum held at the center, and prepared a formal report on my activities for the institution. The seven-page report condensed my major findings; I presented the document to four CISEP workers prior to meeting with the group for a debriefing session, which was tape recorded. Here, as in Siglo XX, my participation operated on two different levels: the concrete/material and the abstract/conceptual. If anything, the abstract/conceptual participation was emphasized more in Oruro, as the director requested a written report and presentation, which I was pleased to do. The major difference I found between Oruro and the other sites, regarding the issues of participation and reciprocation, was that I began to feel
completely comfortable with my role as a participant, as is illustrated in this journal passage:

11/24 Weds.--Last night I was at CISEP until 10:30 p.m. recording candidate speeches for the institution. I was at CISEP from 3:30 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. with just the normal tea time break. What happened was that one of the workers, Max, came upstairs frantically wondering if Gari could go down and watch the [cassette] deck volume, change cassettes, make sure audio entered [during the candidates' forum]. He could not as he had an exam, so I volunteered. Max looked relieved. Finally, I was able to be of use here. Actually I videotaped for them, too.

Gone from my journal are any hesitations or doubts about how the participation would change the study. By this point, participation and reciprocation seemed not only tolerable but essential in ensuring a successful time in the field.

Data Collection

This section is an inventory of sorts, a list of the data collected at each research site, with some space given to explain the underlying rationale of observations and interviews. It is included here--at times with comments from my journal--as important background material for understanding and judging the claims in the following chapters.

Radio Nacional de Huanuni

During my month in Huanuni I logged 96 pages of observational field notes, collected artifacts, audiotaped interviews with seven people, and gathered a variety of videotape and slides. The taped interviews were transcribed upon my return to the United States and resulted in a total of 67 single-spaced pages. I aimed for a diversity of experiences vis-à-vis the radio when gathering the data.

To that end I spread my observations across a variety of places in the radio station. I spent several days working with the station manager, the news director, a street reporter, the studio announcers, the technician, the television producers, and several community activists. Tailing these different people resulted in a rich variety of
field notes stemming from the diverse experiences. My daily activities thrust me into a wide variety of community settings, including the following:

- a hunger strike being waged by workers
- two general meetings of union members struggling to oust their secretary general
- a funeral ceremony of a miner killed in an accident
- a final exam of a baking class, involving the sampling of many cakes and the evaluation of elaborate recipe books
- the home of a 12-year-old girl physically abused by her family
- a cantina/bordello where the owner was accused of neglecting her 15-year-old son

Interviews followed the same general principal of striving for diverse perspectives. The seven interviewees in Huanuni included the station manager, the news director, an announcer, a part-time producer, a technician who also produced a program, a former full-time producer, and a former part-time producer. This group of seven included four male and three female respondents; interviews lasted between 31 and 75 minutes. The shortest interview was cut off prior to being completed because the respondent needed to attend to an emergency, and several attempts to reschedule the interview failed. The range of interviewees in this sample covered the full spectrum of positions in the hierarchical organization of the radio, from its top manager to its lowest level producer, as well as former and somewhat disgruntled employees. I was only interested in talking with people involved in making programs and therefore I did not include interviews with clerical or strictly technical support staff.

The field notes and interview transcripts provide the primary data for this study. The other materials support in different ways. Slides and videotapes, for example, will serve as concrete reminders of certain events and can be of value in fleshing out data in field notes and interviews (Collier & Collier, 1986). They will also be edited and sent
back to the communities where tape was collected as a way of contributing to the people who gave so much to this study.

Artifacts have been valuable in providing documentation in a fashion similar to that of the slides and videotapes. But an unexpected finding of the artifacts is that on a metalevel, they subtly situate me within the research settings. After separating the material artifacts by setting, I realized that the bulk of the objects from Huaunni are what I would call tokens of friendship or testimonies of our personal relationships, rather than hard documentation of media practice. For example, of the many things I collected in Huanuni, only two of them document the work done at the radio: a historical magazine published in conjunction with an NGO and a brochure used in conjunction with a program on children's rights. On the other hand, at least a dozen objects speak to the relationships I had with the people of Huanuni. These objects include ribbons, cards, and badges pinned to my clothing during a baptism and a local festival in honor of the Virgin Rosario. These tokens were paid for by families and distributed selectively. Other objects include certificates of appreciation, musical instruments, a decorative plaque, a casco montero (a rawhide helmet worn by indigenous fighters), weavings, and other gifts. This collection of artifacts stands in stark contrast to the materials collected in other locations.

These artifacts reinforce an evaluation recorded in my reflexive journal. At various times during the study, I wrote that among the different research sites I felt the closest bond to the people of Huanuni. This material concurrence of my evaluation has implications for the importance of reciprocity in fieldwork, for in no other location did I contribute in such a concrete way as I did in Huaununi. I can only assume that the closeness achieved through this reciprocal conduct was of vital importance to the amount and quality of data I was able to collect.
Ironically, I also complained repeatedly of the harsh living conditions in Huanuni in my journal. Indeed, for most of the time I lived in Huanuni I was afflicted with a sinus infection and chest cold that sapped my energy and damaged my morale. By the end of my 1-month stay there, it really was time for me to go. I recorded the following thoughts on my last 2 days in Huanuni.

Today there was a big celebration in Venta y Media. The celebration was packed and I dislike being pushed and grabbed in mobs. Also, it was freezing, windy, dusty. No facilities, of course, so men and women were urinating and defecating everywhere. I get sick of the stench and filth everywhere. I feel guilty and very bourgeois, but it is tiresome after a while. I especially dislike the bus fumes, which are impossible to avoid. A month in Huanuni has been a month with no hot water. I bathe using a plastic tub and freezing cold water. People here complain, too, of no showers. In terms of creature comforts, I have learned that we are lucky to have one toilet between 15 rooms. In the adjacent compound, there is no toilet. People go up to the RR tracks if they must go to bathroom. Thus, the stench of human waste is inescapable.

All in all, I am glad to be moving on. This place is full of personal paradox. I hate the cold, the dirt, the stench, the dogs. Just when things seem totally intolerable, something wonderful will occur. It might be a sunset, a kind word, a small gift, the spread of stars across the black sky, a friendly drink. I don't believe I've ever been with friendlier, kinder people, community of people. At times I feel very guilty because I don't really reciprocate their kindness. Also feel guilty for really being sick of this place. Mixed emotions, thoughts, and feelings are the dominant themes of my experience.

On the one hand, the above entries illustrate my own otherness while being there, and, as such, are something of a testament of failure, of being unable to "go native" successfully. I think the entries show that I never viewed myself as part of the in-group—something I never attempted or thought possible to achieve—and that separateness, knowing that eventually I was moving on, may have helped and hindered the research. It helped inasmuch as I was able to focus on many activities of interest without being mired in the daily struggle of survival. Yet it brought me into contact with that struggle, however superficially, which was enormously helpful in getting close to understanding foreign concepts like solidario (solidariness), compromiso (compromise/commitment), and fraternal (fraternalism)—words that played central role in the media practice. Paradoxically, the distance between us created a gap between my
understanding of the practitioners and key concepts guiding their practice. Finally, the
diary excerpts help to illustrate some of the shortcomings that I had to overcome in the
field. The diary itself became an important document in the field, for it raised my
awareness of these shortcomings and forced me to attend to them in my daily conduct in
Huanuni.

Radio Pío XII

During my 5 weeks in Siglo XX, I logged 131 pages of observational field
notes, audiotaped interviews with 10 people, collected artifacts, and gathered a variety
of videotape and slides. The taped interviews were transcribed upon my return to the
United States and resulted in a total of 70 single-spaced pages. As in the case of
Huanuni, I aimed for a diversity of experiences vis-à-vis the radio when gathering the
data.

Radio Pío XII was a more complex organization than Radio Nacional de
Huanuni due to its larger size and greater financial resources. Some areas of production
were not studied at all due to time constraints. After observing programming at the
station for several days, I decided to divide my time as participant observer into three of
the radio station’s areas: the departments of news (1 week), miners’ affairs (2 weeks),
and rural affairs (2 weeks). These times are approximations; in practice, the time spent
with the miners’ affairs department often overlapped with other areas in the radio; the
time spent with the news department overlapped into other areas, and so on.
Nevertheless, I did make the choice virtually to ignore the departments of research,
women’s issues, and evangelization due to the lack of time. I determined the areas of
focus based on the importance of the departments as reflected in amount of personnel
and programming space. Also, key employees in the departments of evangelization and
women’s issues took vacations while I was there and were not available when I was
drawing up specific research plans.
My observations were greatly facilitated by my living at the station. During the week I spent with the news department, for example, I observed the 6 A.M. newscast, taking notes and asking questions of clarification and meaning; accompanied reporters during the day; and stayed in the newsroom until preparations for the following day's newscast were finished around 10 P.M. Had I not lived at the station, this 6 A.M. to 10 P.M. schedule would have been difficult to maintain. Likewise, when working with the miners' affairs department, I was always on hand for preparations and meetings, which did not occur in accordance with any schedule, but were often spontaneous and dependent on circumstances. In addition, I was of more use to the media workers while living at the station because I could help them prepare materials and transport them to remote locations. It was only with the rural outreach workers that living at the station did not seem to make much of a difference, since many of their activities were conducted in the field. Indeed, by the end of the project I had spent nearly 2 weeks in remote locations for training people's reporters, organizing campesino unions, hosting ecological seminars, and constructing agricultural projects.

While at Radio Plo XII, I conducted ten interviews, again, aiming for diverse perspectives at the station. Included in the interviews were four people's reporters, two workers from the miners' affairs department, two from the rural affairs department, one news department reporter, and the station manager. This range of employees represented the entire hierarchy of the station, from the highest-ranking person (manager) to the lowest-ranking full-time employee (a news reporter who had been on the job for one month) to the volunteers (people's reporters). The ten respondents included only one woman, which was reflective of the dearth of female producers at the station. Interviews lasted from 10 minutes to an hour. The interviews with people's reporters were especially brief due to language differences. They were accustomed to speaking in Quechua, and their answers in Spanish were usually very brief. The selection of
interviewees coincided with the departments that I observed most fully, providing data that complemented my field notes. The only area where I really needed an additional interview was in the news department. I made several attempts to interview the news director, but they all were canceled for a variety of reasons, including a death in his family.

As with the case of Huanuni, field notes and interviews constitute the principal sources of data in this study. Supplementary materials, however, will be extremely valuable. The artifacts I collected from Radio Pío XII are less tokens of friendship than they are documents of direct relevance to media practice. Artifacts include survey results, pamphlets used during people's reporters classes, pamphlets distributed during a general strike that occurred while I was there, and a series of books used to supplement programs aimed at mining cooperatives. Likewise, the collected slides and videotapes contain typical programs from Radio Pío XII and are excellent sources of support material.

The video camera played a very different role in Siglo XX than it did in Huanuni and is worth mentioning here. I tried unsuccessfully to use the camera to gather practitioner-generated images. Instead, the station manager asked me to tape events for the radio that could be edited into a promotional program that could be sent to funding agencies. We planned the program in advance, and the station requested that I shoot all the tape, as other radio employees would be unavailable to do the job. I traveled with a mobile team and a truckload of equipment to an ecological seminar sponsored by the station and taped for 3 days. Since the station did not have editing equipment, I will make this raw footage into a program and send it back to Radio Pío XII.

**Centro de Investigación y Servicio Popular**

During my three weeks in Oruro I recorded 26 pages of field notes, audiotaped four interviews with four people, and collected printed materials used by CISEP. The
taped interviews were transcribed upon my return to the United States and resulted in a total of 40 single-spaced pages. Videotapes and slides were not collected during this part of the study.

Because this organization was very small in terms of its media production activities, I did not have difficulty determining which areas to study. I spent almost all of my time with the people directly involved in program production, and I interviewed them all. My activity with them was confined to working with scripts and research materials in the studio and accompanying the one reporter of the team several times as he went about collecting material. In addition to working with the production crew, I accompanied one of the institution’s urban outreach workers on a literacy project and saw how her work with a group of women fit into the production of radio programs. I also spent 3 days working with the person in charge of miners’ affairs, videotaping and setting up equipment for a 3-day seminar examining the mining crisis in Bolivia. Likewise, I saw how his work fit into the programming routines of the radio workers. Finally, as already mentioned, I helped to set up and record a candidates’ forum organized by the urban outreach sector of the institution. Here, too, I saw how this activity of the center was incorporated into the radio programs.

A limited number of artifacts were collected during this portion of the study. They include a brochure from the candidates’ forum, a press release from a rural teachers’ union picked up during a day of interview gathering, and a monthly survey conducted by the institution that tracks wages and prices affecting working-class people. The video recordings I made during this time are all in Bolivia with the institution, where they will be edited into promotional material.

Final Reflexions

This section contains some final reflexions on the ethnographic method and on how I believe I drew near to alien concepts articulated by practitioners. The lessons I
learned about ethnography center on misconceptions I brought into the field and on
some of the difficulties I encountered while gathering data. The section on drawing near
to alien concepts presents some of the ideas that practitioners expressed repeatedly but
for which I had no adequate translation. I explain how I came to an understanding of
what those terms meant to practitioners. My intention in this section is to provide
enough information to the reader to stake out a degree of legitimacy for myself to make
knowledge claims in future chapters.

Lessons on Ethnography

Fieldwork was a humbling, sometimes frightening, experience. I probably
entered the field with a good deal of arrogance, thinking I would take my
methodological know-how, engage it for 3 months, and churn out a coherent text
explaining the conceptual ins and outs of alternative media practice. In the field I found
that I was often paralyzed, unable to comprehend or process the extensive jumble of
new people, places, and events that were rushing into my life. I found a consistent
pattern in my personal journal referring to feelings of isolation, loneliness,
incompetence, and struggle as I forged through this project. Midway through the
fieldwork I jotted this illustrative entry in my journal:

10/17 Sun.—Spent the last 3 days in Oruro. Have been spending time in my
room analyzing data. Disappointed that I haven't accomplished more. I have a
hard time concentrating in my room. Am overwhelmed by the data. After
working for 2–3 hours coding, looking for patterns, etc., I feel completely lost.
What the hell is my research question and how does this data relate to it??
Am I
ever gonna be able to make sense of this mess? How do interviews aid,
complement, extend data?

When I get overwhelmed like this, I am paralyzed, unable to continue
with my task. After a few hours of brisk walking around town, I return and
force myself to trudge onward. At some point I have found that the muddle
begins to clear and I quickly jot down insights that have become visible. It feels
good to find an insight at some point, but scares me when I become paralyzed.

In large part, the complexity and seeming incommensurability between the data
and the research question was simply a matter of design. I realized this during a period
of being overwhelmed when I was tempted to fall back on the very traditional 
ethnographic practice of locating a key informant who could spin out a unified yarn of 
the medium and its cultural and historical relationship to the community. Of course, my 
study was designed to attach observations and interviews to multiple and even 
competing perspectives of miners’ radio, so the resulting fragmented narrative should 
have come as no surprise. Eventually, I learned to cope with this diversity of 
perspectives by trying to rise above the particularities associated with resulting narratives 
in order to construct more general, abstract qualities that could link seemingly disparate 
experiences together. A journal passage following several days of boisterous union 
meetings in Huanuni helps to illustrate this struggle to cope:

10/3 Sun.—I've been reflecting on this sensation of being overwhelmed with 
data. How do you go about finding significance in all of this mess? The methods 
books suggest analysis—searching for units and pattern, this focusing more and 
more your observations. In a situation like the one I've been in, however, being 
overwhelmed is inescapable sensation. No matter of focusing will help. I've 
determined a couple of things: 1. One shouldn't get overwhelmed with the 
minute details of a situation because they are very changeable. I believe in all of 
my observations, I've seen and heard and felt sensations that are very specific to 
the individual actualizing them. At the same time, I recognize that these 
sensations are linked, embedded, and determined by some larger influence, 
tradition, force called "miner's culture/miner's communication." I don't think the 
individual quirks are that important to note. In addition, they make 
understanding extremely difficult. In contrast, the overarching general conditions 
are of more value. To me this thinking has greatly complicated my sense of 
generality and generalizability. 2. I've come to the belief that ethnography should 
be done in a team. I feel a strong need to have someone with me in the field. 
There is too much going on here for me to make sense of. This project would be 
a lot better if I had a partner. Also, I feel a great need to sit down and hash over, 
debate, discuss this data with an "outsider." Of course, I do this 
with the insiders, but they do not have the academic interest (nor should they) in 
stretching this data. Their concerns are fixed in their own social web, caught up 
in the daily here-and-now of getting through the day and pushing their 
movement along the road.

The analysis and conclusions reported in this and the following chapters are a result of 
this strategy of always striving to rise above the particular to abstract, general concepts. 
Yet embedded in this process is a struggle to retain the particularistic richness and 
identity of the practitioners enacting these media productions.
Alien Concepts and Drawing Near

One of the greatest difficulties to overcome in this project was untangling alien concepts. By alien concepts I mean the ideas expressed repeatedly by practitioners, but for which I had no translation or referent. For example, how does one make sense of repeated statements such as, "El es muy solidario" (He is very solidary, or in solidarity), when one's culture has no expressions or referents that approximate its meaning? After reading and rereading my journal, I found two windows into alien concepts: the window of work and the window of socializing.

As mentioned throughout this chapter, my participation at all research sites was much greater than I had anticipated. First and foremost, the participation was an important means of reciprocation. But another important result from my physical labors was the ability to draw near to an understanding of concepts referred to repeatedly by the people but for which I had no means of grasping their significance. Concepts like solidario, fraternal, and compromiso cannot be explained adequately in the abstract; one must live these experiences to understand them fully. For me to suggest that I have lived all of the experiences staking a claim to concepts of central importance in this dissertation would be specious. Nevertheless, I do assume limited authority in making my interpretations based on extended time living and working in the Bolivian highlands. An illustration of how these experiences led to understanding came from a mundane journal entry of transporting equipment for a people's reporters course.

We loaded up in a flat-bed truck—one with wood floor and side boards. The truck was loaded well beyond capacity yet people continued to pile in. With slight adjustments of the body, we formed a large human jigsaw puzzle, with knees interlocking within knees, chests across backs, shoulders tilted to accommodate one another, and, of course, the occasional piece forced uncomfortably on top of one another. In addition to the people, the truck carried a large armoire, many knapsacks of native weavings loaded with worldly possessions, sturdy plastic bags filled with onions, bread, live chickens, small tanks of gas used to light stoves, 25-gallon drums filled with kerosene, iron stakes, bags of cement, corrugated metal used for roofing, a bicycle, car battery, suitcases, our radio transmitter and antenna, spare tires, cans of alcohol
"Guabira," jugs of cooking oil, a pack of lamb's skins (fresh), a goat's head (fresh). What most surprised me was the patience of the people. Each time we stopped to pick someone up at the side of the road, the people inside made suggestions of where we could place things. No one ever suggested that there was no more room. People in urban areas would not tolerate this abuse. Here I think it a sense of mutual survival that both helps one through his/her struggle yet keeps conditions very low.

It was only after rereading the above passage that I began to realize that a concept like solidario is a group's response to everyday experiences with exploitation. Practitioners of miners' radio can use such concepts to help guide their conduct because they have the experiential authority to do so. I tried to capture a glimpse of this experiential authority while working in the field.

A second window into understanding came from an unexpected place: relaxed periods of socializing with media practitioners. If this part of my study had a smell, it would be of Singani, the grape alcohol made in the south of Bolivia and consumed with regularity in the mining regions. Many hours in the field were consumed in late-night drinking sessions that were astonishing for what they yielded about the research community's perception of me, about tense interpersonal undercurrents running invisibly through each field site, and about unflattering aspects of the different locations.

It was during these episodes, for example, that practitioners explained things such as the following:

- the reason most people refused to speak, debate, disagree during public discussions, like the miniseminars I conducted (fear that they might appear uneducated and lose their jobs)
- the resentment held between radio practitioners and the employees of a local NGO that otherwise appeared to be working very closely with the station
- the embarrassing and intentional cover-up (facilitated by the radio) of a rape/murder of a woman committed by a union leader
- community perceptions of my work that ranged from respect and admiration to suspicion and mild hostility
The most interesting and sometimes startling things to emerge from social occasions centered on the perceptions others had of me. I learned very quickly, for example, that I could use my Mexican ancestry as a ready tool to gain entrée and acceptance among participants. Many people seemed to feel absolved of their compulsory abhorrence for the gringo in their presence upon learning of this background information, which facilitated the assignment of a few redeeming qualities to the researcher. Yet others felt that I was staging my interest in miners’ radio and not fully supportive of their struggle. It invariably followed drinking episodes that I thought most about this important issue. My ideas in the field are reflected in an entry made after such an evening.

10/10 Sun.—Reflecting on their comments, I have a number of thoughts. First, people are constantly forming impressions of fieldworker and these impressions affect their behavior toward me. It is probably good to be aware of this, to monitor somehow, and to factor into data. Aside from intensified sensitivity/awareness, should one do anything else to ameliorate negative consequences? Indeed can one do anything? In the case of don Juan, since he is a union leader, I didn’t want to do anything to offend him so I asked very few questions intentionally. The last thing I wanted him to wonder is why does this gringo ask so many questions. [My reticence was interpreted by him as distant, cold] In the case of Fernando [who charged me with faking my interest in the radio], I probably am acting different and asking some questions that have raised his eyebrows because I find his manner of doing journalism infuriating at times for its transparent impositions and heavy-handed censorship. In his case of suspecting my “faked” support of the overall project, I think he has misread my behavior. Nevertheless—both Fernando and Juan actively were reading the cues I provided and interpreted them as best they could. This, I imagine, is occurring with each person at every interaction and is having a subsequent impact on the data. I do not believe that this invalidates data, nor do I believe that the influence can be eliminated. I do believe, however, that one can and should control the degree of impact.

The above and similar observations stemming from social activities were important to my conduct in the field and were of use in interpreting the data. In the field I grew more sensitive to my behavior and how I interacted with the practitioners. I tried to understand what was happening from the social actors’ perspectives, which meant that I had to work on suspending my immediate judgments and reactions. This was a
difficult task, as it ran counter to my predisposition. Furthermore, in analyzing the data I have tried to incorporate my knowledge of this interaction when suggesting relationships in patterns in the findings.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide readers with enough information regarding the research sites and data-gathering process to make them into intelligent companion participant-observers for the remainder of this study. I have done this by providing sketches of the research sites, descriptions of my relations with practitioners, an inventory of data, and some final reflections on the ethnographic method.

I provided brief demographic sketches of each research site, which included a traditional tin mining camp (Huanuni), a rural commercial center (Siglo XX–Catavi–Llallagua), and an urban NGO (Oruro). I then described each media production site in terms of its schedule, format, number of personnel, ownership structure, and ambience. These sites included a struggling station owned by miners (Huanuni), a well-funded Catholic station (Siglo XX), and a modest NGO (Oruro).

In the section on field relations, I provided a site-by-site description of where I lived and how living arrangements factored into data collection. At Radio Nacional de Huanuni, where I had conducted a pilot study in 1992, I was embraced by the community upon my arrival. I had maintained contact with people by sending videotapes of the station, which I had edited from 1992 field footage. My entrée was immediate and intimate, and I lived in a miners' compound that housed several radio employees, as well. At Radio Pío XII, I had established contact in 1992 but did not have a close relationship with them. Nevertheless, I was given a room at the station, which facilitated intense data-collaborating opportunities. During my study of CISEP in Oruro my relations were much more businesslike and formal. I lived in a hotel a few blocks away from the institution and was only able to observe and interview employees during business
hours. At all three sites I contributed to their work either by making programs, conducting workshops, or presenting final reports resulting from my study.

The final section of this chapter reported some reflexions regarding methodology and epistemology. Specifically, I was overwhelmed by the ethnographic method of gathering data and reported my strategies for handing overload in the field. Also, I presented a number of terms that I called "alien concepts" and described how I drew near to their native meanings. My intention in presenting all of this material is to give the reader information that will be helpful for interpreting and judging the accounts offered in the following chapters.
CHAPTER IV
COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

"Practice without theory is blind, and theory without practice is arid." -- Oscar B., presenter at miners' radio conference, Universidad de Siglo XX

The purpose of this chapter is to present a theoretical understanding of communication and social change as articulated by the practitioners of this study and to piece together various media experiences that both inform and are informed by that understanding. Bringing theory and practice together in one chapter is an attempt to exemplify the spirit of both the efforts of practitioners in this study and the premises of the literature on which this dissertation is based. More specifically, the reasons for presenting these materials are twofold, and both reasons are connected to the theoretical questions of this dissertation.

First, the data that theorize communication and social change focus on central, substantive issues in the alternative media literature: how media can and do transform societies. This chapter illuminates--sometimes confirming, sometimes contesting, sometimes making more complex--important conceptual categories in the literature. But it does so in a way that departs from the bulk of alternative media studies--by articulating a particular understanding of communication and social change as constructed by practitioners going head to head with the messy details of social struggle in their daily
labor. Practitioner-articulated theories, then, fill a void in the literature, where theorizing communication and social change has been the sole province of privileged intellectuals.¹

This leads to the second reason for focusing on these issues. The theorizing of communication and social change by practitioners was an unexpected media procedure to emerge from the data but one that was crucial for interpreting events, behaviors, and consequences; it is something of a linchpin category holding together many different practices. "Theorizing" by practitioners was an unexpected procedure because alternative communication scholars have not explicitly identified this as an important aspect of media production. Rather, researchers have either assumed and prescribed theories or have adopted conceptualizations that roam unpredictably through the intersections of media, culture, and society. By detailing practitioner theories of communication and social change and attendant media practices, I hope to paint a more meaningful picture of tin miners' radio practice than has been offered to date and to begin uncovering the hows of communication that have been absent from the alternative communication literature so far.

The rest of this chapter is ordered into four sections:

• Overview—a brief overview of the data used in this chapter and an explanation of the chapter structure.

• Practitioner Theories of Communication and Social Change—a review of the various explanations of the processes of communication and social change from the perspective of the practitioners.

• Theories into Practice I: Committed Bonding—a discussion of a critical way of enacting theories of communication and social change.

¹ The category of "theorizing" was a surprise finding during data analysis, for the interview protocol never explicitly asked respondents to speculate on how societies and media operated, and because alternative communication scholars have ignored this area altogether. The sense-making methodology expects such a category, however, as it views theorizing by social subjects as ontologically and epistemologically mandated. I defined the category of "theorizing" as respondent statements that explained relationships of media and society in general terms, especially those drawing inferences and causal links.
Theories into Practice II: Examples from the Field—a description of a variety of practices derived from fieldwork that illustrate practitioner theories of communication and social change.

Overview

Before proceeding with any description or analysis, I want to identify the primary sources for data in this chapter. By and large, I depended on data from interviews with practitioners for this chapter. I did this because I am dealing here primarily with practitioner conceptualizations of communication, society, and social change. Rather than infer conceptualizations from my observational data, I have opted to hold onto the explanations given by practitioners of how they went about the business of producing radio programs.

After reading all the transcripts and coding every procedure that I could identify, I found that more than half of the interviewees (11 of 17) had theorized communication and/or social change at some point in our discussion. As I mentioned earlier, the widespread instances of practitioner theorizing came as a surprise because the alternative communication literature has not acknowledged this activity as being of central importance to media practice. I found, however, that understanding the nature of communication and social change from the practitioners' perspective was fundamental to appreciating the decisions and routines of their work.

Instances of practitioner theorizing did not concentrate around indicators such as research site, sex of practitioner, or position within the radio hierarchy (Table 6). Rather, the instances were widespread, crossing demographic demarcations. By and large, the remaining sections of this chapter rely on the interview data listed in Table 6. It is fleshed out periodically, however, by an example from field notes or from interview

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2 Readers should note that there were actually a total of 21 interview subjects. For the analysis of this chapter, however, I eliminated interviews with four people's reporters because they constituted a unified data set that I explore in Chapter six.
excerpts from practitioners not listed above when such sources provide outstanding exemplars illustrating a practitioner notion. Because these periodic examples will serve to reinforce or clarify a concept introduced from interviews, I will not describe them up front (as I will clearly do in the next chapter).

Table 6. Principal data sources of chapter four by research site, person, and position in organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position in Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CISEP</td>
<td>Gari E.</td>
<td>Technical producer, former reporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CISEP</td>
<td>Pablo J.</td>
<td>Part-time contributor, reporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CISEP</td>
<td>Vicho D.</td>
<td>Main program producer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huanuni</td>
<td>Ana L.</td>
<td>Part-time producer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huanuni</td>
<td>Loren R.</td>
<td>Station director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huanuni</td>
<td>Magy C.</td>
<td>Announcer, morning program host</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huanuni</td>
<td>Pedro I.</td>
<td>Former community producer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pío XII</td>
<td>Alfredo A.</td>
<td>Station director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pío XII</td>
<td>Lalo E.</td>
<td>Outreach worker with miners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pío XII</td>
<td>Marta M.</td>
<td>Outreach worker with palliriis(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pío XII</td>
<td>Quiroga V.</td>
<td>Rural outreach worker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Palliri is the name for a woman who works the tailings from the mine. The tailings are either piles of rubble that are broken up by hand using a sledgehammer, or the sludge escaping into waterways after tin has been processed.

The remaining sections of this chapter are designed to construct an interpretive frame that will help the reader to understand practices described in this and succeeding chapters. This chapter is designed to lay the conceptual foundation of Bolivian tin miners' radio from the perspective of practitioners, something that is missing from previous studies. The sections in this chapter move from the general/abstract to the specific/concrete. The first main section describes practitioners' notions of communication and social change. It responds to the questions, "What is communication?" and "How does social change occur?" The second main section fleshes out the sensitizing verbs of ligarse (linking oneself) and comprometerse (committing oneself), which emerged as central from practitioner theories of
communication. The last main section introduces examples from the field that illustrate how theories of communication and social change and how sensitizing verbs of ligarse and comprometerse led to specific practices. The first two sections are vital for interpreting the actions described in the third section. I now turn to practitioner theorizings.

Practitioner Theories of Communication and Social Change

Throughout my experience in Bolivia, I noted that practitioners operated with implicit theories of society, social change, and communication. The repeated--and often dogmatic--references to class consciousness, solidarity, unity, social justice, the option for the poor, and like rhetorical framings indicated the enormous conceptual influence of Marxist theories of social change, particularly as manifested through Liberation Theology. These blunt, direct invocations of Marxist and Liberation Theology theories fell away from interviews once participants began describing concrete experiences and their explicit understandings of how the media and society operated. As already mentioned, 11 of the interviewees made general statements about the processes of communication and social change. What emerged was a complex and subtle framework that helped to make sense of specific media practices. I will describe their theoretical positions below, first of communication, then of social change.

Practitioner Theories of Communication

When coding instances of theorizing, I looked for general statements of phenomena, not specific accounts of a particular event. But even the most abstract,

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3 Here I am extending and modifying Carey and Christians' (1989) notion of "sensitized concepts" in qualitative research, which are "categories that are meaningful to the people themselves, yet sufficiently powerful to explain large domains of social experience" (p. 369). The modification I have performed is to move it from a static descriptor to a dynamic constructor of meaning. Both share the sense of compactness, concentratedness of meaning in specific terms.

4 See Löwy (1993) for a recent synthesis of Christianity and Marxism in Latin America.
theoretical discussions were not about general principles or properties of communication but were made in reference to the particular kind of media practice conducted the practitioners in the study. Hence, they should be understood not as generalizations about communication per se but as general understandings related to or springing from a specific kind of communication practice: the making of Bolivian tin miners' radio. My purpose in this section is not to present a unified theory of communication but to describe an amalgamation of concepts that emerged from the interviews. This amalgamation conceived communication as a relational, political, practical, and ethical activity.

On the relational level, media practice was viewed as work done jointly with others out of a sense of being bonded, connected, tied, linked, and committed. It was not the solitary enterprise of the expert trained in documenting reality. Instead, it was the conjoint constructing of reality by practitioner and public. The words ligarse (to tie, bind, link oneself) and comprometerse (to promise, commit, oblige oneself) were used repeatedly across interviews to explain and describe experiences. Of course, these words entered the instances of theorizing as illustrated below:

Communication is not just the sending of messages. It is getting into the masses. Getting into, well, if not the masses, getting into the life of the people, sharing with them, being there through the good and the bad. This experience has helped me as far as securing a sense of compromiso [the noun form of comprometerse] with the popular sectors of society. --Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII

For this practitioner, getting into the lives of people (a kind of linking) helped achieve a sense of compromiso. For another practitioner, forging such relationships was

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5 The use of the word "popular" in this citation and throughout this and subsequent chapters differs from the meaning introduced in the "popular culture" discussion in chapter one. In this context, popular communication and popular organizations/movements refer to things of the people, from the grass roots, not to things emanating from the culture industries. For a terse explication of this sense of the popular, see White (1980). The contexts in which these terms appear will provide clear reference to the sense intended by the word, "popular."
fundamental to understanding very basic matters affecting miners and campesinos
(peasant farmers):

Most of the people who are from the cities, they find themselves disconnected
from the difficulties of the miners, the difficulties of the campesinos. There's not
much you can understand as long as you can't get into their lives. --Pablo J.,
contributor to CISEP

"People from the cities" was a veiled reference to professionally trained communicators
who have worked periodically in the miners' radio stations from the stations' early days
(Lozada & Kúncar, 1986; Miranda, 1989). Professionalization was equated with values
held in opposition to communication beliefs--linking, bonding, committing--regarding
the relationship between practitioner and public:

You know that I am not a professional. I was born right here. I was born right
here and came from a family of workers. I think this helped me a lot. I have
learned a lot. That's why I'm telling you that the professional does not
necessarily serve people. And if you are not in service with others, you are not
an organic professional. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío
XII

The notion of an "organic professional" captured the sense running through interviews
that communication was not only done with others but took place in a bonded
relationship with others.

In the interviews noted above, the definition of communication was strong and
clear in describing the quality of relationships: bonded, committed, organically linked.
Less clear in the discussion was a specific sense of the social subjects of practitioner
bonding. In a sense, the interview statements begged the question, "With whom were
practitioners bonded?" This question is significant theoretically, for it leads to the
political aspects of practitioner theories of communication. Practitioners at worker-
owned stations most clearly articulated a response to this question:

The work of a union radio is very different from what they do in the cities.
Union stations are committed with the workers, with this class known as the
exploited class, the dispossessed class, with the popular sectors. And this is
where we can really achieve more freedom in our work than they can in the
cities. Because in the cities almost all of the radios, or almost any communication
medium, is a private business, they have their owners, right? So that is a
different system, a system with censorship. It would be difficult there for us to
say what we think or believe or even what we see. --Ana L., part-time producer
at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

The sense articulated above was still somewhat vague. Practitioners at miners' radio
stations were committed to an undifferentiated class of people characterized as poor,
exploited, and dispossessed. The ability to bond with them was linked to the ownership
structure of the station, as another practitioner observed:

I applied for the job [at a commercial station] and, well, they grabbed me. But I
started to realize that it wasn't the same, working in commercial radio as
working in a union station because in the commercial station, they wanted to
control all the information. I couldn't speak out against the government, I
couldn't say what was really happening. The thing is, these commercial stations
focus more on giving international news so that they don't have to commit
themselves, so that they don't have to commit the station. --Magy C., announcer
at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

These passages reveal two things. First is a rather simple matter, that
compromiso was given direction by ownership structures. Commercial stations
discouraged practitioner-public commitments, while worker-owned stations demanded
practitioner-public commitments. Second--and more complex--is that compromiso gave
the practitioners a sense of freedom to "say what was really happening" and "what we
think or believe or even what we see." The very enactment of compromiso, then, was
political in that it gave practitioners the "freedom" and power to define reality and truth.
That freedom was not contained, however, in the medium itself, but in the work
emerging from the commitment with the class of the exploited, the dispossessed, and the
poor.

Because the committed bonds with other sectors played such an important role in
miners' radio, communication was viewed by some as a tool to be used in forging those
bonds. That is, communication was seen as a practical phenomenon, perhaps
secondary, even subordinate, to the organized activities of unions and other popular
organizations:
One of the objectives of the institution is precisely this: to support the unions and popular organizations. This is so they can debate among themselves using elements that we offer them. They can come to their own conclusions and I believe that, indeed, they have done their own analyses. They should do their own analyses and come up with answers that respond to situations. This is the objective of CISEP. --Gari E., technical producer at CISEP

This passage came perilously close to undercutting the relational aspect of communication articulated earlier. The idea of providing raw material for social groups was a tension that ran through other interviews, as well. Related to this conceptualization was a view that communication operated as an ancillary or tool in struggles for better living and working conditions:

We are quite aware that through popular programs, people generate opinions. And through that, they share their problems with other groups. The radio should be a vehicle of this nature, don't you think? This allows groups to mobilize, it allows groups to organize. The radio should not simply constitute itself as an information or entertainment element, but as an element that strengthens organizations. --Pablo J., contributor to CISEP

This practitioner reclaimed the relational aspect of communication, however, by emphasizing that people need to generate the ideas and opinions carried on the media vehicle.

A common thread running through these and other interviews was an ethical aspect that tied communication to a certain plan of action and endorsed a particular agenda: one calling for the transformation of society that is more just, egalitarian, dignified, and democratic:

Most of the time, the programs that are broadcast are dead the next day because our minds are very fragile. What I believe is that one must work for this hope—if there's one thing that can't be taken away it is our right to dream—of a life where there aren't these things: injustices, social problems with consequences of alcoholism and all that. One must work for this and the radio is a medium with force and sometimes, influence. One should work for this. --Pedro I., former community producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

The vision articulated above was formally adopted at Radio Pío XII, whose employees received periodic training from the Latin American Association of Educational Radio (ALER). In fact, during my fieldwork, the station employees were studying in a
correspondence course conducted by ALER, which espoused principles of working with popular groups to defend their interests, strengthen political abilities, and reinforce cultural practices. I learned of these principles not from ALER documents but from public lectures given by the station director and from a survey published by the station (Torrico, 1989). I make the connection to ALER here because the lecture and document specifically mentioned the organization and because their work is well known in Latin America.

This section has demonstrated that practitioners did not theorize communication as an abstract activity but as a process done in conjunction with others. Furthermore, these relationships came with a sense of being bonded, connected, tied, linked, and committed to specific social actors. Because of the strong obligations inherent in these ties, such communication had both political and ethical dimensions, for it was always cast toward achieving a social agenda of human justice, equality, and dignity. Despite sharing a broad social agenda, practitioners expressed very different understandings of the process of social change, which I will describe below.

Practitioner Theories of Social Change

In analyzing practitioner accounts of how social change occurred, I found two complementary perspectives contained in the data. The predominant perspective was something I am calling the "sequential" view of social change, and the complementary perspective was something I am calling the "emergent" view. Both are defined below:

- **Sequential view of social change**—posits that social change occurs in a somewhat predictable, controllable, and evolutionary succession of steps. In this view, the role of radio is to help create the conditions for these steps and to provide programs that contribute to their fulfillment.

- **Emergent view of social change**—posits that social change is a process without predictable order, sequence, or direction. In this view, social change is in the process of becoming, a process that is both enabled and hampered by contextual factors, including media. The role of radio is to be responsive and flexible to shifting conditions accompanying emergent changes.
I will present data explaining the sequential view of social change before moving on to the emergent view.

The sequential view. The most vague sense of the sequential view conceptualized society as evolving with the accumulation of experiences and the attendant changes brought to communities. In describing the townspeople of Huanuni, for example, a practitioner expressed social change using the evolution metaphor:

People here used to be very timid. I mean, they didn't want to express absolutely anything, no matter how great their needs were, no matter how much they needed to express the rage they had. They couldn't express themselves to anyone other than their neighbors, just in the neighborhood. Publicly [on the radio] they wouldn't do it. People were very closed off. But as time went by, the system has changed, with evolution of everything, the people started to express themselves. Even children. Before we were—I remember, at least, that as a girl, I was very shy and very respectful of older people, with children, and youngsters. There was so much respect. If anyone gave us some sort of challenge, we didn't know how to respond. We knew how to respect. But now, everything has changed—this generation is different now. The young people especially speak with no problem... All of the people have changed. And even analyzing myself, what my life meant before, now I am working in a communication medium, I analyze myself and think about how I used to be, it is really incredible. --Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Aside from a vague sense of evolutionary progress leading up to social change, practitioners shared some ideas regarding specific steps to be taken to build movements to transform reality. One of the most commonly shared ideas was that raising consciousness was a necessary condition and motivating force for building popular movements:

The Federation of Neighborhood Organizations [Fejuve] was a fairly strong organization in Llallagua. Having raised the consciousness [via the radio] of the people regarding their struggles and their organizing efforts, Llallagua now has paved streets and has achieved a certain level of progress, thanks to these efforts. --Loren R., director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni (and former director of Radio Llallagua)

This practitioner ascribed material accomplishments in town to the consciousness-raising efforts of the radio. Indeed, there was a belief that people needed to understand living conditions as injustices, not as fateful events, before they could mobilize to change
them. In fact, raising consciousness was seen as a long-lasting method of changing society:

We managed to achieve a coming to consciousness of the people regarding their problems and their absolute right to make demands. Now as far as meeting specific objectives defined by their demands, we didn’t achieve any of these because that is outside the nature of the radio. If we start to deal with those problems--for example, social issues--then we would become a welfare agency [una institución asistencialista]. And the radio cannot have this sort of character. Assistancialism [welfare, handouts] in any form holds back any and all projects, any and all hopes, any and all goals of a particular group of people. It puts the brakes on their aspirations. Instead, what needs to be done is to motivate, motivation, that this group be conscious of its problems in order to achieve its particular objectives. --Pablo J., contributor to CISEP

In the view expressed above, raising consciousness motivated people to organize, mobilize, and achieve specific objectives. Interestingly, this was seen as more effective than contributing direct, material aid to communities, which constituted a "palliative," a temporary solution.

Other practitioners sharing the sequential view of social change emphasized the importance of popular memory in maintaining grass-roots movements. Historical media projects were seen as both generative--a way to stimulate new interests among youth inexperienced in workers' struggles--and corrective--a manner of redirecting movements that had somehow lost their way. One practitioner came to this understanding of social change after witnessing the influx of foreign films and television programs in his town:

For example, we have seen that this district has had its essence wiped out by the movies, television, and the rest. So all this memory was being destroyed, right, and people started picking up another reality. What I mean is that I wanted this program to serve as a new experience for the young people, so that they could understand that they too... That's the conclusion I drew. I had also seen that the union leaders failed to keep in mind the earlier struggles [for dignified salaries and better conditions]. Little by little the union had become the property of a political party and was no longer working for the entire working class of miners. What was happening was a distortion of what these earlier leaders had been struggling for. --Lalo E., outreach worker with miners for Radio Pío XII

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6 I am referring here to the notion of history constructed by common participants in events, rather than by academic or appointed specialists. See Popular Memory Group (1982) and "Film and Popular" (1975).
The emphasis on collective memory was intertwined with a sense that many of the social and political practices derived their form and strength from indigenous customs and collective modes of production, as virtually all miners can trace their roots to campesino communities. The emphasis on collective memory, then, was an important means for accessing and revealing this relationship and, perhaps, of recovering potentially useful strategies that had been forgotten. These goals could be achieved in a congruent manner by radio stations working as collective agencies that consolidated experiences across space and time. This complex network of ideas was bundled together in an explanation of how one practitioner saw one of his own experiences as it related to the work of his institution:

We talk a lot about changes, don't we? Changes in society so that there is justice, equality. Obviously we cannot achieve these lofty aims. But at least this kind of experience [of collective women vegetable growers] demonstrates to us what is possible. To build on a small level—if not in a big way—just in a small way, on these kinds of experiences. Experiences derived in one way or another from the organization of campesino communities, because there is a relation here. You know that many people of the countryside have gone to the mines. So this kind of experience is related in some way to the institution [CISEP], inasmuch as it attempts to consolidate small, productive entities, that work toward these ends, the way these women did. —Vicho D., producer at CISEP

The emergent view. Whereas a sequential view of social change was the predominant kind of theorizing among the practitioners I interviewed, a complementary set of perspectives accompanied this view. This complementary understanding—the emergent view—posed social change as more of a process without order, sequence, or predictable direction. Social change was not viewed as a corpus of related parts—consciousness, memory, the collective mode—that were placed in motion one after the other and pushed in the direction of justice, equality, and dignity, as was the case with the sequential view. Rather, organization and mobilization were aims that were seen as in the process of becoming. And this process did not always take on a recognizable form, as one practitioner explained:
Sometimes, things that happen in Bolivia, and really this is the way popular movements are throughout Latin America, they are not what we could call already established or somehow inherent. They are always being created. Popular movements. . . I can't remember, for example, that there was ever a march of torches at night the way it happened here the other night. The people here have the custom of doing their marches in the day. Likewise, there had never been a crucifixion. Then there were self-crucifixions during a protest, as a form of struggle. That's the way the dynamic is. --Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII

In addition to having multiple, manifest forms, the emergent view of social change understood popular movements as being contingent on changing circumstances.

Moments of severe crisis, for example, seemed to bring out the best in people:

It is in the unfortunate moments of despair that the people are highly solidaria [in solidarity]. When they try to defend against something that is going to have a great consequence on the town, it is something that is very spontaneous. They just appear, these marches of solidarity that help in creating resolve. And there is no need to drag people out. They turn out like sheep. I think this has helped me a lot. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII

Moments of crisis also sparked the creativity of practitioners who sensed that changing circumstances mandated new communication forms. In explaining a form known as the chain of miners' radio stations, one practitioner interpreted its appearance as follows:

I think the chain came about as a necessity of the moment. What I mean is there was a necessity for communication, right? Because when there is a dictator who shuts down all communication—and this dictatorship of García Meza was very powerful, as I believe everyone knows. So, due to the severe censorship, I think the chains came about as a necessity for the workers to be organized. . . . If we review history, I believe—at least the events that have touched my life—the chains have functioned best in times of dictatorship. In contrast, during times like the ones we are living in now—and this is probably your experience, too, as you've been able to observe—one doesn't feel the necessity, and so only two or three stations participate. In contrast, during times of dictatorship, we all felt the need to communicate with each other. --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Because the particulars surrounding everyday life can shift radically—as they have in the Bolivian mining regions—movements for social change must be able to respond. The practitioners cited above shared a sense that some contextual shifts were met successfully by the people working with the radio stations and in social movements.
Nevertheless, these practitioners did not always hold understandings of social change as an emergent process. In fact, one practitioner told me how sequential-view understandings of popular movements were unable to cope with radically altered social, economic, and political situations. Rigid social theorizing had created a blind spot in her practice:

We have created a myth of what is a worker and the task of unionism. We have forgotten about all the mistakes and flaws. Beginning with myself. We had hidden a lot of the things that are now coming to the surface. I'll tell you, for example, that I did not want to accept that unionism as we knew it had to succumb in order to lead to a new workers' movement, one, perhaps, with very different characteristics. --Marta M., outreach worker with Palliris at Radio Pío XII

The position that movements sometimes must die in order that others gain life is radical and complex. It creates a tension when pitted against the view that social changes are sequential and measured, for it questions the certainty and stability of social life, and makes media practice more problematic.

Indeed, these complementary theorizings of social change have various implications for media practice. First, the view that social change is a sequential chain of conditions to be created and steps to be fulfilled provides prescriptions for media practitioners. In this view, media are placed in the service of the different sequences, applying appropriate programs to specific social actors. On the other hand, the emergent view of social change summons an agile, flexible, and responsive media to cope with a world of shifting conditions and processes of everyday life. Media practitioners operating under such a worldview would need to be skilled monitors, facilitators, and promoters of the people, their experiences, and their desires. Rather than working on the periphery of popular movements as mere supplements, the media would play a much more central role in the active definition and construction of social change. Both the sequential view and the emergent view of social change provide a useful theoretical backdrop for interpreting the data of this study.
In this section I have described practitioner theories of communication and social change. In summary, theories of communication were never described in essential terms but always relative to the making of tin miners' radio. Within that frame of reference, communication was defined as the conjoint construction of meaning stemming from a committed, bonded relationship, and having political, practical, and ethical dimensions. Social change was defined in two ways that complemented one another. The predominant understanding viewed social change as coming about through the progressive fulfillment of sequences that built upon one another. A complementary view understood social change as difficult to predict, control, or direct but emerging from shifts in conditions surrounding life. These theories of communication and social change provide useful templates for understanding some of the more specific media practices described in this and subsequent chapters. I will turn now to discussing two essential practices--linking and committing--in terms of how practitioners enacted them.

Theories into Practice I: Committed Bonding

The preceding accounts of practitioner theorizings of communication and social change introduced the concepts ligarse and comprometerse. These two concepts emerged as sensitizing verbs in this study, by which I mean actions containing a concentration of meaning and logic that explained, related to, and resulted in specific practices. This section will unpack the meaning and processes of linking and committing, which I will refer to by the combined term "committed bonding." The reason for adopting this combined term is to convey the sense it carried in the context of Bolivian miners' radio practice. In fact, linking and committing can be thought of as two separate procedures, but in the context of miners' radio, linking actions implied a

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7 Again, I am extending and modifying Carey and Christians' (1989) notion of "sensitized concepts" in qualitative research, which are "categories that are meaningful to the people themselves, yet sufficiently powerful to explain large domains of social experience" (p. 369).
commitment, obligation, or promise. I feel it more accurate to consistently apply the term "committed bonding" in this section, which progresses from schematic and general descriptions to concrete examples of enactments and misenactments of committed bonding. This section is divided into the following themes:

- The difficulty and complexity of committed bonding
- The dimensions of committed bonding
- Three strategies for committed bonding
- The consequences of delinking and mislinking

Because committed bonding is a sensitizing verb, it serves as an interpretive bridge between practitioner theories (in the preceding section) and practitioner actions (in the following section). Placing this central concept here facilitates the reader's interpretation of the data, as it is deeply rooted in theories of communication and social change, yet branches out into multiple programs. I begin with a discussion of the difficulty and complexity of committed bonding.

**The Difficulty and Complexity of Committed Bonding**

Because miners' radio stations traditionally have been owned by workers, the committed bonds of practitioners to labor might appear as a given or natural. Indeed, previous interview citations indicated that the noncommercial status of the stations provided important direction for forging committed bonds. Nevertheless, the means for forging committed bonds in the different communities was not given or natural. Committed bonds to labor and popular organizations were neither a birthright nor a natural inclination. Rather, the process of forging committed bonds was rife with difficulty and complexity.

Several practitioners expressed a sense of disconnection from the labor movement, despite having been born and raised in mining camps. One practitioner
described the lives of herself and her brother as sheltered and protected from the hardships faced by the mass of mining families:

I am a miner's daughter, but I did not know about of all the needs of housewives. There were just two of us in my house, my brother and I, so we lived in another world. We had a happy life. . . . I was raised here, but I know other places, too. I had the opportunity to study medicine in Cochabamba. I was in my fourth semester when my father became ill and I had to return [to Huanuni]. Only my brother was able to finish his studies. So we never really lacked anything. . . . But once I started working in the radio station, I started to see that my people needed so much help. --Sara S., former producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Even though as children they lived in the same substandard mining camps as the mass of workers and attended the company schools like other children, she perceived herself and her brother as having been distanced from the workers' struggle. A practitioner with a similar sense of childhood explained the labor she expended to reclaim a sense of connectedness to the workers' struggle:

Since I began working here, I have gotten into the living conditions of the people little by little. Despite having lived here for so many years, I was brought up on the margins of everything that was going on. Well, once I got involved with the miners, I soaked everything up, as they say, I got covered with the situation and began to see things differently. This is what I have recovered. I was born here, but I never thought I would know anything about the mine and the work that we carry out, the work of the miners. So when I went into the depths of the mine to do a job, I began to know with a luxury of details just what it means to produce, in economic terms. Because on top of this effort of so many people, just about an entire country survived. It was only then that I started to become conscious. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII

The distancing experienced by these two women might be interpreted as a form of paternalistic shielding of daughters from a dirty and dangerous life, but in general I found--in my field notes and videotapes--that miners dissuaded their daughters and sons from working in the mines and encouraged and supported them in professional studies. An indicator of the extent of this sense could be found in the daily messages broadcast at Radio Nacional de Huanuni and directed at college-age children attending universities in La Paz, Oruro, Cochabamba, and Sucre. Three times a day the station transmitted messages that people delivered, usually handwritten on a piece of paper. Of the days that
I studied the messages, 25% of them were notices from parents to their children instructing them to pick up money orders or care packages that were being carried on one of the bus lines passing through Huanuni.

Discouraging children from entering the mining work force generated an antipathy between lifestyle and aspirations that contributed to the distancing described above. The tension this provoked within families was illustrated in a funeral speech videotaped during my pilot study:

This part of our life is gone. Perhaps it was a fateful end. They have left us in the most difficult times. But they have left themselves in the elevated consciousness of their wives and these children, whom I've seen at their fathers' sides, giving them a handkerchief, giving them a rag and saying, "Daddy, I will never be like you. I promise you daddy." Of course this is painful for a miner. -- Mario P., secretary general of the local miners' union, Huanuni

This tension was reflected in the earlier comments by practitioners who recovered their sense of connection to the labor movement.

The mere existence of material connections between a movement, a medium, and its workers, then, did not necessarily ensure committed bonds of practitioners to that movement. Furthermore, living in the movement did not automatically lead to identification with it. How, then, did practitioners forge the committed bonds that are considered the touchstone of communication? I will begin answering that question with a discussion of the dimensions of committed bonding.

The Dimensions of Committed Bonding

The relationships between media practitioners and social organizations differed in terms of intensity and levels of involvement. In terms of intensity, committed bonds to social organizations ranged from casual to intimate involvement between practitioner and social group. In terms of levels of involvement, practitioners forged committed bonds at the local, regional, and national levels. Regardless of intensity or level of involvement, all practitioners seemed to work with existing organizations.
Indeed, working through existing organizations was the gateway for many practitioners into forging a bond to a social movement. Repeatedly I was told that programs got their start by practitioners linking themselves to organized sectors (from a small collective of women tending a greenhouse to neighborhood associations to national confederations) and to events (local festivals, neighborhood meetings, regional and national congresses):

We began by linking ourselves with different sectors of the population of Huanuni. I believe that in this way we could make certain things happen, such as the fact that we pushed for a local office of the Permanent Assembly of Human Rights. This was able to be built here in Huanuni. Also, we had pushed for the creation of an office of the Bolivian Workers Central here since we began working in Huanuni. At least the Permanent Assembly of Human Rights was accomplished. --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

The above passage demonstrates how a practitioner started out working with local organizations and then spread out to forge committed bonds with regional and national groups that could establish branch offices of human rights and labor activists in Huanuni. The movement from local to national bonds was dialectical, tending to have a multiplier effect, as connections in one organization led to contacts in others:

We work with people who are already organized, with the national committee of miners or with artisan groups. Then these initial contacts will certainly lead in a few years to more active participation of women, which we are not giving up on as an institution. We are trying to create an opening where, up until now, there have been certain reservations [regarding the involvement of women]. --Pablo J., contributor to CISEP

The dialectical, multiplier effect created new sources and topics for the practitioner, and this brought pragmatic benefits of helping to create programs and transformative impacts of involving new actors in social movements.

The identification of these organizations was both haphazard and systematic. In one haphazard--but particularly empowering--instance, a practitioner stumbled across a self-organized women's cooperative:

One of the desires of the institution has always been to make the people, in this case the social bases, able to organize themselves as a way to raise their
standards of living or, in other words, to raise their incomes, which is difficult. But in this case, the institution didn't do it, the institution hadn't gone there. Rather, in this case the women had done the organizing and at that moment they had made this their distinct experience. It happened to coincide with the goals of the institution. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP

The practitioner found this new bond empowering because the women had succeeded at doing something that his institution claimed as a central role. In this case, he had stumbled across the group by accident when he and other members of the institution were on their way to seek out union members of a particular town.

Whereas committed bonds were periodically forged in haphazard fashion with previously unknown groups, more often empowering media experiences resulted from the systematic identification of popular organizations. In all three locations I experienced programs that involved social actors who were identified by a censusing or stock-taking procedure of all potentially interested organizations for a given topic. Sometimes this meant physically walking for an entire day to find every group of organized cooperative workers or neighborhood groups to talk with them, to invite them to a program, or to make arrangements for some future production.8

This sort of comprehensive procedure of inclusion operated at both the local and the national level. In fact, one of the most complex examples occurred at a national seminar on the crisis of state mining, sponsored by CISEP. The seminar brought together seven national, regional, and local institutions, all of which incorporated participants from grass-roots organizations in their local communities. A series of presentations and roundtable discussions incorporated this diversity of perspectives, which cut across geographical boundaries and social locations. As the seminar progressed, I began plotting participants in a 15-cell table (Table 7) in order to illustrate

8 I am thinking particularly of the cases of Magy C. and Marta M. cited in other places in this chapter; my observations are the source of statements concerning their censusing and stock-taking procedures
the effect of censusing the totality of potential participants. The consequences for structuring the seminar in this way were that a diversity of concerns were placed on the agenda, as the mining and labor issues varied between geographic locations and between state-salaried and independent cooperative workers. The final document resulting from the seminar reflected the divisions between workers and regions, but the director explained that the institution would continue to seek out common ground among these social actors. I include this example because it provided a clear illustration of how committed bonding was enacted on a variety of social levels.

Table 7. Participants at CISEP-organized miners' seminar plotted by social and geographic location.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Location</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Unions</th>
<th>Cooperatives</th>
<th>Rank-and-File Workers</th>
<th>Academics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographic Location</td>
<td>Officials from a variety of institutions</td>
<td>Officials representing state miners</td>
<td>Officials from miners cooperatives</td>
<td>Workers who do not hold official titles</td>
<td>Experts who study mines, law, int. trade</td>
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<td>La Paz</td>
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<td>Oruro</td>
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<td>Potosí</td>
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Looking at the dimensions of committed bonding began to give a sense of how linkages were forged in actual practice. Now I will turn to more specific concrete practices enacted by practitioners. These specific practices convey levels of intensity moving from the casual to the highly intense.

**Three Strategies for Committed Bonding**

Thus far, practitioner accounts of how they went about forging committed bonds with organizations have been somewhat general. Yet practitioners also talked about specific actions that held committed bonds together once they were established. Regardless of their intensity and level of involvement, committed bonds required human behaviors to energize, renew, and reproduce those relationships every day. In looking
for those microprocedures that held bonds together and intensified their levels of
commitment, I found that three distinct strategies were used:

• Social adapting--adopting specific behaviors to coincide with social practices of people
  with whom practitioners wish to forge committed bonds.

• Reciprocating--the material exchange of labor or goods that helps sustain relationships
  and create a sense of equity in them.

• Taking direct action--hands-on involvement in the work of social organizations
  detached from any particular media production.

Social adapting was a category that emerged from interview accounts of
practitioners trying to gain entrée to a new community. Generally this required the
practitioner to establish some sort of common ground with people in organizations so
that a stronger bond eventually could be forged. Social adapting, then, was
conceptualized as an access-gaining strategy that could lead to stronger bonds to groups.
Practitioners deployed a number of social adapting techniques, such as timing programs
with local festivals:

Well, we want to know the problems of different neighborhoods, what it is that
afflicts people the most. But this has to accompany some specific program, a
local festival, something that is organized with the neighborhood federation or
by a group of neighbors where they have no federation. This way, they have
initiated the program. --Pablo J., contributor to CISEP

By adapting his production around the events sponsored by local organizations, this
practitioner reported that he successfully forged committed bonds with neighborhood
groups.

Another common technique for gaining entrée with social organizations was by
taking part in the routine ceremonies that accompany group life:

Generally, the custom is to look for trust wherever you can find it. Now many
times, this trust is found through coca, chewing coca. This might seem absurd,
but it leads to, how can I tell you? Coca leads to strong social bonds. So they
invited me to chew coca, a pijcheo.\(^9\) I also chew coca. I know what it means to

\(^9\) El pijcheo refers to the ceremonious chewing of coca done by co-workers or
colleagues before starting a task.
share coca. So we didn't have any problems. We just started talking about the things I told you about. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP

The specific use of coca was implemented by practitioners at all three research sites I visited. The most systematic use was by outreach workers from Radio Pío XII who always took bags of coca leaves and bundles of cigarettes when they met with representatives from campesino communities.

In addition to adopting customs of workers, nearly all of the practitioners spoke native languages, which they credited for much of their success at entering campesino communities:

You've got to earn a lot of trust with people, you know. For example, I speak Aymara, so I am able to come down to the level of the people, you see. In order to speak with them about their experiences in a way that helps my reporting. -- Gari E., technical producer at CISEP

Speaking native languages like these women did, like the majority of the people, who speak either Aymara or Quechua, generally Quechua, allows you to be more, more on their level, not as someone who's come down from the radio, but just like an ordinary person. . . . Generally in western Bolivia Aymara or Quechua is spoken. Especially when you go out to the countryside, and even in suburban areas. Most people speak either Quechua or Aymara. So, you have to adapt yourself. If you don't know these languages, that is an obstacle. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP

Since I can speak Quechua, it was easy for me to talk about things with them. We talked about the price of chuño [freeze-dried potato prepared and sold by campesinos], the situation in the countryside, is there production is there not production, the cost of transportation to their towns, what time they come to market, what time they have to get up in their homes, what time they get here, how are the roads, the trails, the pathways. There are so many problems. -- Fernando E., news director Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Not all of the practitioners in this study were native speakers of Quechua and Aymara, but several of them had taken classes to learn this second language. Nevertheless, coming from the countryside seemed to provide practitioners with a knowledge storehouse that was useful in social adapting:

I come from the countryside, and I knew very well that we had to talk with them. They should use the radio. But the people who never lived in the countryside don't know what the living conditions are there. There's very little that they can talk about. But the people who have been there, have lived in the
countryside, know the difficulties. And they know, they know that the campesinos can talk about their living conditions. --Fernando E., news director Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Ah, yes, well, I didn’t have many problems because I, too, come from a relatively poor family from the countryside, and so I can adapt myself fairly easily to different environments. I don’t have much problem in this regard. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP

Having roots in the countryside helped provide these practitioners with a storehouse of topics, issues, and experiences to share with campesinos and also made them more comfortable in this setting.

A second strategy that energized the bonds between practitioners and organizations was reciprocating. The importance of reciprocation in Bolivian culture dates back to pre-Hispanic times in the organization of agricultural production, as well as community festivals and family rituals. Reciprocating is more than the giving and receiving of gifts or labor. It is a means of survival in societies marked by scarce resources. One gives una mila (a day’s labor) to an individual or community project, for without it such projects could not be completed. Likewise, when an individual has a need or is under an obligation to host a lavish event beyond his or her means, the community reciprocates with material assistance.

This procedure of reciprocating permeated media relations across sites and seemed to account for the maintenance of bonds between groups. In Huanuni, the radio had formal, reciprocating relations with five nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) outside of the town and with one in the town. The station manager was explicit in attributing the strength of institutional bonds by elaborating the following reciprocal actions:

We used to work, for example, with CEPROMIN [Centro de Promoción Minera] under the simple agreement that they would send the program, and that was enough. With CISEP, it was the same type of agreement: something at no charge. One, because at that time it was understood that they were making programs on the national level that was in defense of popular groups. It was really possible to understand the situation in this way. So we always had
accepted their programs at no charge. But later we started to realize that it couldn't be done this way. There had to be a more solidaria contribution. For example, thanks to CEPROMIN, we have the camcorder. And for this contribution, we continue to support them. With CAEP [Centro de Apoyo y Educación Popular], it's the same way: the purchase of a few things for the radio--those walkie-talkies that we are using now. With CEPRA [Centro de Producción Radiofónica], it's only that they send us a program of national interest. This is one of the most interesting radio organizations because they make national programs, but our agreement with them was also that they could give us some radio courses, workshops. And with CENDA [Centro de Comunicación y Desarrollo Andino], we have an agreement that they will buy us vacuum tubes. Thanks to CENDA our signal reaches into the department of Cochabamba. --Loren R., director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni

For this practitioner, reciprocating was more than a strategy for keeping the radio solvent. He viewed reciprocating as an action that strengthened solidarity between institutions and forged committed bonds. The practice of material reciprocation was not only evident at Radio Nacional de Huanuni but was also practiced between Radio Pío XII and agencies working in the countryside.

Reciprocating seemed to be such a critical strategy for maintaining committed bonds that failure to reciprocate threatened to liquidate relations between cooperating institutions. I personally saw this happen between CISEP and Radio San José, a miners' radio station that--due to the collapse of the San José mine--became completely commercial. The station's move to begin charging CISEP a cash fee for air time violated the sense of reciprocation, and their programming arrangement ceased. This was also a recurring issue in Huanuni, where city hall officials and other local institutions received publicity and access in some proportion to their reciprocating behavior.

A final committing procedure was that of taking direct action with social organizations. By this I refer to wide-ranging instances where practitioners joined community organizations and performed important functions within them--activities seemingly separated from media tasks. These actions were striking for they violated journalistic norms taught by U.S. media educators and advanced by professional
organizations. Yet they had important committing consequences for the media practitioners.

Examples of direct action were evident at all the research sites but were demonstrated most clearly at Radio Pío XII. An employee who produced a daily program for miners, for example, spent much of his time as a volunteer with one of Siglo XX's mining cooperatives. I learned about his activities as we walked to lunch one day. Lalo E. pulled a wad of cash out of his shirt pocket and told me that he was collecting debts from miners as part of his duties as the president of the committee overseeing the upcoming elections. He explained that only members who were free of debts to the cooperative were eligible to run for any of the offices. When election day arrived several weeks later, I accompanied Lalo as he straightened out problems at ballot boxes, supervised all of the polling places, counted the votes, and ultimately presided over a magna asamblea (a meeting of all members) to determine the winners, as the majority of voters rejected all candidates by casting the "blank ballot."

Likewise, the director of Radio Pío XII spoke of the value of taking direct action with social organizations, referring to the massive protest known as the Marcha por la vida (the protest for life):

This was an interesting experience for Pío XII. It was a daily walking from Oruro to wherever we reached each day. Kilometers and kilometers, together with the miners. Others of us went ahead of the group in a vehicle to set up the equipment. We had hooked into things that were being lived by the people. We have all of this experience recorded, beautiful experiences. --Alfredo A., director Radio Pío XII

Direct participation with the actions taken by labor organizations allowed for this "hook into" the experiences emerging from a struggle of the moment. Participating directly, like this was a strategy adopted by practitioners at all three research sites. Just during the

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10 See, for example, the Society for Professional Journalists' code of ethics, which forbids actions that would compromise the tenets of detachment and disinterest.
time of my fieldwork, I learned that practitioners at the different sites did volunteer work with the Civic Committee of Llallagua, the Permanent Assembly on Human Rights in Huanuni and Oruro, the International Defense of Children of Huanuni, the Regional Workers' Central of Llallagua and Oruro, the Committee of Folkloric Groups, and, of course, the miners' unions and cooperatives in all three locations.

Each of the three concrete procedures presented here—social adapting, reciprocating, and taking direct action—helped to forge, energize, and maintain committed bonds. They moved from the least intense actions—sharing in social rituals and speaking the language—to highly intense practices—walking side by side with miners in an arduous trek and potentially dangerous protest. These cases demonstrated the value and importance of forging and maintaining committed bonds. Conversely, the inability or refusal to forge bonds brought costly consequences to practitioners.

Consequences of Delinking and Mislinking

While forging committed bonds to a social group was never articulated as a requirement for practitioners, people who resisted or for some reason lacked such bonds reported negative experiences in their work. Also, committed bonding with a group operating in opposition to the dominant ideological position of the radios brought severe consequences to practitioners. Therefore, forging committed bonds was an important act in and of itself. Nevertheless, one could and did forge committed bonds with the wrong social organizations, too.

When respondents identified dissatisfying experiences in radio, they often constructed them as the consequences, in part, of being disconnected from a social organization. The starkest example of this occurred when a group of miners known as jukus (men and boys who clandestinely and illegally enter the state mine to extract raw minerals) assaulted and injured a group of officers policing the mine in Huanuni. A group of jukus had been apprehended by the police in Huanuni, but they outnumbered
and overpowered the officers, who suffered serious injuries. When the jukus exited the mine in a "triumphant parade," Radio Nacional de Huanuni responded by denouncing illegal mining (as it jeopardized the position of state workers, i.e., the union members) and reprimanding the violence administered to the police. This caused great tension between the station and the jukus, who threatened to attack the radio workers. The director saw this dissatisfying professional experience in the following terms:

The jukus have always been seen as something to retaliate against. So this act of retaliation [by the radio] was what really showed us that they were a very misunderstood group. We should have understood that, while being a clandestine group, they were still human beings. So from this perspective, we have really improved our work when it comes to this kind of information. That's why we work with the D.N.I. [International Defense of Children] and also with the Permanent Assembly of Human Rights, and now we have begun to talk about el juqueo [the issue of illegal, clandestine mining]. In particular, how children and young people are involved. --Loren R., director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Lacking any bonds with the growing number of clandestine miners led to the misunderstanding of the jukus, which the station director was trying to remedy by working through committed bonds with other organizations. In this case, the station was seemed to be shocked into recognizing its lack of bonds. In other cases, however, the radio practitioners identified delinking as unacceptable to their practice:

I got very upset, I was angered with Gonzalo E., for example, and I damn near told him to go to hell, to go to shit, as we say here, because the guy was very comfortable [during the Marcha por la vida]. He only showed up when it was time to go on the air. He only gave his voice, and I don't understand communication in that manner, just coming on the air, giving your voice and nothing more. I exploded at this experience. Communication is not just speaking on the air. Communication is a process and one has to be there, working. This is part of the game. --Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII

In this case, the director had an understanding of the importance of taking direct action, of sharing in the work of a movement, and he reprimanded a practitioner who viewed the task of the radio as operating in professional isolation from the struggle--of only appearing to put his voice on the air. I interject the term "professional" here because I
saw several instances of delinking, mainly by professionally schooled practitioners who experienced similar problems at the miners' stations:

When I worked at a newspaper in La Paz the only difficulty I had was studying and working at the same time. Here in the radio, the other day I had a super negative experience. It turns out that I was interviewing the director of Fejuve [Federation of Neighborhood Organizations], who wanted to play games with me, right. He wanted me to say that the Civic Committee was a hypocritical institution. Well, not hypocritical, but irresponsible—that it didn't do anything. "Why don't you people in the press say this and this and this?" And I told him it wasn't my obligation to make accusations. Since it was his opinion, he should make it himself. "Do it yourself," I told him. I was smart enough to start recording, and I asked him about other things. Finally I asked him why there was so much resentment between the two groups, why didn't they work better together, what were the aspects of this and that. I asked him to say these things because he was trying to bring me into the fray.... They complained to the director, he called me, and it turned out to be a big hassle, a big hassle. It made me feel bad. .... I really don't know what the position of the radio is. I know what the position of the radio is, but it's not that clearly defined. The director said that the radio could not be so hard on these institutions. To the contrary, there should be a strong relationship between us, a closeness. They say that if you're not working with a group then you are not fulfilling your function. I don't think things are quite this way. --Miguel V., producer at Radio Pio XII

The difficulty faced by this practitioner was the result of conflicting visions of journalism. The training this practitioner received at the university inclined him toward detachment from the civic groups experiencing a conflict. On the other hand, the station director, who had years of experience in the mining towns, insisted that he forge a relationship, a closeness to the groups. Implicit in his recommendation was the belief that useful direction came not from the adoption and imposition of outside norms but from the understandings achieved through the relationship between the practitioner and the social organization. The confusion and hurt expressed by this practitioner revealed a strong tension between professional and alternative notions of journalism and identified committed bonding as a central concept differentiating the alternative from the mainstream.

- In this section I have tried to demonstrate the subtlety and complexity of forging committed bonds. These notions are neither birthrights nor the natural inclinations of
people from mining towns. Furthermore, forging committed bonds occurred at different social levels and with varying degrees of intensity. Regardless of level or intensity, however, these bonds required human actions—communication procedures—to forge, maintain, and reproduce them. Finally, the failure to forge committed bonds was related to many of the experiences considered to be failures or difficulties of the practitioners. This sensitizing verb—committed bonding—constituted an interpretive bridge, of sorts, between general theorizings of communication and social change and the very concrete steps of media practice. I turn now to the most concrete section of this chapter, the actual practices that branched out from forging committed bonds.

Theories into Practice II: Examples from the Field

The process of committed bonding to social organizations aiming to transform society led to and was accompanied by numerous media practices that contributed to the overall goals of the organization. To a degree, these media practices were determined by the social organizations, but the relationship between the two was far from deterministic. That is, media practices were not unilateral and monolithic, but multilateral and diverse. What held the diverse practices in some coherent order, however, were the complementary notions of social transformation that were discussed earlier in this chapter.

Recall that social change was theorized on the one hand as a sequential series of steps, with one step needing to be fulfilled before moving on to the next. From this perspective, communication was viewed as a tool that could assist individuals and groups in achieving the appropriate steps on the journey to transforming society. On the other hand, social change was conceived as something emergent and in the process of becoming—sometimes in unexpected and unpredictable ways. From this perspective, media were viewed as central to monitoring and facilitating this process. As I stressed earlier, these different views of social change complemented rather than competed with
one another. Likewise, specific media procedures enacted in this study operated in a complementary manner.

I have organized the media procedures discussed by practitioners into two broad categories that I describe as "predetermined" and "alterative," using both of these words in their adjective form. Both of them are defined below:

- **Predetermined procedures**—refer to given, constitutive, predefined notions and prescriptions of social life directing communication actions. Predetermined procedures are understood as logical outcomes of the sequential view of social change.

- **Alterative procedures**—refer not to predetermined notions and prescriptions but to dynamic and fluid constructings of social life causing alterations to communication actions, making them different without changing into something else. Alterative constructions respond to the exigencies, contingencies, and developments in social life. Alterative procedures are understood as the outcomes of the emergent view of social change.

Predetermined and alterative procedures contained numerous exemplifications that I am calling media logic constructing, topic selecting, source identifying, and language choosing. I am conceptualizing predetermined and alterative procedures as macroframes that encompass many microexamples. The four examples that I will be focusing on in this chapter are defined below:

- **Predetermined media logic constructing**—specific, concrete reference points concerning media practice, establishing an identity for the station, and drawing parameters for practitioner activities (e.g., lines of authority in the union, appropriate topics within the Catholic Church).

- **Predetermined topic selecting**—appropriate subjects for radio programs depending on their fit within the constructed media logic and the stage of social change of a given social organization.

- **Predetermined source identifying**—routine and reliable informants who provided commentary and elaboration to practitioners.

- **Predetermined language choosing**—already-defined language and style that reflect the media logic orienting practice.

- **Alterative media logic constructing**—conceptual reference points concerning media practice. These reference points were located by words such as "reacting," "coordinating," "contributing," and "rescuing," which described the relationship between media and social organizations.
• Alternative topic selecting—organic agenda setting, where program ideas are driven by the concerns of ordinary people.

• Alternative source identifying—actively seeking a broad range of social actors in program production, often engineered to incorporate participants from all levels of social life.

• Alternative language choosing—seeking terms and explanations used in everyday speech, free from specialized jargon bearing little or no relationship to the experiences of the grass roots.

I begin with a discussion of predetermined microprocedures because they were the most prevalent in the data set, indicating that predetermined proceduring is perhaps more pragmatic in day-to-day practice.

**Predetermined Media Logic Constructing**

The particular organizations and institutions that owned and managed each radio production site in this study provided practitioners with predetermined logical frameworks that assisted in program topic, information source, and language choices. I call them predetermined frameworks because they provided specific, concrete reference points concerning media practice. These frameworks helped media practitioners in day-to-day work as they established an identity for the station and parameters for its activities.

All three of the research sites articulated particular logics, but the most concrete example was at Radio Nacional de Huanuni, where direction was given through the hierarchical structure of the union and its affiliated labor organizations:

There is not much of a problem because all of these social movements are affiliated with the Central Obrera Boliviana [Bolivian Workers' Central—COB]. So from this perspective, well, nobody breaks away from the decisions of the COB. Some of the other sectors, like the mining cooperatives, are also affiliated with the Federation of Miners, and they cannot break with the federation. . . . We in the radio take note of what they are talking about in the Federation of Miners, and also, of the perspectives adopted by the Central Obrera Boliviana. -- Loren R., director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Through the decisions of the union, its national organization, and the conglomerate

Bolivian Workers' Central, practitioners received concrete directions that helped in the
management of potentially competing social movements. One gets the sense from the passage above that a disciplinary ethic operated between the groups affiliated with these labor organizations and was expected to be honored by media practitioners.

Decision-making frameworks were less structurally delineated but more conceptually directed at Catholic-affiliated Radio Pío XII and at CISEP, where practitioners talked about the "option for the poor" and a Bolivia "without oppression"--a framework articulated by Latin American bishops--as the guiding principles for selecting topics, sources, and language:

This institution belongs to the Catholic church, to the Jesuit order. The Jesuit order has a policy of the option for the poor, which has been adopted by all [Catholic] congregations in Bolivia. The option of the poor means to struggle for equality, justice, solidarity with marginalized people, ethnic groups, cultures, nationalities, with whom we talk and don't talk. So when we speak of the option for the poor, we are opting for a particular group, a conglomerate sector that has low income, that politically does not have access to decision making, and that socially is marginalized by those decisions. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP

Radio Pío XII as an organization, as an institution, takes off from these principles that are talked about in international conferences, the option for the poor, you know, this is where our work begins. This means we are aiming, all the time in our overall work, at changing society. Not just changing society, but as you can see, many elements such as the matter of integrating people, communities, cultures, all of this. But we are going in the direction that one day, some day, there will be social change. --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

Since the celebration of Vatican II in the 1960s, and following all of these documents of the Latin American bishops, the first proof that was made is that Christians, whoever they are--doctors, construction workers, journalists--Christians must be committed. No matter who you are. Therefore, from the very beginning, if one is serious about developing the role of the Christian, there is no room for neutrality. --Victor A., director of CISEP

The practical framework at the Catholic radio stations was not as structurally defined as the one at the miners' union, but it was predetermined, nonetheless, in providing concrete, identified, material targets--the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized. In addition to providing broad substantive direction to practitioners, the Catholic organizations adopted an operational strategy for enacting actual programs. At CISEP,
for example, practitioners told me about a procedural chain that was implemented for each production:

Well, this institution, what we do here is to show everything in three stages. The idea is to see, judge, act. In seeing the entire picture, we need to gather documentation always. Not just in this case but in the great majority. --Gari E., technical producer at CISEP

This operationalization of seeing, judging, and acting could be viewed as an abstract theoretical procedure. But I have interpreted it as a predetermined procedure because it was set into motion with the understanding that the seeing, judging, and acting would be directed at the poor with their liberation in mind.

Radio Pfo XII also had formal operational strategies for enacting programs. Their method for determining topics, sources, and language was more formal, as the station's external funding agency required that each department draft 3-year plans. The department of mining cooperative outreach, for example, drafted a 10-page plan that was divided into three columns, which had the headings "Goal," "Objective," and "Means of Accomplishing." Under the headings were included general goals to improve living standards as well as specific workshops and meetings to reach them. Some examples include:

- Co-assist the miners' cooperatives in the search for solutions to the problem of irrational use of the mine that affects the lives of 5,000 miners.
- Push for the democratization of work teams in the mines for improved participation in decision making and earnings.
- Promote educational activities regarding the prevention and treatment of sickness related to mining.
- Conduct consciousness-raising campaigns, debates on the state of mining, forums on risks in mining, and meetings between technicians and workers.

The construction of these logical frameworks and methods of producing programs may appear rigid, formulaic, and, perhaps, authoritarian. In practice, however, they operated as reference points, helping to define the identity of practitioner
and audience. They directed practitioners to general topics, information sources, and types of language, while leaving some room for flexibility. Furthermore, the predetermined media logics were complemented by alternative media logics described later in this chapter. Nevertheless, the predetermined logical frameworks were the more clearly defined of the two complementing frameworks, exerting more influence over topic, source, and language selection.

**Predetermined Topic Selecting**

The media logic constructed by the organization managing the radio stations provided explicit direction to producers regarding the selection of topics. In addition, the data revealed that practitioners relied on personal experiences as substantive storehouses for topic choice. These topic choices, however, fit within the media logic constructed by the radio organizations.

By the time I entered the field, all of the radio stations had established committed bonds with numerous organizations that constituted routine topics of programming. The direct connection between the organization's media logic and topic choices was taken for granted, in general, but several practitioners articulated this relationship clearly:

> Within our target audience, we have defined groups. To be exact, the institution, from the beginning, has been about popular support. Especially after 1985 when there were so many firings in our country. How can we alleviate this situation? By doing small investigations that will be of use to the popular sector. But later, well, we had to redefine our objectives. The popular sector now, for example, is concentrated in the microregions of the mining sector. There we have, for example, Santa Fe, Cañalón, the mining sector Colquiri in La Paz department, and in the suburban poor neighborhoods around Oruro, here. We work with them. There are more than six of those poor neighborhoods. We are in Cantuta, in the neighborhood of Rosario, and it is possible that we will add more. But they have to be poor areas. --Gari E., technical producer at CISEP

In this discussion, the practitioner identified concrete social actors who constituted both the topic and the source of programs. The topics dealt with difficulties faced by the people of poor suburban and mining sectors. They took shape when the practitioners began directing programs:
What we do is to go out to the poor neighborhood with the microphones on the weekends and, well, talk with the people from those places where they have problems related to basic services like water, electricity, drainage. Unfortunately they have never been able to overcome these problems in the mining districts. These are permanent problems that they live with. Certainly, the municipal governments do not have the economic resources to be able to overcome these problems. Nevertheless, the consciousness of the neighbors has to be raised. They need to be aware that it is their right to demand these services. --Pablo J., contributor to CISEP

There was a need to reflect the problems of the people. To ask a little bit what is going on, what are the needs. What were the main problems. This is how the program got started, with the intention of focusing on the people, to know their living conditions and the problems that concerned everyone. . . . And the problems are this, there is no drainage, nowhere to throw dirty water. Well, there isn't any water either. Many times there isn't even water in the plaza and, well, the people start walking all over the place carrying their cans, their buckets, searching for water. --Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Indeed, the lives of ordinary people were frequently the topic of programs, but practitioners—relying on predetermined media logic—gave shape to the programs. They did not focus on any aspect of neighborhood life, but focused on basic needs that they identified as problematic.

In addition to receiving predetermined direction from an organizational framework, practitioners got topic ideas from affiliated institutions. A routine topic-selection procedure at CISEP, for example, was to coincide programs with activities at affiliated institutions. During my first week at CISEP, the series of programs being recorded focused on domestic violence, a theme that coordinated with the work of another institution. This was a routine followed at Radio Pío XII and Radio Nacional de Huanuni, as well:

It was the fathers from Caritas, Caritas Boliviana. They explained to me that they were working on an AIDS-prevention campaign. And right in the middle of this campaign they learned about this young man with AIDS. I asked them, "Who is it?" "Such and such a person." "And could I interview him," I asked. "No." Then after thinking it over, "Yes." --Miguel V., producer at Radio Pío XII
In this case, an affiliated Catholic organization enlisted the practitioner to report on a topic they were promoting. Because it fell within the constructed predetermined logic of the station, he was able to file a report without difficulty.

Aside from receiving direction regarding appropriate topics from their organizations, practitioners also brought a storehouse of substantive experiences to their work. Across research sites, practitioners explained how lived events had drawn them to the kind of work they did and factored into the selection of topics they covered:

I believe one's education comes from the home, where one is inculcated with a specific understanding, particularly, not to deceive your own people. The experience of my mother in particular--she was a teacher at one time and worked with children. This in some way awakened my interest, the concern I have for overcoming problems. After that, another area of work was linked to a women's cooperative that made crafts. --Pablo J., contributor to CISEP

Often these personal histories were nearly palpable, explaining their force in the lives of practitioners:

In my life, ever since I was little, even in school, I participated in making Molotov cocktails, back in the time--back in 1965--in the time of [military dictator] Barrientos. I also participated with the union, making bombs, bringing metal, helping, guarding the union. Because back then, in the time I was living in —, it was a time of continuous tension trying to keep the military from invading. Perhaps this has driven me to this kind of work. I also lived these things in the flesh. Everything that happened, the massacres, the way they came in. In 1965 for example, the came into houses and the soldiers started shooting at point blank range. I remember the Pomares family, I remember the Cruz family. In — there were people killed. All of this has been a part of my history. --[name omitted to prevent persecution]

I have selected these two examples because they are fairly brief and clear explications of how personal experiences influenced practitioner choices. Other practitioners in this study shared similar stories--in much longer versions--of how specific experiences provided direction to selecting topics, when the parameters of those topics were predetermined.

Predetermined topic-selecting procedures operated in a variety of ways: as a direct extension of the organizations, as an effect of affiliations, and as something that
fed off of personal experiences that drove practitioners into a specific work field in the first place. Implicated in the selection of topics was the identification of sources, which I will turn to now.

**Predetermined Source Identifying**

Predetermined topic selecting pointed to preferred sets of sources to accompany programs. These sources constituted routine and reliable informants whom radio producers could turn to for commentary and elaboration. Because they were predetermined, these sources usually occupied some official position within an organization, such as secretary general of the union, president of the neighborhood group, or section leader of a cooperative. There was a tendency, therefore, for predetermined sources to concentrate on top-level representatives of various organizations.

The use of routine sources of information—in essence, a beat reporting system—was most pronounced in the news departments of Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII. Each day that I accompanied reporters on their job, we visited the same people and places and frequently spoke about the same topics. A survey of 10 newscasts in a row at each station showed that sources were overwhelmingly men (91% at Radio Nacional de Huanuni, 98% at Radio Pío XII), and were most often experts or leaders of organizations, as opposed to ordinary residents (76% at Radio Nacional de Huanuni, 89% at Radio Pío XII). In addition, the same expert-leaders were interview sources each day. This resulted in homogeneous and repetitive programming, a conclusion reflected in the frustrations of a Radio Pío XII news reporter:

> Today I interviewed Cirilo Jiménez [leader of the Regional Worker's Central] and I asked him to talk about the Lupi Lupi electrical plant. I said please tell me all about the plant—don't talk about politics, the needs of the Bolivian people, the people of Llallagua and Northern Potosí—just about Lupi Lupi... Well, he started out fine, but then he got into the Bolivian people, the miners, the struggle—he started putting in all sorts of things that had nothing to do with my story. These things are said day after day. —Miguel V., reporter at Radio Pío XII
That predetermined sourcing accounted for such a large proportion of program sources indicates that this procedure is reliable, predictable, and responsive to the pragmatic needs of media workers. But the passage above indicates that the price for utility is informational atrophy due to the lack of new ideas being incorporated into programming.

Such heavy reliance on the same sources seemed to affect the way information was conceptualized. One practitioner contrasted his experience working in radio in a very small mining town with his years producing programs in Huanuni, which had a more developed civilian population and government:

At times it is important to get experience in places where the work is much more difficult. So when you finally arrive to work in a medium where there is an ample number of information sources and there is a wide field of information, then the job is much easier for you. For example, in Bolívar, there were no sources of information. There was just the union. There was nothing more, nothing more. It was smaller. Whereas here, city hall, so many people, right. Well, there [Bolívar] it wasn't like that. This is what has made my work easier, the experience. --Fernando E., producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

This practitioner conceptualized "information sources" as officials and leaders of labor and civic organizations—something that I inferred from his words as well as my observations. Ordinary people in a small town fell outside of the definition of information sources, making media production more difficult. This passage confirmed what has been mentioned before: predetermined source identifying was a pragmatic and efficient method of gathering information but resulted in static and redundant representations of social life.

Predetermined source identifying sprang from predetermined topic selecting. Because topic selecting and source identifying both focused on constituted social actors, they had ready-made spokespeople and interpreters of social reality. These procedures were practical and efficient because events and sources were readily identifiable and
available. Like signposts on a road, however, predetermined topic selecting and source identifying carried with them a ready-made language giving interpretive direction.

**Predetermined Language Choosing**

When topics and sources were predetermined, practitioners tended to present material mechanically in an already defined language and style that reflected the media logic orienting their practice. This tendency was particularly notable at the union station, Radio Nacional de Huanuni, where the language was laden with references to class, exploitation, struggle, and imperialism. The style—shouting slogans, inserting interludes of workers' protest songs—was akin to a rally and mobilization of workers. This language and style were constants in the news programs, in station editorials, and in jingles that were aired two to three times every hour. For example, a commentary preceding a news story about several miners staging a hunger strike to protest the loss of their jobs began with this paragraph:

> There are times when—due to Bolivia's laws, which were drafted by the rich—innocent people pay for the crimes of others who currently walk the streets of Bolivia. . . . Many times we have said that unity is the force that is capable of bringing down the current capitalist schema of life. . . . Nevertheless, it appears that we are losing faith in our own force and ability to consolidate the unity that will allow us to bring down those who control the laws: those are the wealthy who are able to change or manipulate the law. All of this depends on who pays the most. --commentary from Radio Nacional de Huanuni, September 28, 1994

Commentaries such as the one above were frequently used to frame news stories in the given language of the labor movement. By and large, this language was direct and simple: class focused, anticapitalist, and anti-imperialist.

Another illustration of this kind of language and style was contained in a jingle produced by an announcer who said that it was designed to calm frantic workers who were panicked by falling tin prices that were provoked, in part, by the U.S. sale of surplus stocks of tin. The jingle, in part, said:

> Fellow worker, in the face of aggression of the United States government and of the national private industries, the only security we have is in the unity of the
workers and their families [musical interlude, a worker's song with the lyrics, "It's time for resistance and combat"]. The low price of tin on the international market is due to political manipulation of the powerful with the sole intention of taking over our lives and leaving the workers and their families in the streets [musical interlude, "oh my suffering humanity, how much should I give the forgotten?"] . . . Be alert and be united. The mines belong to all Bolivians, to those who do the work. \textit{Viva} the Bolivian Workers' Central and \textit{viva} the Miners' Federation.

The impact of using predictable language and presentational styles is hard to determine, particularly since I have no audience data speaking to this theme. Different practitioners, however, offered divergent opinions. The producer of this jingle—which was not the only one of its kind at the station—-noted an improvement in the attitudes of workers and housewives. On the contrary, the technician responsible for playing the recordings several times an hour considered them "very tiring, listening to the same thing over and over." This position was shared by practitioners at Radio Pío XII, which intentionally avoided this language and style as a matter of policy:

\begin{quote}
We don't care for these terms [used by self-defined "revolutionary" practitioners]. They are terms that have been beaten to death. Besides, they have been appropriated by political parties and such. . . . Regarding these terms, the director of this institution has questioned us all—I don't know how many times—on the use of revolutionary terms, demanding to know, "Show me, where is the revolution?" --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker for Radio Pío XII
\end{quote}

The practitioners at Pío XII seemed to be aware that the repeated use of incendiary language resulted in a deadening of meaning, as words no longer coincided with material reality and were used by outside groups for political advantage.

This aversion to the language and style of "revolutionary radio" did not mean that Radio Pío XII's presentational modes were entirely void of predetermined procedures. Ironically, the pattern of their presentations followed the 5 Ws and H (who, what, when, where, why, and how) structure of mainstream practitioners in the United States. In fact, this story construction formula was formally incorporated into some of
their training materials. The adoption of this particular presentational form coincided with the more institutional nature of Radio Pío XII.

Aside from repetitive and formulaic presentations, reliance on predetermined source selecting and the tendency to seek expert opinions led to language that was far removed from everyday experience. At CISEP, for example, this tendency became painfully clear during a program examining the economic impact of the government's privatization policy:

One time the dean of economics [from the Technical University of Oruro] came on the program. He spoke in so many economic tecnisismos [technical jargon] that it was incomprehensible to the people. Oh it was hard to understand. And the worst part was that at one point, for example, I said to him, "Let's talk a little bit about the stock market in understandable terms." He couldn't explain a thing. Well if I couldn't understand, as an economics student, how could the audience? And that's the way the program ended. --Gari E., technical producer at CISEP

This practitioner added the observation that predetermined sources can constitute a set of insiders or experts who speak in specialized languages that are divorced from the common lived experience.

Predetermined language choosing followed progressively from predetermined topic selecting and predetermined source identifying. As in the previous sections, this procedure was efficient for practitioners but dangerous in portraying the world in one-dimensional, rigid, and incomprehensible terms. Whereas most topics and sources and language across sites were developed though predetermined procedures that led to formulaic presentations, alternative procedures were present, as well. I will now turn to descriptions of alternative procedures in media practice.

Alternative Media Logic Constructing

When describing various radio experiences, some of the practitioners used terms that reflected a sense of self-awareness in the process of communicating for social

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11 Details of these training materials will be given in chapter six.
change. They used words like "reacting," "coordinating," "contributing," and "rescuing" when describing their responses to emergent situations involving social organizations. These views constituted, in effect, a media logic that contrasted with the predetermined media logic that was dominant among practitioners. Because these alterative media logic constructings were relatively few and far between, I believe they are more difficult to articulate and, perhaps, less efficient in daily practice. In describing alterative media logic, practitioners never articulated abstract relationships or introduced specific criteria; rather, they skirted around the notion of alterative procedures by describing how they handled specific situations. In other words, alterative procedures were never talked about directly—as were predetermined ones—but were introduced via concrete experiences that provided an entry point for constructing an alterative media logic. Finally, all of the discussions of alterative media logic coincided with a crisis situation or a substantial change in the social environment that raised questions regarding the utility of such a perspective.

Alterative media logic constructings required that practitioners monitor social life and react communicatively as warranted by the situation. A sudden decision by unions and other social organizations to march from Oruro to La Paz in protest of mass firings required such a reaction by practitioners:

So we had made a complete communication system, without thinking it out in detail, how to establish each little thing. It was not all thought out. The newspaper murals were not thought out. . . . We had combined media because we had the radio, and we had a chain that I told you about, and we also had mini-media like the newspaper murals. We had them all over, wherever people were mobilizing. That's how we responded here. . . . Sometimes you have to have quick reflexes in communication and in popular radio. If you haven't got quick reflexes, you're beat. That's how it is. --Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII

In this case, the practitioners responded communicatively to this sudden decision in a way that adapted to "wherever people were mobilizing," that is not in a prescribed
fashion but in a flexible manner. They did so by having "quick reflexes," which implied that practitioners were alert and were monitoring the various social movements.

In addition to monitoring and reacting, alternative procedures coordinated social action. During the 1980 military coup of General Luis García Meza, miners' radio stations coordinated the exchange of messages between isolated stations, thus providing the only source of news and information for the country. One practitioner demonstrated an awareness of the need to coordinate:

I think more accurately that this situation was somewhat difficult because at any given moment we don't all have the courage to confront such difficult, overpowering situations.... And such situations arose. Since we had the chain of radios, there wasn't any problem because everyone was in the chain. So what was broadcast on Radio Llallagua was passed on to all the other stations by Radio 21 de Diciembre. So from any given point, from any given station, we could send information, what was happening, because it was group work, coordinating this. --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

The above observation included two levels of coordinating. First, the radios coordinated on the informational level, exchanging updates on military advances and activities.

Second, she referred to "group work," indicating that coordination between the different stations at a basic technical level, devoid of information, was also necessary. This point was fleshed out later in the interview:

A kind of chain between miners' radios was established. Perhaps these were the first experiences with this kind of thing, the chains of miners' radios. So for this kind of relation between stations, we also included Radio Llallagua [a non-union station]. I had worked in this station before, so there was practically already a strong link between us. And back then it was clear that although Radio Llallagua was a fairly small station, it had turned into a fortress for the city. --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

So monitoring social action involved a watch over civic and labor organizations and extended to potential allies in the communication environment, too. Coordinating involved not only a bridging between social organizations but between communicators.

The reason for coordinating actions was to bring voices together that would contribute to the overall purposes of the social mobilization. In other words, the media
logic constructed by these practitioners had as its purpose the advancement of social actions. This was evident in a practitioner explanation of the march mentioned earlier:

This experience is interesting because we communicated from here, from the march. Different leaders spoke to each other, different workers spoke to each other. So it was like a common radio that converted into a mobile radio. Aside from this, other stations entered into a radio chain with us... We went along the march, transmitting everything. Back at Pío XII, they organized a chain, like the one you've seen. But this chain included all the miners' radios from around the country. They coordinated the chain at Pío XII and they put me on the air at different times and miners' radios went on the air at other times. Everybody was hooked up in a group in order to help contribute to the mobilization of people. -- Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII

The goal of contributing to the mobilization of people in this case was immediate, direct, and evident. In other cases, however, promoting social action was more subtle, indirect, and delayed. One practitioner held the notion that rescuing successful experiences in the form of a radio production could make important contributions to other social organizations. His comments related to a small group of women who had formed a farming cooperative:

Making a little bit known about the work they were doing, what their conditions were, these things that aren't readily known, even in their own town. This has made it possible for others to be able to know this experience. And maybe by rescuing this experience, attempts can be made at doing similar things in other places. There are many such experiences, you know, this is not isolated, but they exist in other places. People organize themselves sporadically without anyone directing them generally. In other words, they push themselves to form organizations because it is useful for the moment. These kinds of organizations occur for a time and then disappear due to many different factors, just as they appear for many factors. -- Vicho D., producer at CISEP

This passage conveys the sense that many small successes, many microhistories, have never been documented. The work of the media practitioner was to rescue these invisible histories so that other movements could benefit from them. Because of the small-scale, local nature of these histories, this observation expanded the framework of alternative media logic to include social action that is not sweeping in scope and scale.

Alternative media logic constructing resulted in a referential framework that was sensitive to situational contingencies, exigencies, and developments. Practitioners
operating within such a framework placed a premium on the ability to monitor, react to, coordinate, contribute to, and rescue social action. Working within an alternative media logic led to compatible strategies for identifying specific topics.

**Alternative Topic Selecting**

Alternative topic-selecting procedures might be thought of as modes of implementing organic agenda setting, where program ideas were sought out in a number of ways by practitioners. That is, instead of having predefined, constituted sets of topics, practitioners searched for issues of concern held by ordinary people. Instances of alternative topic selecting were related to definitions practitioners had of themselves as "popular communicators" and somewhat depended on their ability to forge committed bonds with social organizations.

The self-adopted identity of "popular communicator" involved a desire to make programs that were responsive to the interests of ordinary people. This general desire was seen to contrast with other programs produced by the radio stations:

> All right, how did this program begin? There was a need to reflect the problems of the people. Because it is true that at the radio there are many different programs. But in general, they are devoted to information, and they do include information from the people. They ask a little bit about what is happening, what the needs are. But there was not a single program that was focused exclusively on knowing what the needs were, and what was going on in the neighborhoods, what were the biggest problems. So that's why this program was started, to focus a little bit on the people in order to know a little bit more about their living conditions. --Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

This practitioner clearly expressed a frustration with the occasional glossing over given to the concerns of ordinary people. Another practitioner was more emphatic in rejecting the predetermined identification of topics, which he described as "planning" of any kind:

> What allows this [getting close to grass-roots organizations] to happen many times is not planning anything. The reason is simple. If you plan, then you already know what it is you want from a particular group. Let's say I'm going to Huanuni, and I want to talk with the Housewives' Committee, and I make a list of questions. I want them to answer these questions: this, this, this, and this. I get there and I don't find the people very receptive. That is, they don't respond. So many times one has to come at it from another side, one has to talk about
things that are local, are of more interest there, and start principally from those things that interest them. --Viche D., producer CISEP

In this case the practitioner did not really reject planning, but rejected planning of the predetermined sort. He rejected the prefabrication of questions where content was already determined. But he recognized the need to ask questions relating to the issues and concerns pressing on a particular group of people--questions that could have been planned without prefabricating their content. As practitioners grew more and more familiar with the concerns of specific groups, they forged increasingly committed bonds leading to an intimate familiarity with important grass-roots issues.

This was the case in Huanuni, for example, where a former producer working intimately with the Housewives' Committee marched to Oruro with the women in a protest demanding back wage payments from the state mining company. During a joint interview between the practitioner and her husband, I learned how the situation occurred:

This was a measure they took because the workers were not being paid their salaries as they should have been. So the way things are here is that the woman places herself on the frontlines and decides to march, you see. In order to demand the payment of back wages. And direct from the march, we went right on the air, using the walkie-talkies, together with Sergio . . . --Sara S., former producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

When the housewives decided to march, since she [his wife] was integrally identified with the women and their problems, of course she had no alternative. She had to go. She had to march together with the housewives. And the whole journey was relayed to the station. --Sergio H., technician at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

By achieving such a close relationship with the Housewives' Committee, this practitioner had no need to ask about the issues affecting them. She was "integrally identified" with the movement and was actively taking part in identifying the topics of concern to this group. Furthermore, she had no choice regarding participation or coverage when the women decided to march; she was obligated to cover the issue. This is a clear example of how organic agenda setting occurred.
When practitioners reached such intense levels of committed bonding—as in the case noted above—their relationships with social organizations produced topic-generating processes. That is, the intense involvement with social organizations began generating topics from within the organization, in the form of either suggestions or direct performance:

I continue to work at the station not only because I want to, but because some listeners have suggested that I do something new. I decided to do the program, From the People, but now the title of the next program is going to be, Huanuni Before and After. This was the suggestion for the focus of the next program I do. This was the suggestion I received. It is welcome, I’ll take it and try to reflect how Huanuni used to be and how it is now. --Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

We had a program where in every barrio [poor neighborhood], in every neighborhood, the people prepared their own programs. In other words, every neighborhood federation or barrio group prepared weekend shows. The people who lived there organized music, poetry, food from particular regions. They put together a series of contests. --Pablo J., contributor to CISEP

In both of the cases above, practitioners had worked closely with neighborhood groups for extended periods of time. The achievement of self-generating topic processes was achieved only after long and concentrated involvement with local organizations.

Up to this point, alterative topic selecting has been marked by a grass-roots, bottom-up flow. But, several instances of alterative topic selecting had a decidedly top-down feel. In one case, miners decided to march from Oruro to La Paz in order to protest the mass firings by the government. A practitioner who did not join the march responded by organizing children in support activities that would be heard by the marchers:

As they were marching, we who were here in Siglo XX did educational programs and movements. We mobilized children with their empty pots, with spoons banging on them, and we transmitted this for the people [in the march] so that they would feel fortified that their children were with them. To tell them that this was a permanent communication, from adults to children, from adults to adolescents. This work was so, so, we say so entrenched, so enrooted in the affairs of the people, of the town, that it began to multiply itself, it radiated out. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pio XII
In a similar case, a practitioner saw that changes in the town had resulted in the loss of collective memory regarding important events in the miners' struggle:

I was very entrenched in the work of the mines. I went into the mines regularly and made programs there. Well, I was talking to the director of the radio, and we came up with the idea of doing special programs on Sundays. We were seeing that an entire experience, the entire life of the miners was being lost. We saw a need to recover all of this. Why? In order to create consciousness among the people that the working conditions of the miners right now, we can say, is worse. It is more inhumane, more subhuman, the work in there. --Lalo E., outreach worker with miners at Radio Pío XII

In both of the cases above, practitioners were deeply involved in social movements and initiated programs that responded to particular situations affecting those movements. The selection of their programs, however, was not done in a predetermined fashion but in a way that was flexible to changing contexts and in conformance with notions constituting alternative media logic: monitoring, coordinating, contributing, and rescuing.

In general, alternative topic selecting seemed to coincide with the goals and definitions of popular communicators, that is, incorporating issues and voices from the grass roots. These general goals led to committed bonding with social organizations, which resulted in a self-generating dynamic wherein groups would begin to give concrete direction to practitioners—a process I called organic agenda setting. Nevertheless, practitioners also were able to set agendas from the top down, while invoking alternative procedures. They did this by following the central tenets of alternative media logic. Many of the procedures used in alternative topic selecting also operated in source identifying, the next section of this chapter.

**Alternative Source Identifying**

Alternative source-identifying procedures were not a natural outgrowth of alternative topic selecting. Because practitioners nearly always worked through social organizations that had internal hierarchies, the danger was ever present to slip into predetermined procedures of seeking group leaders for opinions and interpretations. Yet
practitioners took some ingenious steps to incorporate a broad range of social actors as sources. These steps virtually always involved making their programs in the public places where people normally congregated.

Because ordinary people in social organizations were usually overshadowed by elected leaders at formal meetings, practitioners at all three sites responded by taking programs to unofficial public places--street corners, work sites, markets. In Huanuni, for example, one practitioner determined that housewives were the closest to the hardships of family reproduction (carrying water, tending children, managing budgets, washing and cooking in substandard conditions) but were only rarely used as sources for information. She responded by systematically visiting neighborhoods to propose doing a live program where women could share their experiences:

It went like this. I invited them to make a program before it actually aired. I would go to a neighborhood and participate in their association meetings. I said, "I'll be here on such and such a day, in such and such a place; please wait for me; we want to know the needs of the people." And if the whole neighborhood didn't show up, at least the members of the association board would. Or better yet, just a few neighbors would be there. And this has been a satisfaction to me.

--Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

This advance notice gave the women the opportunity to plan their activities, organize their thoughts, and meaningfully contribute to the program, which took place--not coincidentally--during hours when most men were either leaving for or returning from their jobs in the mine.\(^{12}\)

Likewise, producers at Radio Pío XII were concerned that few members of the various miners' cooperatives had been coming to the station to participate in programs. Several practitioners determined that the record low levels of tin prices meant that workers had to spend more time in the mine and were too exhausted to participate in

\(^{12}\)I have analyzed this program in great detail elsewhere. See Huesca (in press) for a more complete version of these procedures.
radio programs. They responded by taking their programs to the entrance of the mine in the early morning, before the workday began:

I have been feeling somewhat frustrated and that’s why I’ve opted to do radio at the opening to the mine. And now I’ve had experiences that have shown me how I can get to the audience this way, making programs at the entry to the mine and in the small processing pools. --Lalo E., outreach worker with miners at Radio Pío XII

The move described above was alternative in that it responded to a perceived contextual change--more time at work, less time available to visit the station--and adapted to the new situation--taking the program to the work site. The area in front of the mine’s entry was a wide dirt road surrounded by small buildings where women sold food, coca leaves, alcohol, cigarettes, lamp oil, dynamite, and other small items used during the workday. Hundreds of men gathered there each dawn before entering the mine. It was a festive atmosphere lasting about 30 minutes each day, during which time, Radio Pío XII practitioners enacted their program.

Both at Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII, alternative procedures that identified audiences as sources wound up using multimedia forms in the process. At Radio Pío XII, multimedia forms--like the newspaper murals--had been used for years when audiences were dispersed, inaccessible, or distanced from the station for some reason. An example from a labor strike, where miners took over an interior section of the mine, illustrates this process:

We went into the mine to pull out the experience of the strikers: how they felt in that moment, of being exhausted, of hopelessness, of things they were living. In a small way we rescued the human experience of these people, you know. So we’d take in our newspaper murals and they themselves would draw on them. We took their drawings down to the Plaza of the Miner and we displayed them there. It was a constant coming and going, a permanent response between the people on the outside and the people on strike inside. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII

The use of multimedia, in essence, created multiple entries and exits for members of social organizations to participate in programming. Taking different media to the places
where constituents congregated established multiple avenues for them to contribute to
the programs (entries) while providing multiple opportunities for them to focus on
content (exits). At times, participants from neighborhoods and work sites actually
requested multimedia formats:

The neighbors from this neighborhood asked that the television station [also
owned by the miners' union] and the radio program, From the People, visit their
neighborhood. In other words, they had us make a group production—the
television and the radio. So the television came with their camera and I went on
the air live so that people and the authorities finally began to understand what
living conditions in Huanuni are really like. This was a suggestion that came out
of the Cuchillani neighborhood. --Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de
Huanuni

Taking production equipment into the neighborhoods and providing multiple entries and
exits for participants produced positive results for practitioners responding to changing
circumstances. In addition, producing programs from public places had a generative
effect. People who were ordinarily shy and reticent seemed to get caught up in the swirl
of the intense turn taking that went on in these productions:

I will always remember the program I did in Villa Santiaguito, which is very far
away, down by the Santa María bakery, right in front. I had a commitment and a
windstorm started up and wouldn't stop. I went out into the storm and we
started with just two neighbors: the association president and a compañera [a
neighbor, a housewife]. Once people heard us on the radio, they started coming
out, even with the storm blowing. And they started denouncing and making
demands. And people started appearing from Villa Victoria, from Barrio Nuevo,
and a whole bunch of other barrios. I had just started with Santiaguito, and we
just started reflecting, in such bad weather, but we started reflecting on all the
needs and we started to know just what is happening in these neighborhoods. --
Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

Participants seemed to identify and appreciate the sacrifices made by practitioners and
reciprocated by adding their voices to neighborhood programs.

Alterative source identifying was not a natural outgrowth from alterative topic
selecting. Practitioners brought production to public places, often adapting them to new
situations occasioned by extreme contextual shifts. Producing radio in public places
frequently resulted in the use of multimedia—something that participants seemed to
value. Finally, programs produced in public places had a generative effect, drawing in participants who might otherwise never go near a microphone or camera. The processes of this kind of production led to and, in fact, mandated alterative modes of presenting material, which I will turn to now.

**Alterative Language Choosing**

When topics and sources were determined through alterative procedures, practitioners tended to include many direct quotes in their radio accounts, usually in long, uninterrupted segments. Even when direct quotes were not used, practitioners tried to fashion their presentations in the language and vocabulary of ordinary people. They placed a premium on conveying information in plain language, as evident in an explanation of how one practitioner got started working in miners’ radio:

> The way I started working, for example, or how it was that I developed an interest to work in the miners’ radios, especially in news, was when there were some journalism courses in 1974 in Llallagua. They were organized by the union of the state mining company back then. And one, perhaps the main, speaker was father Luis Espinal [a well-known martyr in Bolivia]. It was a lightning course that lasted just three days. It was during Easter Week of 1974. But it was very intense--morning, noon, and night. A lot, perhaps, that it was father Luis Espinal who was the speaker, has been the reason why I felt so attracted to this work. The language he used, so simple, so clear, a form that I found very appealing. So this was a fundamental reason. Perhaps if it had been another speaker, perhaps I wouldn't have been attracted to this work. From that moment on, I felt an interest to work in these radios. --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

At all three sites, practitioners actively sought out the language used by rank-and-file workers, housewives, and even children when making their programs. Practitioners recorded people's statements at events, such as the display of newspaper murals described above, and either used the material directly or indirectly in programs. In one case, for example, a practitioner told me how interacting with the people helped her to construct a language frame for a program on government privatization policies:
The Housewives' Committee called meetings to orientar [give guidance] to the compañeras on what this policy, [Supreme Decree] 21060,13 consisted of, what its repercussions would be on the lives of the miners, their families. So while they went along building, they also gathered a series of understandings that helped us popularize ourselves, back at our internal meetings at Pio XII. It helped us to clarify, more or less, the picture of what was going on, how we could aim our work, how we had to give guidance to the masses, etc. Once we had this, you know, this information from the people, well, then we could turn out our program in popular terms back to the people: this is the policy, these are the effects, this is what is going to happen, etc. And automatically, people generated their own initiatives in defense of the policy. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII

This kind of practice was repeated over and over--at Radio Pío XII in particular. Just in the three weeks that I was there, media productions that included alternative language choosing included the following:

• programs broadcast in Spanish, Aymara, and Quechua that included native speakers of those three languages as participants

• a weekly talent show--broadcast live--that drew participants from the Northern Potosí countryside to perform original music

• the publication of a report that included popular testimonies of cooperative members and was distributed to each of the cooperatives

Producing programs in the language common to ordinary people provided a sense of fulfillment, as one practitioner explained:

I can tell you about another experience. It is having worked on a half hour segment called La K'epirina, which was directed at miners working in cooperatives.14 For me, it was a satisfying experience, one because of the language that was used, the language that miners from cooperatives use. Also, it pleases me that whenever I bump into cooperative workers, they tell me that the program has helped them in some way, in giving guidance, respect, or referring to problems such as safety in the mine. --Lalo E., outreach worker with miners at Radio Pío XII

As evident in the two previous accounts, adapting language to the audience had pragmatic benefits for the social movements promoted by practitioners. Using such

13 This was the executive order that resulted in the mass firing of 20,000 of the state's mining work force of 27,000.

14 K'epirina is the Quechua term for the backpack used by the cooperative miners for carrying minerals excavated during the workday.
language was satisfying because it brought the practitioners closer to the struggles lived by ordinary people in their towns.

Alternative language choosing was an outgrowth of successful alterative source identifying. In the situations faced by practitioners at Bolivian tin miners' radio stations, alterative language meant nontechnical, simple, clear words used by ordinary people. Practitioners characterized such language as attractive and satisfying. In addition, it played a pragmatic role in their productions aimed at having an impact on the struggles faced by different groups.

As mentioned earlier in this section, the operation of predetermined and alterative procedures was a complementary, sometimes dialectical one. In some of the examples of predetermined procedures there were traces of alterative procedures, as well. Likewise, alterative procedures often were manifestations of predetermined concerns lurking in the background. Predetermined and alterative procedures for coping with reality have not been presented here as mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories confining action; rather, they have been posited as constructs useful for understanding particular behaviors and for guiding future action. I have posited that conceptualizing these specific media practices as constituted by and constitutive of predetermined and alterative procedures offered a meaningful way of thinking about Bolivian tin miners' radio, especially given the preceding theories of communication and social change.

Summary

In this chapter I have posited that it is important to study alternative media practices in terms of practitioners' theories of communication and social change. Bringing theory and practice together was not only true to the spirit of the radio producers and scholarly literatures in this study, but it was a useful way to get at the meaning that specific actions had in this particular research setting.
Theories of communication in this data were fairly homogeneous. Discussions never explained communication in terms of universal principles, neutral characteristics, or abstract descriptions. Across interviews, communication was conceptualized as a relational phenomenon, always occurring within a specific context with concrete social actors for particular goals. The emphasis on context, actors, and goals added political and moral dimensions to these theories of communication. That is, communication was seen as the willful act of forging a commitment with social organizations for the purpose of transforming reality.

The transformation of society was a matter of practitioner theorizing, as well. Here, however, practitioners held divergent perspectives on how change occurred. The prevalent view from the interviews was that social change involves a sequential series of steps including raising consciousness of injustices and rights, organizing like-minded actors, and then taking some kind of action. A complementary view saw social change as something in the process of becoming, neither sequential, predictable, or controllable.

The theories of communication and social change held by the practitioners of this study helped to make sense of the media practices at tin miners' radio stations. In some cases, media were used as ancillary tools, operating in a complementary and subordinate fashion to organized social movements. Usually, the media-as-complement practices were manifested in predetermined procedures that relied on substantive criteria for identifying topics, sources, and language of content. In other cases, media were seen as more central to social change, fulfilling monitoring and facilitating roles. In these cases, the practitioners used alternative procedures that relied on flexible criteria for determining topics, sources, and language. Alternative procedures were less evident in practice, but they still claimed a common and important role in producing programs.

The purpose of this chapter has been to construct a theoretical foundation necessary to understand the concrete practices described in this and the following
chapters. In one sense, it is the most abstract chapter in this dissertation, as it deals with theories of communication and social change from the perspective of practitioners. Its connection to the remaining chapters is as a theoretical referent useful for interpreting microprocedures described later. The next chapter presents microprocedures that identify problematic differences in media practice and formulate actions to cope with them.
CHAPTER V

DIFFERENCES AND MEDIA PRACTICE:

KINDS OF DIFFERENCES, COPING STRATEGIES, AND CONSEQUENCES

The purpose of this chapter is to address a fundamental gap in the alternative communication research dealing with how practitioners respond to differences in their communities. This topic constitutes a major blind spot in the alternative communication literature, which has portrayed alternative media practices as fundamentally participatory and democratic. The differential nature of power (an assumed condition of all human relations), which gives rise to and/or exacerbates differences, has been ignored, by and large, leaving the impression that alternative media are homogeneous, egalitarian systems. Even studies calling for the incorporation of the dominant into the alternative and mandating both industrial and artisanal modes of production have left this impression by neglecting to theorize explicitly the ubiquitous problem of differences, their particular manifestations, and communicative strategies for coping with them.

This chapter will attend to this fundamental gap in the literature primarily by tracing out instances of differences—identified in field notes and interviews—that became problematic for practitioners. This chapter is ordered into five sections as follows:

• Overview—an introduction to the cases that I have chosen to focus on in this chapter, and an explanation of why they were selected while others were rejected.

• Kinds of Differences—a discussion of how differences emerged in practice, and what those differences were like.

• Coping Strategies—an examination of how practitioners responded to problematic differences.
• Consequences—a presentation of the outcomes resulting from coping strategies.

• Synthesis of Situations, Actions, Consequences—a discussion of patterns emerging from that data that might give useful direction to practitioners.

The division of this chapter reflects the communication-as-procedure analytic from a metatheoretic position. Recall from chapter one that the communication-as-procedure framework attempts to retain dynamic processes by looking holistically at communicative actions as embedded in situations and consequences, rather than isolating the static parts. I have reproduced the central theoretic from chapter 1 (Figure 7). Taken together, this situation-action-consequence chain is a very shorthand representation of the communication-as-procedure analytic, which I have abstracted to a higher conceptual level in this chapter in order to deal with a broad range of data. By raising the level of abstraction, I hope to point out the broad applications of this data while retaining the dynamic processes and specific characteristics that gave way to differences.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 7. The communication-as-procedure chain.**

In this chapter, the section on kinds of differences corresponds to situations, coping strategies to actions, and consequences to outcomes. By casting "differencing" as a dynamic process, I hope to show how media practitioners take an active part in constructing and coping with differences. I believe this discussion of dealing with differences is relevant, not only to tin miners' radio practitioners, but to any communicator who is concerned with making practices more democratic, pluralistic, and participatory.
Overview

Before proceeding with any analysis, I will identify the specific subset of data I have used in this chapter and explain briefly the reasons for selecting them. This data will provide the reader with a ready reference source that will be of use in following the description and analysis in later sections of this chapter.

Recall from chapter two that the initial steps I took in the analysis of data was to identify holistic units from interviews and field notes. These units were defined as coherent instances, events, stories, or programs that I had observed or that an interviewee had discussed in detail. After going through the entire data set, I ended up with 90 units (see Appendix B).

For the purposes of this chapter, I reviewed each of the 90 units to identify those that manifested signs of difference that practitioners had to attend to in the course of dealing with an event, story, or program. Nearly one-third of the units (29 instances) involved differences that were problematic for practitioners. Of the units that I observed, differences were involved 31% of the time in Huanuni, 32% at Radio Pío XII, and 29% at CISEP. Of the units derived from interviews, I only examined 28 out of a total of 35. Seven units were removed from the data set because they constituted a holistic data subset that will be the subject of chapter six. Of the interview units that I examined for this chapter, 12 of them, or 43%, involved problematic differences requiring the attention of practitioners. The purpose of quantifying here is not to prove anything but to emphasize the importance of differences to alternative media practice. Aside from being a neglected point in the alternative media literature, problematic heterogeneity—the existence of differences—demanded a significant portion of alternative radio practitioners' attention in this study. Therefore, differences are not only of theoretical interest, but they are of practical concern, as well.
Although I identified a total of 29 units that were marked by problematic differences, I only used 22 of them in the description and analysis of this chapter. I eliminated 7 units because they lacked sufficient detail to be of use here given the situation-action-consequence chain I am using to make sense of the data. Of the 7 cases that I eliminated, 6 of them came from field notes; these were instances that I was unable to document in sufficient detail because of circumstances at the research sites. In these cases I either left the field while the event was in process—thereby losing any sense of consequence—or I was only able to document smatterings of detail that left too many gaps in details surrounding situations, actions, and consequences. For the sake of precision, then, I have focused my attention on 22 cases where I have fairly complete accounts of how differences arose in situations, how practitioners responded to them, and what consequences resulted in each case.

The 22 units forming the subset of data for this chapter are summarized in Table 8. I have assigned each unit an arbitrary number, which I will use in descriptive passages of this chapter to facilitate the reader's ability to track the development of patterns and detail. In addition to numbers, I have included the short-hand name that I assigned in the field to every unit; I found these names useful for remembering the instances. Finally, I have included the place (Huanuni, Pío XII, CISEP), data source (field note, interview), and a brief description of the situation and the difference demanding attention. The order in which they appear in the table corresponds to the order in which they are introduced in the chapter following Figure 8 (p. 188). I adopted this pattern to facilitate the tracing of individual cases by readers wishing to do so.
Table 8. Events, instances, stories, and programs constituting the data subset of Chapter five. Data abbreviations are "F" for field note source, "I" for interview source.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Number, Location</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Name and Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01. Huanuni</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Hunger Strike—A group of three men hold a hunger strike in the lobby of the radio station to protest being fired. The occupation of the radio station brings out historical, and political alliances and conflicts among union members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02. Huanuni</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>La Paz Meeting—The secretary general of the union calls a meeting of section leaders so he can explain results of recent meetings with the government. Section leaders boycott the meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03. Huanuni</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Dissent 1—A formal assembly of workers outside the mine airs opposition to the current secretary general. Leaders and rank and file comment on the event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04. Huanuni</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Dissent 2—A second assembly of workers outside the mine, again, expresses opposition to the current secretary general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05. Pio XII</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Controversias—Two factions of a peasant federation are brought into the studio to discuss their differences in a program called, Controversias. My interpreter tells me, &quot;they are having a terrible fight.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06. Huanuni</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Women's March—Housewives' Committee decides to march from Huanuni to Oruro in protest of nonpayment to their husbands. Taking initiative breaks with traditional role of responding to direction given by union.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07. Huanuni</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Women's Unionism—Practitioner initiates a regular program on union education for women. It draws criticism from male leadership of the union.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08. Pio XII</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Cooperativa Conflict—The leadership of the largest cooperative is misappropriating funds and is unfairly partitioning workplaces in the mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09. Pio XII</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Women's Hunger—Housewives' Committee stages a hunger strike to demand return of jobs to laid-off husbands. Jobs not returned, but the women's movement is substantially altered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Huanuni</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Colquiri—Practitioner is fired from the radio by the union for demanding fair pay and benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Pio XII</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Cooperative Elections—A vote of no confidence dominates the election of officers in a large cooperative. Radio staff plays a central role in brokering a compromise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Pio XII</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>1986 Elections—Voters in a national election unexpectedly cast ballots in favor of right-wing former dictator. Radio staff responds to this undetected position among the people it works with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. CISEP</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Workers' Assembly—Union leaders act as spies for management. Practitioners decide to expose this treason on the radio. They are fired and exiled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Pio XII</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Miners' Survey—Miners have stopped coming to the radio station to participate in programs. Staff conducts a survey of miners' living conditions, needs, and expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. CISEP</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Miners' Seminar—Two groups with different interests—state miners and cooperative workers—brought together at a seminar. Aim is to establish common ground between them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Pio XII</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>El Expreso—Radio's work with indigenous people is target of criticism by peasant union leader and a conservative priest. The criticisms are publicized in newspaper El Expreso.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. CISEP</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>La Paz Demonstration—Radio worker rebuffed by union leadership at a street rally in La Paz. Unexpected hostility forces him to redirect news-gathering efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Pio XII</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Rural Outreach—Development workers who contribute to the radio visit rural populations, meet with diverse residents to plan future programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. CISEP</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Greenhouse Work—Independent women who tend greenhouses are reluctant to talk to a radio reporter. He overcomes this difficulty by building rapport and trust with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Huanuni</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>Cochillani—Program focusing on poor neighborhoods is resisted by residents of Cochillani—a target neighborhood. Practitioner succeeds in getting support of some residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Pio XII</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Listener Survey—Changes in labor force and introduction of FM radio stations results in loss of listeners. Station surveys audience regarding needs and desires.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ordering of the units in Table 8 coincides with the order in which the units are introduced in the descriptive section of this chapter following Figure 8 below. The reason for placing the units in this order—rather than organizing them by field site, data source, frequency of citation, or some other criterion—is that I believe it will be easier for readers to trace out patterns and ruptures as I move from descriptions of kinds of differences to actions to consequences.

Kinds of Differences

Up to this point I have used the word "difference" repeatedly without taking time to define what I mean. At the risk of oversimplifying, I am using a pedestrian, commonsense understanding of the word: a perceived dissimilarity or distinction. More specifically, I have considered differences in media practices as those instances where competing, conflicting, disagreeing, complementing, and/or accentuating sets of experiences or perspectives entered into the routines of radio production in a way that became problematic for practitioners. By "problematic" I mean that the difference produced a range of effects, which included calling attention to, placing into relief, interrupting, challenging, or upsetting habitualized routines in radio production. Notice that my definition of difference includes experiences and perspectives that not only contest, refute, and contradict existing views, but also extend and add to existing positions.

Despite its commonsense nature, this conceptualization of difference is broad and complex, not tied to any specific literature base that has as its primary focus theorizing difference.\(^1\) I view difference as highly abstract and universally present in social life. At the same time, it is experienced particularistically and given specific meaning in the routines of everyday life. Understanding difference as both universal

\(^1\) Though I do not cite individual works in this section, my thoughts are based on theories of power (Lukes, 1974; Scott, 1990), hegemony (Femia, 1975;Forgacs, 1988), and communication (Dervin, 1993).
presence and particular manifestation helps to untangle how differences arise in communication practices, for it provides a mandate to attend to difference across situations, while emphasizing its specific qualities grounded in space and time.

The matter of difference can be conceptualized in numerous ways with varying levels of complexity, from very basic ontological states of being to highly subtle relations involving symbols, ideologies, and social organizations. The alternative media literature has treated difference in dualistic fashion for the most part, positing external impositions of technology and programming as negatively different from local and national communication. Differences within local and national settings have been ignored altogether. In response to this gap in the literature, I have attended to differences on the local level (not global), conceptualizing differences primarily in terms of group membership. At the most superficial level, I have used the notion of internal and external group affiliation and hidden and obvious manifestations as useful ways of distinguishing differences. Definitions of these four kinds of difference are given below:

- **Internal/Hidden differences**—involve social actors within a practitioner's organization or group and concern dissimilarities that are surprising, unexpected, murky, imprecise, or unknown but suspected by practitioners.

- **Internal/Obvious differences**—involve social actors within a practitioner's organization or group and concern dissimilarities that are obvious, clear, defined, known, and readily identifiable by practitioners.

- **External/Hidden differences**—involve social actors outside of a practitioner's organization or group and concern dissimilarities that are surprising, unexpected, murky, imprecise, or unknown but suspected by practitioners.

- **External/Obvious differences**—involve social actors outside of a practitioner's organization or group and concern dissimilarities that are obvious, clear, defined, known, and readily identifiable by practitioners.

When dealing with the particular manifestations of problematic differences within or between groups I have tried to be sensitive to historical, political, economic, and gender aspects factoring into kinds of differences that emerged in this study. Practitioners across sites in this study shared an understanding of the ubiquity of
difference in social life. This came as something of a surprise to me given the small size and apparent homogeneity of the various towns I visited. Nevertheless, they talked about difference in abstract terms, but always connected their discussions to concrete examples from their local communities and to their roles as popular communicators, as in the following case:

Popular communication should be connected on the popular level to various groups because to do otherwise, I believe, would have no reason for being. So starting with the workers, since they are the owners of these union stations. Then there are always the Housewives' Committees that have been organized for a long time now. Then there is the civil population, too. In Llallagua, for example, there was the Federation of Neighborhood Groups (Fejuve), which had a lot of power. And then there are student groups, as well. --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 10)

Cataloging the diverse groupings in a community—as done above—was a handy method that practitioners deployed to describe the differences in their lives. But others shared a sense that diversity existed within tightly defined sectors. Like the person cited above, they emphasized that the practitioner was obliged to ferret out these differences. One way of doing that was by seeking information from different points within the organization's hierarchy. This theme of how differences were handled in practice will be developed more fully below, but it is included here because it illustrates the recognition of internal difference:

We strive to achieve the alternative, especially in participatory aspects. This has pushed us to do many things. . . . For example, it shouldn't be the leader who always speaks to us or who always has the ideal of what is going on in reality. . . . So we always seek, try to get the gente de base [grass roots] to participate, and not just the leaders, not just those who always speak, not just those well-known people. We try to get other people, the grass roots who often say nothing but who have ideas. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP (unit 20)

In addition to merely recognizing the existence of internal differences, practitioners also understood them as potentially antagonistic. That is, potential conflicts and disagreements marked the relations of social organizations regardless of size and complexity. The potential for antagonistic differences resided in organizations as large as
the national workers federation, the Central Obrera Boliviana, and as small as a local Housewives' Committee. Good examples of this were the attempts by Housewives' Committees to act independently from union leaders (units 06, 07, 09). They initiated hunger strikes and marches, actions that broke with their traditional role within the union of following directions given by the male hierarchy (details on these cases will be presented later). Historically, miners' wives have operated under the direction of union leaders, a tradition that was formalized in passage of a 1982 resolution at a national miners' union conference. The resolution defined the formal structure of Housewives' Committees and stated that they "will function as auxiliaries to the mining unions, subordinate to them" (Ardaya Salinas, 1985, p. 338). The three units mentioned above exemplified a conflictual break from the tight definition drafted by the union.

Furthermore, in two of the cases (units 07, 09), the women struggled against each other for leadership positions within the Housewives' Committee, demonstrating that antagonistic differences can and do appear at every level within social organizations.

Inherent difference and its attendant potential antagonisms were often seen as problems to overcome. But one practitioner suggested that the strength of popular radio stations was based on the ability to seek out polemical differences and to incorporate them as a regular part of programming. In describing what helped him during the making of a particular program, one practitioner commented:

Like I told you fighting, fighting is one thing that we know how to do. Where there is no fight, it appears there is no life, there is no communication. There always has to be contrast. And if there is none, you have to provoke it, get it? You have to provoke it. --Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII (unit 12)

The notion of "fighting" (peleando) was something shared across research sites and male and female practitioners (of the 21 interviewees in my entire data set, 6 of them mention "fighting" as something of value in their practice). Placed in the context
described above, I conceptualize "fighting" as action that draws out difference in a way that accentuates the contrasts that clarify and illuminate social issues.

Clearly, there are ubiquitous or universal or axiomatic aspects of difference in social life. But those differences claim specific meaning when they become problematic in everyday practice. In attempting to tack between the universal and the specific I examined each unit in the data subset and looked at the situations in which differences arose. Conceptually, I clustered these situations by the kinds of differences that were produced; I have collected them into a four-cell typology (Figure 8). The division of these instances of difference was based on practitioner accounts of their experiences. Depending on the social actors involved in the account, I sorted the instance as either an internal or external example. The particular manifestation of difference—hidden or obvious—was determined also by practitioner accounts. In cases that I identified as being hidden, practitioners described instances that surprised them or that they wanted to know more about. Here, differences were unexpected, murky, imprecise, or unknown, but they were suspected by practitioners. In cases that I identified as being obvious, differences were clear, defined, known, and readily identifiable by the practitioner. I will turn now to describing these various kinds of differences to get at their specific situational details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Internal</th>
<th>External</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hidden</td>
<td>5 cases</td>
<td>6 cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obvious</td>
<td>9 cases</td>
<td>2 cases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8. Typology of situated kinds of differences.
Internal/Obvious Differences

I begin with the most common kinds of problematic differences that emerged in this study: differences internal and obvious to the social groups with whom media practitioners forged close ties. Of the 22 units in the data subset, 9 involved internal and obvious differences (units 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09). These internal differences varied in their intensity, tone, and clarity. Some differences were examples of sheer and transparent internal power struggles, while others seemed to be touched off or elicited by tangentially related events. Still others resulted from subtle shifts in norms, contexts, and behaviors within organizations.

The most frequent instances of problematic differences that I learned about in the field resulted from brute struggles for power of organizations (units 02, 03, 04, 08). Most of the time I was in Huanuni, for example, the union that owned the radio station was marked by an internal rift of factions trying to oust its secretary general for a variety of reasons, including charges of financial malfeasance. These internal, obvious differences surfaced whenever the secretary general attempted to use the radio to convene workers or leaders into meetings (units 02, 03, 04). He attempted to call leaders to a informational meeting, for example, to explain the substance of talks between government mining ministers and union leaders (unit 02). This call was met by vocal resistance of oppositional factions, which radio personnel then had to cope with. Likewise, when the secretary general called general assemblies of all workers, his action provoked oppositional responses from different factions (units 03, 04).

Brute struggles for power within groups were evident at Radio Pío XII, as well. For example, I observed and learned of leadership struggles that marked the miners' cooperatives, which had grown from nominal numbers in the mid-1980s--prior to mass firings of state workers--to the 5,000 members in 1993 (units 08, 11). In response to
the swelling numbers of cooperative miners, powerful factions emerged to compete for power, which led to acts of favoritism and corruption, as explained by one practitioner:

Where there has been a lot of participation was with the rank-and-file members of the Cooperativa de Siglo XX. When there were--two years ago--when there were problems, there was quite a lot of participation. They even used to fill up the radio auditorium that we have. It would fill up with workers from the cooperative. Their participation was mainly in the form of denuncias [accusations] against leaders who had taken away work areas, who had ordered beatings, these kinds of things. They [participants] did this to get rid of a tyrant leader. That's what impelled them. In addition, some of them had been run out of the cooperative for having opposed the director, Raúl Claros, and so they had more time to come, participate, and denounce the abuses. --Lalo E., outreach worker for miners at Radio Pío XII (unit 08)

The workers at Radio Pío XII told me in many conversations of the difficulties these sorts of differences raised for practitioners. The radical shift in working conditions--from a large state work force and a small number of cooperatives to its opposite--was a change that encouraged the formation of new factions in the mining industry that Radio Pío XII and CISEP both had recognized. I will discuss how they responded to this difference later in this chapter.

In addition to very blatant internal conflicts, I learned about more subtle instances of problematic differences within organizations. While I lived in Huanuni, for example, three union members launched a hunger strike demanding reinstatement to their jobs (unit 01). Drawing on field notes from the 17 days of the strike, I will describe this event in some detail because it captured the subtle ways in which internal, obvious differences were set off by a tangentially related event.

Three miners had been fired--as had numerous other workers over the years--for stealing raw ore, and they protested this action by staging a hunger strike in the lobby of the radio station. Within days, the number of protesters grew to nine and a large poster declaring the strike was hung outside the station entrance. Union members responded in a variety of ways to this complex situation. No one denied that the strikers had stolen raw ore, which offended the moral sensibilities of some members and violated a
convention that the union had signed with management concerning the punishment of theft. Yet the stolen quantities, in some cases, were quite small and taken by men with large families who were unable to survive on the workers' salary. How differences emerged in this dilemma were subtle and complex.

A constant stream of union members came in to check on the strikers during the 17 days that they occupied the station. After checking on the strikers they would mingle in front of the station where practitioners and the public frequently took in the sun, perched themselves on the spitt-rail fence, and discussed the topics of the day. It was here that I learned that the union was absolutely divided on whether or not to support the action of the strikers. About half of the union membership condemned the strikers as rateros (common thieves) who did not deserve the support of the union and, in fact, were tarnishing the image of honest workers, making negotiations with the government more difficult. The other half of the union voiced support of the strikers and lashed out at the low wages that provoked honest people to steal in order to feed their families. They also complained that the state management selectively applied laws, letting higher levels of corruption go unchecked.

As the different views continued to surface over this internal tension, I learned that the positions were more than reactions to the specific circumstances of the firings. Indeed, they were manifestations of different political party affiliations within the union. Union members who were identified with the parties of the national ruling coalition voiced disapproval of hunger strikers, while union members belonging to opposition parties showed support. Political affiliations of union members played a significant part in aligning warring factions in the obvious power struggles. They also arose as an issue

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2 At the time I was in Bolivia, the government was hosting a constant series of "dialogues" with organized labor as it went about implementing its privatization policy called El Plan de Todos (The Plan for All).
that factored into people's behavior when this seemingly apolitical action was launched. In this case, the dilemma of the hunger strikers was resolved favorably to all parties in a fairly short time. I will discuss how media practitioners handled these differences later in this chapter.

Perhaps the most subtle instances of internal, obvious differences resulted from shifts over time in the norms and behaviors within organizations. The clearest examples of how this happened involved the Housewives' Committees at both Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII (units 06, 07, 09). As I have explained above, the Housewives' Committees were viewed as subordinates to the union by male leaders in mining districts. Yet subtle changes in context, norms, and behavior led to situations in which women's differences were viewed as inappropriate by men, thus creating pressures for practitioners who were aligned with the housewives. Two practitioners told me how situations developed in which women launched initiatives that broke with their traditional roles in the union:

We started out, really, a mixed group of women and men. We couldn't work exclusively with women. These were union matters, dealing with their husbands' issues, so women were necessarily incorporated. So, in these strikes, women and men both participated. . . . But then I began pushing the women, along with Domitila Chungara [a well-known leader of the women's movement; see Barrios de Chungara, 1978]. I was working during this period and Domitila was a leader of the Housewives' Committee. There were many, many tensions in the country, and right away they started holding courses in the mining districts, particularly here in Siglo XX because it was one of the most productive centers in the country, and because it was known as one of the most politically radical mining districts, from the men to the women. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris [women who work the tailings from the mine] at Radio Pío XII (unit 09)

It seemed to me that for a long time, there was a separation, at least in the time I was there, a separation between the union and the Housewives' Committee . . . All of the problems, all of the activities dealing with the Housewives' Committee must be related to the radio. Because the radio cannot sit on the margins of everything that is happening. All of this is [legitimate] information. These problems are just as much miners' problems and problems for the radio and we cannot remain silent about them. I believe there is a relationship between women's problems and the radio, don't you? --Sara S., former producer for Radio Nacional de Huanuni (units 06, 07)
My purpose in citing these two passages is not to demonstrate a break from expectations (that will come later) but to lay out the situation in which a break took place. I viewed these cases as examples of internal, obvious differences by taking the perspective of the practitioners facing them. In both cases above, the practitioners were working with groups incorporated into the union, hence the differences were internal. Also, each practitioner was attuned to the different thoughts women brought to bear on the situations challenging union members. Because they were attuned to these differences, I considered them obvious and not hidden. From the perspective of the male leaders of the union, the attitudes and actions of women seemed to be unexpected—judging from their reactions discussed below—and therefore hidden from them. But since I will be tracing out the actions taken by the female practitioners cited above—actions informed by the kind of situation that occurred—it is more important to classify this instance from their experience.

Just as social organizations contained many obvious differences, they held hidden ones, as well. I will turn now to cases involving those kinds of differences that became problematic for practitioners.

**Internal/Hidden Differences**

In the cases where internal differences were hidden from view (5 of the 22 units in the data subset), all practitioners seemed surprised to learn of specific beliefs and actions of their compañeros [companions, friends, partners] (units 10, 11, 12, 13, 14). At times these beliefs and actions were hidden from practitioners by organizational leaders wanting to hold onto their power. In other cases, the very routines of an organization served to mask internal differences.

Two practitioners, for example, shared painful memories of working with a miners' radio station and learning that union leaders held opinions more akin to management than to workers. In one case, a group of practitioners (including the
interviewee) was fired for repeatedly demanding pay increases commensurate with adjustments to miners' wages during a period of runaway inflation. The firing came as a shock to the practitioner, who said that the union leaders were acting more like managers than workers:

It was in Colquiri that this situation came about. I was working at the station along with some other compañeros when we were fired just like that... And this only because we had demanded our rights, nothing more. I was very hurt because I thought, "Why are we fighting? [referring to general radio practice] We are fighting precisely for justice, for the recognition of legal rights, of human rights." And suddenly, the people we work on behalf of turn and tell us you're fired. . . . I went through a severe crisis. But after reflecting, I realized that it was not all of the workers who had this form of thinking and acting, but only a few people in the leadership who acted this way on their own. --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 10)

In a very similar case a practitioner recalled a time when he was surprised to learn that union leaders functioned as virtual spies for the managers of the state mining company, COMIBOL:

An assembly of workers had been held one day where the workers questioned the administration of the mine. They asked that the manager and superintendent be fired for their heavy-handed way of dealing with things. This was in the last months of the Banzer dictatorship. The whole assembly was tape recorded but not broadcast, when the union leaders in charge of meeting with the administrators went to present the workers' demands. However, they did not stick to the decisions of the rank and file. Instead they went in to talk with the management and denounced the workers who had asked that the managers be fired. --Pablo J., contributor to C!SEP (unit 13)

Both of the cases cited above involved the intersection of power and rewards during periods of sustained crisis. The first case occurred during 1984 when inflation was running at 24,000% a year, and the second case occurred under conditions of a brutal dictatorship. These extenuating circumstances may have influenced the actions of union leaders.

Nevertheless, other cases of hidden, internal differences surfaced in more tranquil times (units 11, 12, 14). In these cases, the routines of radio practitioners and members of social organizations seemed to mask differences within the group. Again,
these differences came to light as surprises to practitioners in specific circumstances. At Radio Pío XII, for example, the station manager expressed his anguish when a right wing party headed by former dictator Hugo Banzer swept elections in Siglo XX. He explained that all of the leftist rituals—mobilizations, posters, chanted slogans—had led him to believe that a victory was imminent for the opposition party:

People seem like great revolutionaries when they are together, mobilized. Well, fine, this is one way of seeing them as revolutionaries, but later when it's time to vote, they cast their ballot for the right. --Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII (unit 12)

Rather than jealously hiding different beliefs from practitioners, in this case social actors—and their thoughts and experiences—were rendered invisible through the "revolutionary" practices enacted and reenacted before an election. Another routine practice that eclipsed differences within organizations was the repeated use of a limited number of sources, topics, and formats (units 11, 14). I will not describe each of these cases in detail from my field notes because they reflect the dynamic process explained in the above citation. In each of the cases, however, organizational routines worked in a soft and silent way to hide internal differences that emerged in a surprising and problematic way for practitioners.

Whereas organizational identities and routines led to the manifestation of a variety of internal differences, they also summoned differences vis-à-vis external groups. I will now describe external differences that became problematic for practitioners.

External/Obvious Differences

Specific manifestations of problematic differences for practitioners were often a reaction to and a by-product of the identities and boundaries constructed in alternative media. Forging committed ties with unions, cooperatives, and neighborhood groups was, in essence, an ordering and identity-creating process whereby individual
differences were subsumed under the collective rubric of "el sindicato," "la cooperativa," or "la organización." The creation of an organizational identity in effect differentiated the group from other sectors of society. It proclaimed that its members shared something in common that others did not. Whereas this commonality isolated the group and facilitated participation, it also evoked differences of a problematic nature for the practitioners at Bolivian tin miners' radio stations.

Curiously, the least number of problematic instances for practitioners were from external sources that were obvious in their differences (units 15, 16). This may seem counterintuitive at first, given that boundary setting and identity creating are intentional actions designed to differentiate—in obvious ways—one group from another. Nevertheless, the main purpose for creating differential boundaries and identities is to facilitate action with social actors within the identified group. It stands to reason, then, that practitioners would face few situations where obvious differences with external groups would pose a problem.

One such situation occurred in two different sites and involved differences between state miners and independent workers in cooperatives. These groups shared many things in common as exploited members of the working class, but their expectations from the state were incompatible. State workers were concerned with job security, salaries, and benefits provided by COMIBOL, the state mining company. Cooperatives received nothing in the way of salaries and benefits from this agency, but instead were granted concessions to equipment and sections in the mines owned by the state. Their interests, in effect, went against those of state workers inasmuch as they were encroaching on the resources of the state workers. The different interests between these otherwise similar groups have been problematic for practitioners.

At CISEP, for example, practitioners recognized both the similarities and differences between the two groups but hadn't figured out how to respond adequately:
We are in a period of profound reflection and only reflecting what we are going to do with the miners. What is going to be our view? One of the central themes that you have mentioned is this: have we opted for the salaried, for the state workers? Because over here we have the cooperatives, and they are in the same group, too; they are equally poor. So what do you do? This is precisely what we are asking ourselves. You’ve got to problematize. We problematize every chance we get to sit down together. We problematize this topic, and something new always comes up, something that does not leave us empty, although neither does it provide a solution, evidently. But we have continued to advance. --Victor A., director of CISEP (unit 15)

At Radio Pío XII, a practitioner faced the same problem, especially when successfully forging bonds with the cooperatives that have emerged over the last 9 years:

I began to change. I began to change and I said to myself, “Fine, now I’m going to get involved with the cooperatives [instead of working exclusively with the union].” I got involved with the cooperatives. I began to see how things were more and more. Then I had confrontations with the union. They called me a traitor, “You’ve gone over to the cooperatives, now you want nothing to do with us... you know that you are going to kill the worker’s movement, you are an accomplice to the death of the workers.” That’s the way they treated me. --Marta M., outreach worker with paliris at Radio Pío XII (unit 09)

In addition to problematic differences between groups that were similar in many ways, practitioners faced situations where organizational affiliations called up a web of complex relations that were years in the spinning. The mere institutional affiliation of Radio Pío XII to a wing of the Catholic Church, for example, provoked such antagonisms across the Department of Oruro (unit 16). While I conducted fieldwork at the station, a series of articles appeared in the daily newspaper, El Expreso, of Oruro, denouncing the radio station for its activities with campesinos [peasant farmers]. After weeks of working with the station and its affiliated Catholic organizations, I learned that the articles had been precipitated by a conservative priest who enlisted an embattled campesino leader to level charges against the work of the radio station. The affiliations

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3 Note that this case was mentioned previously as an example of an internal/obvious situation. As a point of clarification, the holistic unit “Women’s Hunger” functioned as an instance where difference was internal/obvious. The experience, however, resulted in making the practitioner more mindful of the situation faced by cooperative workers. In describing how her practice changed as a result of the experience, she reported this conflict with a group external to the cooperatives.
of the radio station with particular church organizations and specific wings of the campesino confederation tapped into historically rooted antagonisms within both the church and the campesino confederation. This very complex, rich, and involved example demonstrates how the mere step of linking to an organized group can call up a set of instant adversaries, making radio production problematic for the practitioner. In this case, all of the adversaries were members of external groups where ideological differences were known by the practitioners.

External/Hidden Differences

The adoption of identities and boundaries by practitioners frequently had the unintended consequence of creating an artificial and unwanted divide between them and other social organizations (units 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22). Across the research sites, practitioners experienced times when they tried to reach out to new social organizations but were hampered by their own affiliations. In some cases, practitioners sought to work with organizations but were met with rejection or resistance because of their affiliations. In other cases the practitioner's identity had created a blind spot regarding differences of a particular group.

Cases where social groups resisted practitioners because of their affiliations occurred at both Radio Nacional de Huanuni and at CISEP (units 17, 20, 21). The work at CISEP was especially difficult because it was not affiliated with a grass-roots organization but was a nongovernmental organization (NGO) trying to forge linkages with many groups:

The fact of being from an institution, an NGO, many times is an open door. In the case of CISEP, institutionally we have a lot of clout in mining districts. We have free access to unions. But on the grass-roots level, there is often distrust... This has happened to me many times, you know, when they don't even want to talk to me. "I don't want to say anything to you because you're from an NGO and that's the way it is." Sometimes things like that happen. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP (units 17, 20)
But even at a miners' radio station, practitioners met resistance from local residents who did not see themselves as fitting within the boundaries set up by the union:

When I had worked here earlier, I went up to a cooperative miner once to ask for his opinion and he told me, "With Radio Nacional I say nothing. Why do you make us speak and later not put it on the air? Why should we speak? Sometimes we have important things to say and you ignore us." You see, there was resentment, which makes working uncomfortable. I think this still happens. -- Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni

We are not always well received [by neighborhood groups]. Many times they turn their backs on us. . . . A man appeared in the neighborhood and asked me: "Why are visiting this sector? What do you have to do with us?" --Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 21)

Cases where a practitioner's identity created a blind spot regarding differences of a particular group were found at Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pio XII (units 18, 19, 22). Practitioners at Radio Nacional de Huanuni, for example, were intimately informed about the inner workings of the union, but were out of touch with workers' issues in the outside, local community. Thus when a conflict arose between state police and jukus (clandestine miners), the practitioners were unequipped to handle this difference:

It happened inside the mine, underground. The mine police certainly tried to detain the jukus. But the presence of so many clandestine workers inside the mine, well, they started to form a group and look for ways to drive back the uniformed officers. And they did it. They made them retreat. But they made them retreat after leaving them in terrible conditions [beaten]. Even the regular workers, which normally do not get involved in these kinds of cases, came to the aid of the police. The clandestine workers came out of the mine, practically in a victory parade, challenging not only the police, but the state miners. So even the workers were starting to get agitated by the presence of these clandestine workers, who had begun to surround the miners, up in Huairapata [a state miners' compound]. All day long there were threats made against them and against the radio. Basically, a confrontation. So this, perhaps, has been the greatest difficulty for programs, even for the very safety of the station. . . . They were a very misunderstood group. --Loren R., director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 18)

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4 This citation did not correspond to one of the units in the data subset. It is included here, however, because the experience is directly relevant and a superb illustration of this kind of difference.
Whereas the practitioners were well versed in issues surrounding the state mining industry, they knew very little about the everyday struggles faced by jukus, and this blind spot left them unable to cope with this difference. In fact, it put them in an adversarial position with the jukus. Similar blind spots were obvious at Radio Pío XII, which had begun to lose local listeners and was also shifting its audience focus more and more toward the countryside (units 19, 22).

The relationships between media practitioners and social institutions provide the context for understanding how differences arise and what their characteristics are. The most common differences in this study were those internal to organizations and obvious to practitioners: blatant power grabs, historical party loyalties, and gender divisions. Also frequent were internal differences that were hidden from practitioners. These were either actively hidden by social actors or were rendered invisible by practitioner routines. Perhaps the biggest surprise here was the lack of external differences that were obvious to practitioners. But this surprise was understandable given that obvious differences with external groups were often by design; practitioners had no intention of working with most of the groups that were obviously different from them. Where practitioners wanted to reach out to external groups that were different, they were often hampered by their adopted identities, which had been forged with social organizations. The boundaries created by their identities was both a force that elicited negative reactions and a source of practices that blinded them from understanding the situations of other groups.

All of these kinds of differences and the ways in which they emerged help to establish a meaningful context for understanding practitioner responses to them. In the next section I will provide details on the various ways that practitioners handled problematic differences that formed part of their work experiences.
Coping Strategies

Faced with problematic situations involving differences, practitioners took a variety of steps to manage them. I examined the variety of actions taken by practitioners in the situations discussed above and established procedural categories for understanding them. Because media practice involved performing, I used terms—in developing categories—that reflected the constructed, choreographed sense of practitioner behaviors. The three broad categories and their definitions are the following:

• Backstaging—dealing with differences in off-the-air arenas, that is, moving attention off stage. Discussions of difference were held in private, nonmediated venues.

• Spotlighting—dealing with differences on the air, that is, on stage. It involved emphasizing or focusing on a narrow set of actors and the differences they manifested, both internal and external to social organizations.

• Floodlighting—dealing with differences on the air, that is, on stage. Similar to spotlighting in that differences are on stage but different in its scope. Floodlighting illuminated a broader set of issues by bringing multiple social actors into mediated settings. Differences were discussed in terms of wider relationships to other social actors, internal and external.

I developed these performative metaphors for three reasons. First and foremost, they captured the actions actually taken by practitioners. In other words, I did not develop the categories first and search for appropriate examples later. Second, the performative metaphors are broad enough to be useful to the metalevel analysis that I am trying to achieve in this chapter, yet they are always anchored in time and space. That is, the backstaging, spotlighting, and floodlighting procedures imply a concrete place, time, situation, and actor. Third, the performative metaphors are readily understandable and highly visual, so they are helpful at managing multiple examples that I will be drawing on.  

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5 Several qualitative methods books have adopted performance metaphors without fully developing them theoretically, thus tacitly attesting to their utility (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Wolcott, 1990). My understanding of performance is informed by Bruner (1986), Conquergood (1988), Pool (1991), and Schechner (1993).
Backstaging Differences

I begin the discussion of coping strategies by presenting backstaging actions for two reasons. First, backstaging was one of the most common strategies for coping with difference and merits a prominent place in the discussion because of its widespread use (units 01, 02, 03, 04, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18). A more important, conceptual reason, however, is that backstaging procedures interacted most clearly with the kinds of differences discussed in the previous section. I will first present examples of how backstaging interacted with situation factors. After that I will present other backstaging examples in terms of how they fit within the logic (assumptions, values, goals) of organizations.

Of the 9 cases where backstaging was the principal procedure used for coping with difference, 5 stemmed from situations where differences were hidden from practitioners (units 10, 11, 12, 17, 18). The relationship between situation and action was interactive but not tautological. By that I mean that situation and action interacted in a self-reinforcing fashion; behaviors were hidden in part because they had been backstaged, and they were backstaged in part because they were hidden. I claim that this is not tautological because there were several examples of hidden situations that were not backstaged and vice versa, and also because the 5 units demonstrating this interaction involved conscious choices on the parts of practitioners. I will describe 4 of the units below to demonstrate how differences were backstaged and how practitioners made choices in some of those cases (units 10, 11, 12, 18).

At both Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII, routine practices of working with unions, affiliated organizations, and their leaders distanced practitioners from other social sectors and even from rank-and-file members within organizations. Differences that became problematic were often the by-product of certain perspectives having been backstaged for many weeks, months, or years. In these cases, practitioners
were unprepared to deal with them. For instance, when a conflict broke out between state miners and clandestine jukus, Radio Nacional de Huanuni backstaged the difference to the union, civil, and military arenas for discussion:

It was many of the very same authorities [who had been beaten] who began to be concerned, because the confrontation was building and starting to threaten the town. Also, there were union leaders who put forward certain agreements, certain solutions. The idea was not to let this escalate, not to let blood flow in rivers. So some of the compañeros began to mobilize immediately. I can still remember, for example, that compañero Jaime Soares [a union leader] went personally to talk them into calming down and begin to look for a solution. And it turns out that there weren't many problems, one, I imagine because they were probably quite fearful, too. The jukus. They were scared because they had lost the goodwill of the workers and the people and also of the authorities. --Loren R., director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 18).

Likewise, when supposedly left-leaning residents of Siglo XX cast their ballots for a right-wing candidate, practitioners at Radio Pío XII seemed lost about how to deal with the difference:

We had misread the audience. Our reading vis-à-vis living conditions was mistaken... We had gotten involved as the converted, nothing more. Working exclusively, back then, with the converted, with our buddies, and not looking at other contexts that one doesn't want to talk about, the wider context... The difficulty is that the radio station has a defined position, and this defined position is articulated in our programs. You have to have an anchor for the radio, for the journalists, the announcers, the other workers. Maybe we need to raise our expectations. --Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII (unit 12)

The examples cited above illustrate the self-reinforcing dynamic between coping procedures and kinds of situation. They are less illustrative of the conscious choices that practitioners made in backstaging difference. The matter of choice, however, was explicit in two units (10, 11). For example, three workers who were fired from a miners' radio station considered spotlighting the injustice but ultimately did not because of other contextual factors.

That's the way our firing was, very underhanded, and we all realized that it was an underhanded action. So we had decided to launch a hunger strike, the three of us, because this appeared unjust, the way they were treating us. In addition, they in no way wanted to recognize our medical benefits and there were ideas about laying people off and cutting salaries. A lot of things that appeared unjust to us. But we didn't take this extreme measure. Perhaps because we didn't have the
necessary backing. That was something that really hurt me personally. That some of the people working at the same radio turned their backs on us, leaving us practically isolated. —Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 10)

Instead of taking an action that might have spotlighted this difference with union management on the radio, the three workers let the conflict be settled in the arena of the union office.

An even clearer example of choosing to backstage difference came from an experience I will reconstruct from my field notes at Radio Pío XII (unit 11). A hidden rift between several factions of a miners' cooperative ended in an election deadlock, which, according to the bylaws, had to be settled in a magna assembly open to all members. The personnel of the radio and I helped to run the assembly: we brought microphones and loudspeakers, we counted votes, and one station worker actually ran the meeting, since he was the head of the electoral commission for the cooperative. More than half of the meeting was marked by dissent: a large faction called for the assembly to be postponed; another faction introduced written resolutions denouncing the elections; several workers pointed out that the resolutions contained forged signatures; a count of the attendees indicated that the assembly lacked a quorum and could not legally meet.

Despite all of the consternation at the assembly, the majority decided to hold the elections, and, indeed, a new body of officials was elected. The assembly had acknowledged the strong dissent from a particular area in the cooperative and incorporated them into an oversight commission, which would monitor officials. The meeting appeared to have resolved the many differences in the cooperative, yet it clearly violated the cooperative's bylaws by not achieving a quorum.

Subsequent coverage of the assembly ignored the substantial differences that had been raised in the assembly. I cohosted the afternoon miners' program that day, which focused on the elections. In preparing for the show, Marta, the other cohost, reviewed
the meeting with me, played audiotaped excerpts that would be used, and indicated what we would focus on. None of the matters of dissent were included in the program. In later conversations with station workers, I was told that what we had done was a common practice, that dissent was often deemphasized on the air because it had been dealt with satisfactorily in other forums. Clearly we had chosen to backstage previously hidden differences that were problematic for the cooperative because now they seemed to be resolved.

Not all of the examples of backstaging, however, stemmed from situations of hidden differences (units 01, 02, 03, 04). All of these cases occurred at Radio Nacional de Huanuni in situations I described as involving internal, obvious differences. My field notes are the primary source of data in these cases, though I did tape record comments from observers referring to the treatment of internal dissent running through three of the units (02, 03, 04).

As I described in the previous section, warring factions were openly battling for control of the union during my fieldwork in Huanuni. Disagreements often threatened to spill onto the media stage, but, in my observations, practitioners moved quickly to backstage differences. They did so in a variety of ways: by ignoring them, by coaching interviewees to avoid criticisms on the air, and by invoking language of unity and agreement.

Ignoring conflict within or between groups was the easiest way to continue programming and reporting functions. This strategy was used with regularity, and it followed the established lines of organizational hierarchy. When the movement to oust the secretary general in Huanuni reached its height, for example, practitioners continued to give him daily coverage despite their personal views that he should resign (unit 02). One evening I was having tea in the house of the director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni when the secretary dropped by. He wanted to call a meeting of all section leaders for the
next day and asked the station director to tape record him. The tape recording was dutifully made and broadcast, yet the station director explained the internal division to me and concluded, "The secretary ought to leave, don't you think?" When he aired the tape recording, no mention was made of internal opposition to the leader, leaving the impression that the secretary general was in complete control of the union.

Practitioners could not always backstage differences by ignoring them. When they faced conflictive situations in interviews, for example, practitioners sometimes urged interviewees to avoid criticisms in the interest of unity and solidarity. At both Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII I noticed that reporters of the news programs, in particular, coached interviewees on what to say before turning on the tape recorder. After a particularly conflictive meeting of a miners' section in Huanuni, for example, a reporter approached the lambasted secretary general and asked him to comment on the event without focusing on the internal division (unit 03). He suggested that the secretary general supplement an oral report of union-government negotiations in La Paz that had been delivered at the meeting. The union official accommodated the journalist and subsequent reports on the radio focused on union-government negotiations, totally ignoring the heated internal division that constituted the bulk of the meeting.

As dissent continued to spill outside of the confines of union meetings, practitioners turned to editorials and commentaries that invoked the language of unity that exemplified the thoughts they wanted to promote. During the struggle over the leadership of the union, for example, the news director of the station ignored four taped interviews with various section leaders who were clear in their divisions. Instead, he filed the following commentary, which was written in the harsh and direct style that was customary for the station:
We exhort, from our position as a medium of the workers whose lines of combat are clearly defined, that attitudes that only benefit the oligarchy be halted and that workers, if they feel the time is right, make decisions that have been expressed in adopted resolutions on more than one occasion [referring here to oppositional resolutions adopted by various work sections of the mine]. These decisions should be made without fracturing the unity of the workers that at this moment need a union that is able to stop the neoliberal model. -- news item from Radio Nacional de Huanuni, October 5, 1993 (referring to units 02, 03, 04)

The practice of backstaging difference by projecting unified narratives fulfilled fit within a logic that was shared by all three research sites. All of them shared a belief that one of the functions of alternative media was to give orientación (guidance and direction) to the audience. Orientación referred to general guidance concerning the assumptions and values of the union or the Christian organization. Orientación also referred to practical direction, such as where to gather for a meeting or a strike. Differences arising among workers, campesinos, or social groups that threatened to spill over into radio programs were seen as violating the orientación function. This was clearly operating in the case of internal union differences in Huanuni:

> Well, understanding that union radios are always medios de orientación [media that guide, orient], right, for the workers, then in any given time of conflict, like the one that has come up here. I believe it is a sensible position to try to avoid further division among the workers. Why throw gasoline on the fire? -- Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (commenting on units 02, 03, 04)

When the situation grew so volatile that the station workers were unable to back stage the differences among workers, the director of the station wrote a formal editorial laying out the reasons why disagreements should be kept off the air.

It is always confusing for rank-and-file workers and for the workers of this medium to receive information from two sectors of the work force, each with different versions. In communication, the message should always be positive, along the lines of not only creating values of unity, but of social force that will guarantee positive actions in the face of policies that are completely alien to the worker's movement. . . . That is why we, the workers of this communication

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<sup>6</sup> The word orientación was used frequently at every research site in this study. Of the 21 interviewees in this study, 10 of them spoke of orienting the audience at some point in our conversations. This word was not in my interview protocol.
medium, will not contribute to sending messages that are absolutely destructive. Rather, our mission is to unify and focus the struggle of the exploited class. . . . From this position we fraternally ask the union leaders to conform to the rules of classist, social communication. --editorial from Radio Nacional de Huanuni, October 7, 1993 (referring to units 02, 03, 04)

The director of the station explained the purpose of the editorial to me during a conversation following this division.

At times of division between union leaders, well, the first thing we tell them is, how are we going to give guidance? If we have these differences, you see, what is it that we are going to say? Either we say these absurdities that you are espousing, or we talk about what we should talk about, the brotherly struggle. . . . The best thing to do is what we have done: call the workers together, call for the unification of the union before the current politics disunify us all. --Loren R., director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni (commenting on units 02, 03, 04)

Efforts to backstage differences not only fit with the orientación function of the stations, they also were compatible with the values and operating modes of the particular social organizations connected to practitioners. For example, designating union disagreements to section meetings or general assemblies was compatible with the notion of having "brotherly struggle" within the organization showing but unity in front of the general audience. Likewise, the backstaging disagreements involving jukus and cooperative workers were coordinated within the organizational structures that were part and parcel of each group’s routine media practices.

In addition to the compatibility with organizational structures and the sincere belief in the orientación function, genuine fear for one’s job was an incentive for practitioners to backstage differences. By backstaging differences practitioners insulated themselves from reprimands and, perhaps, firings by angered leaders. The threat of firing came out during the serious division within the union in Huanuni (units 02, 03, 04). Various producers there described the ambience as "uncomfortable," which one announcer explained in more detail:

Unfortunately, like it or not, we are controlled, and when there are abnormalities like this, we cannot talk about them [referring to charges of misuse of funds by union secretary]. Can you believe that every day we are talking about giving a
beating to the government for their acts of corruption, but when the union commits the same acts... We have had run-ins with the union over such circumstances. With the current secretary general, for example, I've had three run-ins, and each time he has threatened to fire me.—Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni.

The possibility of being fired for airing dissent was mentioned by two other practitioners at Radio Nacional de Huanuni and by two workers at Radio Pto XII.

Whether working in combination with a group's practices or striving to protect one's job, practitioners frequently handled difference by backstaging it to some venue outside of the station's programs. Just as frequently, however, practitioners spotlighted differences on the air. I will now turn to the cases where differences were placed on center stage by practitioners.

**Spotlighting Differences**

Instances where practitioners spotlighted differences constituted the flip side of backstaging them outside of the station's programs. In these cases, practitioners recognized differences that were internal and external, hidden and obvious. They responded to these differences by producing programs that spotlighted them (units 06, 07, 08, 09, 13, 14, 16, 20, 21, 22). Spotlighting procedures did not correspond in any particular pattern with the kind of situation in which differences emerged. Rather, spotlighting procedures seemed to be related to the position occupied by the practitioner vis-à-vis the social group manifesting the difference. In one set of cases, practitioners were in the position of reaching out to external groups with whom they wanted to forge linkages (units 14, 20, 21, 22). In another set of cases, practitioners were in the position of deep commitment with people who occupied the margins of social organizations affiliated with the stations and/or practitioners (units 06, 07, 08, 09, 13). I will describe these two sets in turn.

In cases where practitioners were reaching out to external groups, the stations had either lost touch with outside social groups or were trying to expand their repertoire
of media participants. At Radio Pío XII, for example, the numbers of local listeners had declined, and the station's administrators were puzzled why people had abandoned the station (unit 22). Several practitioners told me that they suspected that declining listenership was related to radical changes the region had experienced in the 8 years following government privatization and liberalization of the economy. They shared an acute awareness that audience interests, desires, and needs had changed from what they were when the mining towns of Siglo XX and Catavi were in their heyday. Furthermore, the broadcasting context had changed with a low-power television station and two FM radios coming on the scene. Nevertheless, the implications of these differences were not well defined, obvious, or clear.

In response, Radio Pío XII surveyed 450 local listeners in Siglo XX, Llallagua, Catavi, and Uncía (Torrico, 1989). The station used students at the local university to knock on doors and question residents concerning demographic information, media preferences, listening/viewing behaviors, and suggestions for programs. The survey provided the station with a window into the changed living conditions of listeners and the utility of the radio in those different conditions. A revealing portion of the survey asked listeners how Radio Pío XII helped them during the day. The following is a sampling of responses:

- I can send and receive messages from my family. I learn about meetings. It helps us express ourselves.
- The news in Quechua guides us. It keeps us informed. The rural teacher hour is informative. I speak Quechua. It makes campesinos matter.
- The miners' programs keeps me from having accidents in the mine. It teaches us how to organize. It helps me to be careful in the mine. It guides us through examples from the job.

This effort to understand the differences in the audience in a changed economic and media environment occurred 5 years prior to my fieldwork, so I cannot comment on how the views of listeners were incorporated into programs at the time. Nevertheless,
my experience with similar surveys at the station leads me to believe that the thoughts, opinions, and voices of the people were incorporated into programming at the time. In fact, a virtually identical situation involving cooperative miners' occurred at the station during my fieldwork (unit 14). Cooperative miners had stopped participating at the station, but practitioners were not quite sure why:

The station director has complained to me that there is such low participation now. I told him that before, when we had the program Last Shift, we had high participation of state miners from the Catavi plant because back then there were good salaries, overtime, a good living. But now that we are working with cooperatives, they have different living conditions. I think this explains some of it. When they leave the mine they are wiped out. They leave the mine and go to their processing pools and they are completely worn out. We have invited them to come and participate many times, and yes, they have come once in a while. We can't say they never come. But the biggest difficulty is that they leave work so tired that they cannot participate. --Lalo E., outreach worker for miners at Radio Pío XII (unit 14)

In this case, as with the preceding one, practitioners surveyed cooperative members. I helped to tabulate responses, which resulted in programming changes. Some of the responses that I have listed in part below constituted the raw material for programs:

- A lot of sadness. I am an old woman. I don't know how to read. They won't even give me one Boliviano [approximately 25 cents] for a kilo [of raw ore].
- I earn 35 Bolivianos a month, and it's not enough to make ends meet. We eat less.
- I sell to the rescatiris [women who market small quantities of minerals independently] at a very low price.
- Bargaining with the rescatiris. When the mineral concentration is too low they don't want to deal with us.
- I think I am going to return to the countryside after Carnaval. There's no reason to stay in the mine. It's a lot of sacrifice. My family is no longer here. It's just me working alone.
- I'm staying put because sooner or later the price of tin will go up. This is a temporary drop.
- I wish our leaders would mobilize, at least visit different sections in the mine to see how we work. We have poor technical assistance.
• I expect the same thing from the radio that I do from our leaders: that they unite forces in order to fight against injustices that are starving us to death.

• We hope for help [from the radio] in denouncing, in starting projects that teach professions.

• I have no idea [how the radio can help]. But I like it when they talk about us on the radio.

In the above cases, practitioners spotlighted differences in attempts to regain participants. But in other cases, practitioners spotlighted differences to expand their repertoire of program participants (units 20, 21). These practitioners shared the position that neglected segments of the population needed to be cultivated and incorporated into the radio:

So we always seek, try to get the grass roots to participate, and not just the leaders, not just those who always speak, not just those well-known people. We try to get other people, the grass roots who often say nothing but who have ideas. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP (unit 20)

What I should point out to you is that really there are some areas of Huanuni that are worse off than others, where they don't even have drainage, they don't have streetlights, and one way or another, we have made the authorities, the city council, the mayor internalize this problem. Because even though they look alike, despite the fact that all of them are from Huanuni, they don't really understand the living conditions of some neighborhoods. We have awakened them. --Magy C., producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 21)

Both of these practitioners had designed programs that mandated grass-roots participation. When they went into neighborhoods or informal economic sectors, however, they occasionally were met with resistance attributed to shyness and mistrust.

In both cases practitioners used a similar technique of backing off from their program task (i.e., putting their tape recorders and microphones away) to focus on the lives and struggles of the participants:

We started out talking a little bit about a lot of things--work, family. Just laughing, playing, enjoying. And once we got to know each other, we started opening more and more. It wasn't like an interview, like I said, of a reporter and an interviewee. No, it was more like a chat regarding the problems in their district. Well, this kind of experience was surprising for people who didn't know each other. And after they started unpacking all the social problems of that
place, it was extremely rich material to put on the air. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP (unit 20)

In the Cuchillani neighborhood, to begin with, I had previously visited the people. But not a single compañera would speak to me concerning the needs there. When I tried to interview them, they didn't want to. They called the president, they went to get the man who was from the local directorate, and they just didn't want to talk. He said they couldn't, that they were afraid, for whatever reason. No one said a thing. The people just clammed up. So I began to pull out a word at a time. I told them, we're not going on the air. But please share with me what are the needs. After a while I turned on the walkie-talkie and we began talking on the air. They noticed the walkie-talkie was on but kept on talking. --Magy C., producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 21)

These gestures of establishing rapport, expressing interest, and easing into interviews were necessary steps in some instances to spotlight differences successfully.

The four cases discussed above were instances of practitioners trying either to recoup old participants or reach out to new ones by spotlighting the differences they contributed to programming. In the remaining cases, however, practitioners spotlighted differences of a current and active body of participants (units 06, 07, 08, 09, 13). Their actions seemed to be propelled by the marginalized position of specific groups within the larger organizational hierarchy.

In 3 of the 5 cases, for example, practitioners had forged alliances with Housewives' Committees, which occupied a subordinate position within the union (units 06, 07, 09). Practitioners were aware that gender divisions influenced the subordination of women within the union:

The people here, and even the union, is somewhat machista [exerting masculine control]. They don't want the union to be a place where the housewives form independent opinions, where they work like that, with their own minds. The first thing always is to consult with the union leaders before doing any task. So they didn't care for Sara because she was always pushing them, for example, to cut loose from this structure and make their own decisions on certain issues that were going to benefit the miners, not hurt them as they saw it. --Sergio H., technician at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (commenting on unit 07)

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7 This program was broadcast live from local neighborhoods using a walkie-talkie that connected the practitioner to a studio producer.
Each woman began growing a little bit stronger. Because before, they would say, "But what will my husband say?" There is always a "but," because the machismo [masculine quality] is very strong, too strong. In spite of the fears, one had to push the compañera. Sometimes I had to go with her and speak, you know, to the husbands. I would say, "The problems you are facing in your home are problems of your wife, too, aren't they?" "Yes." "So does she need to be or doesn't she need to be here [at committee meetings]?" "Yes, she needs to be there." When we went to talk with the husbands, the picture started to change. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII (unit 09)

These practitioners adopted activist roles, using the radio to spread the women's ideas, in effect helping to foment the struggle for autonomy of the housewives:

Back then, [Supreme Decree] 21060 was declared. This was in '85. That's where they started, the hunger strikes. Fine, the women didn't want these policies to become permanent, right, in the mining towns. That they be carried out all the way. So they began to make movements, the compañeras. And I was participating with them. When there was a need to gather together in assemblies, assemblies were called. These assemblies were broadcast live. The entire analysis and all of the discussion was broadcast. . . . As the problems intensified, the women grew more mature. They called assemblies to delegate people to participate in the hunger strike, as wives. The Housewives' Committee called meetings to orientar the compañeras on what this policy, [Supreme Decree] 21060, consisted of, what its repercussions would be on the lives of the miners, their families. So while they went along building, they also gathered a series of understandings that helped us popularize ourselves, back at our internal meetings at Pío XII. It helped us to clarify, more or less, the picture of what was going on, how we could aim our work, how we had to give guidance to the masses, etcetera. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII (unit 09)

Back then the señora Emiliana de Solis was the leader. She was the head of the Housewives' Committee. So I brought in Emiliana de Solis, and I think many workers did not like this comrade Emiliana de Solis. Well, the program ended and here comes the call. "How is it señora that you would put her on the air? Don't you know she is from another party?" I had to listen to a thousand reasons, but I didn't pay any attention because in the end I told myself this radio belongs to the housewives, too, you see. --Sara S., former producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 07)

For these practitioners, spotlighting the differences articulated by women in the union movement was not a matter of benevolent pluralism or the mandate of popular

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8 This was the executive order that resulted in the mass firing of 20,000 of the state's mining work force of 27,000.
communication. Rather, it was a response to shifting contextual conditions and the exercise of fundamental rights, as indicated in the final sentence.

Just as the women exerted what they saw as a fundamental right, other union members demanded access to the radio while I lived in Huanuni (units 02, 04). During the heated internal struggle over the union leadership there, rank-and-file workers and section leaders demanded access to the studio to air their differences at various times. I mention these examples here because they bore a strong resemblance to the actions of the women. But readers tracing units 02 and 04 back to other parts of this chapter will find that backstaging strategies were the dominant modes of coping with difference in these cases. I include this information merely to clarify that the relationship between situation and action is not unilateral but complex in its directions.

The last two cases where practitioners spotlighted differences also involved group members situated in a marginalized position within the entire organizational hierarchy (units 08, 13). In these cases, practitioners spotlighted differences that intersected with perceived internal injustices and violations of trust. Both cases involved rank-and-file workers being abused by top leaders in their labor organizations.

I introduced unit 08 earlier in this chapter as a case where the leaders of a cooperative had demanded tribute from workers in exchange for assignments to the wealthiest sections of the mine. The practitioner working with this cooperative sought out differences within the organization in a way that protected the workers from potential retribution:

We followed these events and we were insistent. This was the only way that we could get the people to come and participate at the radio, but in a hidden way, without allowing anyone else in. They spoke clandestinely, without giving names and all. They all came and denounced the leadership until they managed to convene a general assembly. Little by little people continued coming. . . . The movement grew, resistance against the leaders grew. We kept on and kept on until finally, the leaders were brought down. —Lalo E., outreach worker for miners at Radio Fio XII (unit 08)
In a very similar case (also introduced earlier), a practitioner had tape recorded
the leaders of a union actually betraying the confidence of rank-and-file members by
divulging names of dissidents to the management of the mining company. He explained
his decision to spotlight these differences within the union:

Well, what did we decide to do? We took out the tape and listened to it and
decided we cannot allow something of this nature, that the very leadership of the
union goes against the decisions and requests of the rank-and-file. We went to
the radio, went on the air, and made all the workers hear--on the radio--the
position taken by their leaders. This provoked an immediate reaction of the
workers, along with our immediate dismissal. --Pablo J., contributor to CISEP

Despite being fired, the practitioners made copies of the tape recording and secretly
toured the different sections of the mine, replaying the conversation for groups of
workers.

Practitioners seemed to share a set of contextual criteria for determining when to
spotlight difference and when to backstage it. The criteria implied a range of tolerance on
such issues as corruption, deception, and injustice within organizations. Once that range
was pushed beyond its limits, backstaging actions converted to spotlighting actions. One
person hinted at this range of tolerance:

There are times when certain situations arise, malfeasance, let's say, of funds by
a union leader. . . . I believe there are things that are so negative that we have to
tell about them, period. We have to tell about them. We cannot keep quiet just
because it is a workers' radio, worried about what people will say about us, or
worried about what will happen to us. --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio
Nacional de Huanuni (commenting on the backstaging actions in units 02, 03,
04)

Spotlighting differences in the community and within organizations occurred
often and in a wide range of contexts. Practitioners made the diversity of their social
organizations and communities the focus of programs due to their mandate as popular
communicators and as a response to changing contexts. The forms that this took differed
widely--surveying, seeking out the grass roots, exercising rights, surreptitious
broadcasts--but the practices shared the purpose of illuminating a narrow difference in
the group or community. Less frequent were efforts to floodlight differences, which I will discuss next.

**Floodlighting Differences**

The notion of floodlighting differences bears a strong resemblance to spotlighting them, but I believe there is an important distinction between the two. In the cases cited above, practitioners spotlighted a narrow set of differences when making their programs: the dilemma of cooperative miners, the views of grass-roots workers, the perspective of women. Whereas these subsets of social actors themselves contained diverse points of view, they nonetheless represented delimited perspectives based on some common social, political, economic, or gender characteristic. In the case of floodlighting differences, I am specifically identifying practices that brought together a wider range of diverse, even competing, actors for a specific program or event. In keeping with the performance metaphor, I have envisioned floodlighting as exposing the entire stage of actors and issues, rather than casting attention on the spotlighted few.

Floodlighting seemed to require a particular contextual condition of being relatively distanced or removed from specific social actors being floodlighted. The few instances of floodlighting differences were done by practitioners at Radio Pío XII and CISEP who were able to rise above factional disputes because of their organizational positions (units 05, 15, 19). Both of these organizations received their funding from European foundations, a financial arrangement that gave them the autonomy and distance necessary to moderate and facilitate groups manifesting problematic differences. Procedurally, floodlighting requires moves that moderate and facilitate discussions of difference. I will describe each of these cases below; all of them are reconstructed from field notes.

The most in-depth of my observations was with the rural outreach office of Radio Pío XII (unit 19). Part of its task was to forge alliances with campesino
communities known as ayllus (pre-Hispanic organizational structures that brought together a number of families into an agricultural collective). Their goal was to teach organizing skills that would promote improvements in health, education, and agricultural production. I was able to accompany these workers at numerous stages of their work and observed how differences within ayllus were identified and incorporated.

After several visits with leaders of one ayllu, Radio Pío XII workers arranged a day-long class that brought together diverse representatives. Their first activity with the class graphically outlined the diverse and competing issues and actors within the ayllu. Rather than taking attendance from a prepared list, the practitioners taped a large sheet of newsprint on the blackboard and asked the participants to name and describe their respective communities. They started this exercise by drawing the location of Radio Pío XII at one edge of the paper, the town plaza in the middle, and mother earth at the bottom. As the practitioner went around the room, participants described their communities in relation to these initial markers (Figure 9). As they described their communities, they provided many physical and social details: availability of water, schools, transportation, and first aid, and a listing of leaders, popular organizations, and NGOs. Participants shouted corrections to the practitioners as they filled out the sheet of paper, embellishing the drawing with commentaries about the people and places taking shape. After participants described their communities, they talked about members of the ayllu who were not present and explained their absence.
basis for the ongoing project of organizing the ayllu for social change. Teasing out the personal and historical differences by casting a light on the entire social structure of the ayllu was integral to this process.

Because the rural outreach workers held such a comprehensive understanding of campesino communities, they were able to incorporate the diverse perspectives into the radio station's programs. One systematic effort to do this was beginning just as I was leaving the field (unit 05). Radio Pío XII had begun a regular Saturday program called Controversias, which invited organizations to discuss internal differences on the air. On the day I observed the program, two campesino factions—the Federación de Ayllus and the Federación de Campesinos—sat in a circle in the announcer's booth. The men, women, and children filled the area, and other members spilled out into the entryway.

The news director of Radio Pío XII walked inside the circle, bringing the microphone to anyone who wanted to express a thought. He asked questions and summarized positions during lulls in the conversation, but mostly he let the participants discuss the issues that had split them apart. I sat in the adjacent control booth, where I could see and hear the conversation. A woman translated the conversations from Quechua to Spanish for me, and I was surprised to learn that the participants were "having a terrible fight" because the discussion was conducted in such a calm fashion. The factions were debating each other's alliances and actions, which involved complex relations with national political parties, according to my translator.

Political parties in Bolivia have traditionally curried favor with campesino factions, and this has resulted in fissures among previously unified groups. Radio Pío XII's response to this situation was to try to incorporate the different views of the competing federations into a single program that might lead to a compromise between the groups. This kind of programming was assisted in large part by the efforts of the
rural outreach workers who systematically identified intracommunity differences and incorporated them into their projects, such as the meeting with an ayllu described above.

Radio Pío XII was not the only research site to floodlight differences. Workers at CISEP were acutely aware of the competing interests between state miners and cooperative workers, yet they recognized that the two groups shared the same long-term goals of steady work and dignified salaries (unit 15). They worked to bring the two groups together in the seminars they sponsored (see Table 7 in chapter four) with the hope that the two groups eventually would draft a formal plan for working together. This was the design of a seminar on the state of mining that I attended while in Oruro, where the two groups actually drafted very different sets of recommendations to be sent to the Ministry of Mining. Still, the director of CISEP believed that floodlighting differences was the best way to proceed with the institution’s work:

The fact is we have said, "In response to this fight between cooperatives and salaried workers, why don't we try to open a common road that they can both walk down?" And this isn't the first time we've done this. Last year, we made the same intent, in the same place, with the same topic, trying to draft documents together. This time was marked by specific circumstances in which the commission was hegemonized by cooperatives. There was no joint document. Nevertheless, it is a possible route and we will advance down it, searching for spaces where we can work together. --Victor A., director of CISEP (unit 15)

Floodlighting differences seemed to be a strategy enacted by practitioners who could rise above the immediate struggles, allegiances, and commitments of particular social organizations.

Nevertheless, one practitioner caught in the midst of the division of union leaders in Huanuni incorporated different perspectives in a very interesting way (unit 03). Recall that, by and large, practitioners used backstaging strategies to cope with differences between union members in this episode. I include this example here to demonstrate—as I have done elsewhere in this chapter—that contradictory coping strategies were used during some events that I observed. As I followed this practitioner
around during fieldwork, he agonized over whether to put competing factions on the air using a portable walkie-talkie to conduct live interviews from the streets—a main feature of the morning program at Radio Nacional de Huanuni. The news director and station manager of the radio never agonized over this issue, as their strategy was to backstage these differences. When they saw warring factions approach, they either walked in the opposite direction or advised adversaries to resolve their disagreements in other forums.

The one practitioner who agonized, however, eventually sought out competing perspectives for the morning show. As I followed him during the morning program, we noticed one of the chief rivals coming out of the union office. The practitioner turned to me asking, "Should we put him on the air? He will only contradict what the secretary general just said." Sensing that he was looking to get out of this predicament, I advised him against floodlighting the rival and suggested that we leave. To my surprise, the practitioner not only approached this rival but sought out two others—representing diverse sides in the struggle—before the end of the morning show. This raised the ire of the station’s news director and the main host of the morning program, who chastised the reporter. He responded, saying, "Everywhere I go they grab me and demand to go on the air. Since they're the owners, I can't deny them entrée."

In a way, his public reasoning for floodlighting difference bore a strong resemblance to a practice enacted by mainstream practitioners called "objectivity as strategic ritual" (Tuchman, 1972). In this study, Tuchman found that news reporters in the United States used the notion of objectivity as a bulwark between themselves and critics. They amassed "facts" and used quotations as a way to insulate themselves from criticism, charges of libel and bias, and reprimands related to their reports. In a similar way, the practitioner mentioned above used "subjectivity as strategic ritual" with many of the same effects. By positioning himself as a servant of the worker collectivity that owned the station, he argued that he had no choice but to incorporate all who claimed
their voice through him. By embracing subjectivity within the social movement, he shielded himself against criticisms of the deliberate choices that he made quite apart from the structural demands of the radio. It would be unfair of me to guess at his interior motives because we never discussed his experiences in-depth, but it was very apparent that his public justification was only tenuously related to what happened in practice.

Floodlighting differences was qualitatively distinct from spotlighting them. Floodlighting differences placed the practitioner in a facilitating role that seemed to be aided by an ability to rise above the concrete commitments of the social organization. That is not to say that these practitioners abandoned the roles and procedures of committed, activist journalism. Nevertheless, floodlighting strategies did create a tension for this media tradition, which is firmly rooted in a commitment to social change. Loosening those ties was a step in the direction of dispassionate, disinterested mainstream practice, so it came as no surprise that the strategic ritual of subjectivity bore such a stunning resemblance to its mainstream counterpart.

In this section I have presented the three dominant strategies that practitioners used to cope with difference. Contradictory strategies, backstaging and spotlighting, were used most frequently by practitioners. Backstaging seemed to interact with the hidden nature of differences, either contributing to or resulting from a difference's invisibility. Spotlighting coincided less often with characteristics related to kinds of differences. Instead, the decision to spotlight difference seemed to relate to the position practitioners occupied vis-à-vis a particular group of social actors. Finally, floodlighting strategies were used rarely in the cases in this study, and they seemed to rely on a practitioner being somewhat distanced from the social actors identified with a set of differences. Although one of the specific coping strategies dominated each unit analyzed in this chapter, several instances were marked by multiple, even contradictory strategies.
The value and utility of the strategies discussed so far must be measured, in part, by the consequences that they bring. This is the most difficult element to ascertain in the communication-as-procedure chain and must be considered tentative rather than definitive.

Consequences

In the preceding sections I have tried to demonstrate how practitioner behaviors functioned to construct and handle differences. Now I will turn to the outcomes or consequences that accompanied those behaviors. But first I will clarify what I mean by consequences, which are difficult to measure, arbitrary by definition, and interpretive in nature.

The kinds of consequences sought by alternative media practitioners—the transformation of society—are difficult to measure because of the complexity of social change. The process of social change is gradual and cumulative. This means that many small consequences, which may appear insignificant and nontransformative by themselves, actually might be making important contributions because of their cumulative effects. Conversely, when a major movement galvanizes or a rupture occurs, it is difficult to look back and connect a sweeping consequence to the struggles large and small that contributed to it. Therefore, important consequences for social transformation are both easily overlooked and/or mistakenly attributed.

The particular notion of consequence that I am using is arbitrary because of the dynamism retained by the communication-as-procedure framework. What I have often identified as a situation or a behavior could just as easily have been conceptualized as a consequence if approached from a different perspective. For example, in this chapter I have conceptualized women working within the union as a difference situated within a movement. Yet the organization of the women, itself, can be conceived of as a consequence of men's historical use within the union of women. Therefore, I do not
posit consequences here as "effects" of particular media behaviors but as outcomes related to and incorporated into a sequence of events.

Finally, the determination of the meaning of consequences is an interpretive act, difficult to pin down and open to debate. An outcome that one member of a social group views as empowering or transformative might be seen as a nail in the social movement coffin by another social actor. The question for researchers, I believe, is not which is the correct meaning, but how does one go about determining meaning? For it is only by attaching some meaning to consequences that practitioners and scholars can continue to work toward developing an understanding of media and society on which to base action.

I do not claim that there is any right way of getting around these difficulties; therefore, my discussion of consequences will be modest and conservative. I have attached meaning to consequences largely by privileging the accounts of practitioners in this study. That is, when practitioners told me that something changed as a result of a particular media behavior, then I recorded that as a consequence with meaning. On some occasions, I also privileged myself in identifying consequences and determining meanings, especially in cases of observable and verifiable phenomena related to events occurring during my fieldwork.

Recall that of the original set of 29 units manifesting problematic differences, 7 were rejected because details were too spotty to be included in this chapter. The missing details usually related to consequences that were not apparent because the observed episode had not reached any sense of closure. The cases I am about to present did achieve some sense of denouement, even if it was not definitive. I have organized them into the following three categories:

- Cases maintaining the status quo—manifest differences virtually unchanged from initial to final state.
- Cases transforming the status quo—manifest differences resulted in an important social change.
• Cases affecting practitioner on a personal level—manifest differences changed the practitioner’s life.

First I will present cases maintaining the status quo, followed by those transforming the status quo and those affecting personal lives.

**Maintaining Consequences**

Of the 22 cases in the data subset, 6 resulted in maintaining the status quo (units 01, 02, 03, 05, 15, 16). All of these cases came from field notes, none from interview accounts. In other words, I determined that these cases resulted in maintaining the status quo. To minimize the drawing of unwarranted conclusions, I tried to ground my judgments in verifiable outcomes of each unit, which I will detail below. Nevertheless, I think it is important to note this coincidence between consequence and data source as a potential weakness of the study.

On the other hand, it should not come as a surprise that interviewees did not talk about how the status quo was maintained in their experiences. The interview protocol specifically asked practitioners to talk about experiences that were memorable because they were especially successful or particularly difficult. By casting the focus in this direction, my interview data was intentionally skewed toward capturing transformative cases. An unintended outcome of this move was the absence of interview cases identifying instances where the status quo was maintained in practices coping with differences. My conclusions will bear this limitation in mind.

Three cases of unchanged differences involved backstaging strategies by practitioners; these cases related to the internal disputes at the miners’ union in Huanuni (units 01, 02, 03). In two of the cases, attempts by the secretary general to gather all workers in a general assembly were met by boycotts or other forms of resistance that were ignored by the radio for the most part (units 02, 03). As these meetings came to a close or fizzled altogether, differences within the union seemed to be in a holding
pattern, the status quo maintained. In the other case involving backstaging strategies—the hunger strikers demanding restitution of their jobs—differences among union members were left unchanged and the strike was resolved by a government mediator (unit 01).

Several of the hunger strikers were returned to their jobs as a result of mediation with the government—a transformative material consequence, but one that was tangential to the internal differences of union members. My sense in the field was that divisions among union members along political lines were every bit as rigid at the time of resolution as they were at the moment the hunger strike began.

Two of the cases that maintained the status quo involved floodlighting strategies by practitioners (units 05, 15). In one case, practitioners at Radio Pío XII brought two warring campesino factions into the studio to discuss their differences in a program called Controversias (unit 05). According to several practitioners present, the program ended without any trace of a change in the positions of the two factions, that is, the status quo was maintained. In another case, practitioners at CISEP brought state miners and cooperatives together for a 3-day seminar on the state of the mining industry (unit 15). On the last day of the seminar, the two groups worked together to draft a common document calling on the government to take specific actions. This effort resulted, however, in two separate documents articulating distinct demands of the government, demands that reflected each group’s interests. Again, the status quo was maintained as a result. In both of these cases, however, I must note that practitioners’ efforts to bridge these differences continued. These specific cases came to an close because the program and the seminar ended. Nevertheless, the consequences should not be read as definitive but as in process, along with other practitioner efforts.

Transforming Consequences

Of the 22 cases in the data subset, 12 generated consequences that transformed social life in some way (units 04, 06, 07, 08, 09, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22). Of these
12 cases, 7 came from interviews and 5 from field notes. I have subdivided these cases into three kinds of consequences: those evoking transformations in radio practice, those precipitating changes in social movements themselves, and those resulting in differences in material living conditions.

Five of the 12 transformative consequences were related to changing some aspect of radio practice (units 12, 14, 18, 21, 22). For example, surprising and embarrassing electoral results in 1986 precipitated a revision of practices at Radio Pío XII (unit 12):

We hung our heads down after that, asking, "What in the hell do we do now? What have we done up to this point?" This questioning continues still; it is not done. We had misread the audience. Our reading vis-à-vis living conditions was mistaken. . . . Afterwards, we evaluated what happened and decided that we had to do better readings of things. Like I told you, the survey, for me, is a new instrument brought into the whole process that helps to size up how people are living. Also, we need to be more involved with the grass roots. --Alfredo A., director of Radio Pío XII

The consequence from this difference was to provoke internal questioning that led to changes in the station's practices (i.e., the incorporation of audience surveys). While I was at Radio Pío XII, I read the last large survey the station conducted and also participated in one (unit 22; Tórrico, 1989). Both of these surveys, in turn, provoked more changes in the station's practice. I have already mentioned that the miners' outreach workers incorporated verbatim interview material into their programs. Also, the station had reconfigured its entire programming schedule based on the results from the large-audience survey.

At Radio Nacional de Huanuni, as well, dealing with difference led to transformations in media practice. After encountering hostilities from jukus, for example, the station expanded its programming repertoire to include agencies that worked regularly with this poorly understood group of miners:

We have really improved our work when it comes to this kind of information. That's why we work with the International Defense of Children (DNI), and also
with the Permanent Assembly of Human Rights (A.P.DD.HH.), and now we have begun to talk about el juqueo [the practice of clandestine mining]. In particular, how children and young people are involved. Our friendship, no, our institutional work in the radio, in the police, and in many other cases, have benefitted from this. --Loren R., director of Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 18)

Likewise, a problematic encounter with a neighborhood organization eventually led the station to open its video resources to residents:

I had visited this neighborhood, and the people there asked that the television station and my radio program come for a visit. In other words, they requested that we work together, the TV and the radio, the TV with its camera and me directly on the air so that we all could start telling the authorities about the area's needs. This was a suggestion that came out of the Cuchillani neighborhood. . . . This worked out because Candelario F. [a media worker at a local NGO] came to me and said, "Magy, why don't we go together like they asked? We will do the program this afternoon, we will visit now with the camera." I said, "Fine, Candelario, let's go, let's follow up. Hopefully we don't get slapped in the face." Well, we went and the people were very happy. What they did was to air their demands. It's always necessary to give it to the authorities because they really do nothing for these neighborhoods. And they demanded streetlights, for they have none. And this idea they had in Cuchillani, this helped us. I think it helped. --Magy C., announcer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 21)

The previously hostile neighbors decided to work with the practitioners because they had responded to a request to open up the television channel. Since then, video technology has been used to complement and reinforce the work of the station.

In addition to transformations in media practice, I learned of consequences for social movements themselves arising from encounters with difference (units 06, 07, 09). The most pronounced instance of this sort of change was instigated by focusing on the differences raised by the increased independence of women (units 07, 09). Attending to this difference had ramifications for everyday language, gender relations, and the union movement:

The women, starting with Domitila de Chungara, began to form movements and I was participating with them. There was the need to gather in assemblies, and these assemblies were transmitted on the radio. All of the analyses done by the women were transmitted, and the discourse that existed back then had changed. They no longer talked only about the company store, the price of bread and meat. No. The discourse of the housewives had changed. They began to say, "Compañeras, we cannot permit our husbands to be thrown out of work. We
cannot permit our lives to end, that the mining industry decay. We cannot permit these things." And as the problems intensified, the women grew and matured, and they said, "No longer will you men be the only ones to go on hunger strikes. No longer will you be the only ones who struggle."... The movement of the Housewives' Committee had changed in its essence. They were no longer a support organization in domestic matters, of nutrition, education, and health. They now started suggesting to the union leaders the things they needed to do, because we women can see what's happening. They advanced to the point of no longer being a domestic organization, but converted into a union organization. -- Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII (unit 09)

It should be noted that the practitioners' account above collapsed many months of work into a single paragraph, effectively muting many small steps that led to this transformation. Nevertheless, the radio practitioner played an important role in not only connecting with the women but in focusing on the differences they brought to unionism in her programs.

This same series of events occurred in Huanuni in much the same way (unit 07). A practitioner there launched a program that brought housewives into the studio to discuss labor issues, unionism, and social action. Although this generated conflicts with the male union leadership, it also revealed differences among the housewives, especially during a transition from one leader to another:

The Housewives' Committee had its own problems of "she said this" and "she said that," especially with the compañera Nora de Moncada and the compañera Emiliana de Solís, who was voted out during a magna assembly. They decided to vote her out of office. But Emiliana de Solís--since I was friends with all of them--she would invite me to her house, to talk about her problems. And the compañera Nora de Moncada would see that I was talking with her arch enemy. She thought that I was trying to cause problems between the two of them. She was afraid we were going to create problems for her on the radio. Why would I be talking with her archenemy, and then turn around and invite her to be on the radio? This was a problem for me, but I managed to overcome it. --Sara S., former producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 07)

For a lot of people, the program was polemical, for example, by arguing more openly about the problem. She created polemics, but I believe that it has been something more positive, not so that there would be more division and all. No. Because for one reason or another they were deeply divided, these two groups. But I believe that with the program they developed--through the polemic, the argument, and all--I believe they recognized some coincidencias [agreements] and nothing more happened. And so really, they came together and
worked better together. --Sergio H., technician at Radio Nacional de Huanuni respectively (unit 07)

The cases involving the transformation of the women's movement resulted from spotlighting behaviors of practitioners. This chain of spotlighting internal differences and achieving transformative consequences for the social organization was repeated in two other cases, as well (units 06, 08). Nevertheless, backstaging differences could also achieve transformative consequences.

At Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII internal disagreements seemed to have been resolved after practitioners backstaged dissent (units 04, 11). In Huanuni, the struggle for power in the union was finally resolved when the secretary general resigned under pressure (unit 04). This move came one day after a group of miners had taken over the airwaves to broadcast their complaints against him. In essence, then, the transformative consequence may have been related to that brief instance of spotlighting difference rather than to the dominant backstaging practices used to handle differences arising during most of this event. The other case where backstaging ended with transformative consequences involved the selection of new leaders within a miners' cooperative in Siglo XX (unit 11). Recall that practitioners played a central role in brokering this election, but that they never allowed dissenting positions to be revealed on the radio. The successful resolution of differences transformed relations in the cooperative.

A final kind of transformation I noted in my observations and conversations with practitioners regarded material changes in living conditions (units 06, 19). For example, the Housewives' Committee in Huanuni marched to Oruro demanding the payment of back wages for their husbands. The march was detained halfway to the city by the military, which agreed to negotiate the back payments with the miners. The women would not return to Huanuni until the agreement was reached, however, and set up
camp in the middle of the road connecting the two towns. Sometime after nightfall, the authorities negotiated a settlement and the housewives returned to town in military buses to a triumphant reception. This was not the only instance of a material transformation, but is included here as the most dramatic case I learned of while in the field. In addition to transforming professional practice, social movements, and material life, coping with differences had personal consequences for practitioners.

**Personal Consequences**

Of the 22 units in this data subset, 4 dealt with consequences of a personal nature (units 10, 13, 17, 20). Each of these instances came from interviews with practitioners, which stands to reason because the only way to gauge a personal impact is through a conversation with the person. Practitioners described how particular experiences of dealing with difference had an impact on their lives. This kind of consequence was important because it often changed the way practitioners conducted themselves and thought about the movements around them. This kind of consequence is also significant for it demonstrates that alternative media practitioners take enormous risks and have much to lose in carrying out their jobs.

In two instances, for example, a practitioner learned things that were useful in other situations (units 17, 20). In one case he succeeded in getting members of a women’s greenhouse collective to participate in radio; an experience he was able to replicate in other settings:

> Of course on the level of communication, I believe that we have moved closer to that thing called popular participation. Participation is perhaps a misused term, but I mean communication that was not manipulated. It was very open, spontaneous, not so much an interview as a dialogue. So on the level of participation, this and other cases have been enormous experiences. It permitted us to--it’s true that we are a medium that can carry the voice, I mean, in order to make other experiences known, other points of view known. Nevertheless, the personal expression of others is very different. It is not through question and answer, but through a dialogue... This is an experience that, afterwards, allows you to be able to do this again in other places. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP (unit 20)
In another experience, this practitioner found that being rebuffed by leaders of the national miners' union changed the way he sought information sources.

When the institution was tightly linked with state miners, I went to the national federation of miners to see the top leaders. But they wouldn't meet with me. They wouldn't talk to me. And, well, we argued for a moment, but finally, I had to get something on tape elsewhere. I came back with a bad taste, how can I explain, these kinds of things happen. . . . So I rapidly changed my perspective. That is, I had wanted to talk with the leaders, but then I spoke directly with the rank and file, members of the social bases. Like I told you a little bit ago, the leaders should not always be the ones to speak. I had to change. --Vicho D., producer at CISEP (unit 17)

Aside from changing one's way of thinking about communication, personal consequences included instances where practitioners suffered severe material impacts because of their actions (units 10, 13). In both of these cases, workers were fired from the stations for defying union leaders. In one case, however, the practitioner was also persecuted by higher authorities:

I think this was a benefit for the workers, but harmful for those of us working in the radio because we suddenly acquired enemies that were in high political positions in the government. Afterwards, this resulted in our imprisonment and, later, house arrest for a set period of time, just for having expressed these kinds of ideas. Don't forget either, that those of us working at the radio were also in exile and working clandestinely. Under house arrest, we were under strict government control. --Pablo J., producer at CISEP (unit 13)

Aside from their personal consequences, three of these last examples had the side impact of maintaining the status quo at the organizational level (units 10, 13, 17). By rebuffing one practitioner and firing two others, miners' unions at the time were able to hold onto their power and escape accountability. From the perspective of the practitioners, however, the personal consequences were of primary importance in these cases.

Two other cases where practitioners talked about personal consequences involved working with Housewives' Committees and transforming social life (units 06, 09). As a secondary consequence, however, one practitioner felt that she gained a closer understanding of the housewives' movement, which helped her to continue her work (unit 09).
This hunger strike helped me a lot. First, it helped me to know my people, with all their shortcomings. Second, it strengthened my commitment, personally. I said to myself, "What we do is not in vain. There are always results somewhere." It helped me because I said to myself, "We are not alone. We are not so ignorant, so poor. We have incredible riches. We have, as someone said, all the potential of the people that is yet to bloom." There are things not yet discovered and one must help the people discover their many potentialities and capabilities when they set out to do something. This is what I learned from being with the people in this struggle. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII (unit 09)

As an additional consequence in the second case, the practitioner suffered a severe rebuke from her parents precisely because her work spotlighted differences and brought her too much attention (unit 06). Following the women's march to Oruro, this practitioner explained that she was shocked at her parents' disapproval of her work:

I was very pleased with what we had done. I felt like a miner's daughter. I felt a sense of accomplishment for having done something with my people, with my class, and for my class. I came home very pleased. But my parents, mmmmm, they just about hit me because, my father told me, "Why do you have to get involved with these people?" And my mother said the same. "You are going to get yourself in a lot of trouble," and this and that. My God, I cried and cried because I wasn't understood. I am not comprehended here. --Sara S., former producer for Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 06)

I mention these two instances to emphasize something that I have mentioned all along in this chapter. The chain of situations-actions-consequences did not always move in a linear fashion but broke off into combinations of each element. Nevertheless, there has been some pattern in these cases that provide useful directions for alternative media practitioners.

The task of determining consequences is difficult for many reasons. Aside from those I discussed at the beginning of this section, it should now be clear that multiple and contradictory consequences can emerge from a single communicative action or procedure. Furthermore, consequences that appeared to maintain the status quo of situations may have been illusory, as several of the examples above did not terminate but were still in process at the time a particular event or episode ended (I am thinking here about the 3-day seminar on the mining industry and the program Controversias).
Likewise, instances where transformations appeared to have taken place may have been illusory, as well. Removing the union secretary general and restoring order to a cooperative (units 04, 11) may have been temporary transformations accomplishing little more than masking differences momentarily. Finally, personal changes resulted even in cases where the status quo of an organization was maintained. Since these personal consequences changed the way practitioners thought about and approached their jobs, however, they were significant to the overall enterprise of alternative media practice.

Synthesis of Situations, Actions, and Consequences

In analyzing problematic differences arising in alternative media practice, I have tried to use the communication-as-procedure model on a metatheoretic level. I have done this in order to cope with a diverse set of instances marked by difference, without getting mired in the micromoment of each case. In this way, I have been able to examine the entire set of data marked by difference in terms of the situational aspects, behavior or action aspects, and consequence aspects. My hope is that taking this approach has resulted in a richer set of concepts that illuminate the notion of differences arising in alternative media practice. I have mapped the metatheoretic set of concepts in terms of differences I found in the 22 units examined in this chapter (Figure 10). I have placed these elements into a single chart to represent the linkages suggested in the situation-action-consequence chain. Nevertheless, these links are depicted in separate boxes in order to circumvent any assumptions that the connections between them are unidirectional or causal. Data presented throughout this chapter indicated that similar situations could and did elicit diverse actions. Furthermore, multiple actions could be taken, and multiple consequences could result from a shared situation. I have adopted this metatheoretic template as a way to bring together diverse experiences without losing the particular conditions and directions evidenced by them.
Figure 9. Partial reproduction of a map drawn at a campesino community organizing session. Untranslated words: Cabildo (a political jurisdiction), Jilanko (a local leader), Prosempa, CAPE, and CUPE (NGOs). Other foreign terms are proper names.

The exercise of mapping the ayllu functioned in a subtle, indirect, yet very effective way to display the many differences within this production unit. The map graphically represented the disparities in basic services among the various communities and identified areas with the greatest need. For example, some communities had nearby sources of water, while others were distant from wells or faucets. This provided a basis for planning action, setting priorities, and distributing resources. The map also displayed possibilities for taking action by indicating service agencies and specific accomplishments. If one community had been able to construct a first aid station, why couldn't others? If Prosempa--an agricultural NGO--was centrally located in the ayllu, why couldn't it work more closely with all the communities? Finally, in drawing up the map, the practitioners learned about intracommunity conflicts (especially when talking about nonattendees), land tenure battles, important historical events, and points of pride in the ayllu that helped them direct their future actions. Drawing up the map served as a
Figure 10. Problematic instances of difference in media practice, conceptualized in conformance with the communication-as-procedure theoretic. Note that each box—situation, action, consequence—is separated from each other, yet contained within a larger box. This is meant to convey the relationships between them as nonlinear yet sequential. Each element—situation, action, consequence—holds the possibility of moving independently of the other.

I would now like to recapitulate some of the preceding examples by pulling together situations, actions, and consequences in their entirety. I will do this to demonstrate sequential patterns, sequential ruptures, and deceptive patterns in these procedural chains. I will begin with sequential patterns to emphasize that even though the data defied unidirectional or causal connections, dominant patterns offering useful directions to practitioners did emerge in this study. I will follow with a section on sequential ruptures to demonstrate the flexibility of practitioners to break out of the dominant patterns, as well. Finally, I will present deceptive patterns, explaining how limitations of fieldwork must be factored into interpreting patterns. Since details of each of these examples have been presented already, I will be summarizing here, not repeating accounts in great depth.
Sequential Patterns

As I pulled the data apart and tracked the various units as they progressed from situation to action to consequence, I noted two patterns, which I will describe in turn. The first pattern involved a tendency for backstaging coping strategies to result in consequences of maintaining the status quo. The second pattern involved spotlighting strategies that led to transformations of the status quo.

The strongest instances of maintaining the status quo coincided with cases where backstaging was the primary coping strategy for dealing with difference. Furthermore, the instances of backstaging that resulted in other consequences were complicated by either (a) the introduction of additional coping strategies—spotlighting or floodlighting, or (b) weak, possibly temporary, transformative outcomes. The cases concerning the internal/obvious dissent among union members at Radio Nacional de Huanuni offered the strongest illustration of this pattern (units 02, 03, 04). Rather than repeat each case, I will summarize the progression of unit 02, the La Paz meeting attended by the union secretary general.

Recall that the miners' union in Huanuni was beset by an overt struggle for power. Section leaders from the mine were trying to oust the secretary general, claiming that he had accepted a position with the national office of the union and had not accounted for numerous expenditures over the past several months. Calls for the leader to step down from office in Huanuni were made in the open, so this was a case of internal/obvious differences.

I learned of this struggle during my first week in Huanuni when the union secretary general returned from government-labor negotiations in La Paz. My field notes contain the following entry:

9/26/94—Sunday The union general secretary comes to Loren's room to say that he desperately needs an announcement in the morning that all dirigentes [section leaders] convene to hear the latest plans by the nation's secretary of labor. He
was depressed; things look bad. Of the 1,100 miners, 600 will remain. Talk turned to rumors of other union members trying to curry favor with various political parties. Hints of great infighting. This should be very interesting as far as participation is concerned. Hard for me to imagine that there was so much struggle within the union. When the secretary general left, Loren said that the struggle/infighting is just beginning. Also says that lots of miners want him to go. "So he should go, don't you think?"

Prior to this meeting—which I experienced by chance—I had no idea that there was an overt power struggle going on inside the union. That is because dissent had been backstaged by the station. During the secretary general’s visit, the station director, Loren, had tape recorded his call for a meeting, which was broadcast repeatedly the following morning. My field notes indicate the following repeated message:

An emergency meeting has been called for all union dirigentes and section delegates of the Huanuni Mining Company for today, September 27, 1993 in the union office. The agenda includes a report on the issues discussed in La Paz regarding the critical situation of the mining industry.

This message was read repeatedly, and the union office called the studio over and over requesting that it be repeated some more.

Meanwhile, a reporter whom I accompanied on the streets met up with section dirigentes who criticized the secretary general for calling meetings at the last minute. They also argued that the secretary general needed to account for funds spent on a union trip to Potosí before anyone would listen to a report regarding union-government negotiations in La Paz. None of these dissenting opinions were ever aired, following the logic articulated in one of the practitioner interviews:

Well, understanding that union radios are always medios de orientación, right, for the workers, then in any given time of conflict, like the one that has come up here, I believe it is a sensible position to try to avoid further division among the workers. Why throw gasoline on the fire? --Ana L., part-time producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (commenting on units 02, 03, 04)

From start to finish, this episode (unit 02) was backstaged by the station. The final result was that the secretary general could not hold a meeting because he lacked a quorum of participants. Despite having complete discipline and solidarity within the
medium and frequent repetition of his message, he was unable to enforce conformity within the diverse factions in the union. The consequence in this case was to maintain the status quo of separate warring factions.

The second, even stronger, pattern that emerged in this data was the complete opposite from the case described above: spotlighting behavior frequently led to consequences of transforming the status quo. Of all of the cases where transformation seemed to have occurred, those resulting from spotlighting actions constituted the most vivid examples. Furthermore, spotlighting actions were associated with transformation in most cases, with personal changes in several other cases, and with maintenance of the status quo in only one case. In other words, spotlighting did not always result in transformation, but enough strong examples occurred to warrant claims that a pattern in the data existed.

In all, 7 cases displayed clear patterns of spotlighting actions connected to transformative consequences (units 06, 07, 08, 09, 14, 21, 22). Of these, I will describe the case of the women's hunger strike in Siglo XX related to the work at Radio Pío XII (unit 09) because the data was particularly rich in this description, making it an appropriate case to synthesize. Also, this example incorporated the struggle faced by Housewives' Committees within unions, a struggle shared in two other instances in this pattern. I believe their particular situation—a subordinate group within an organization—accounted for some of the spotlighting behavior.

The differences manifested by Housewives' Committees here and in other cases represented instances of internal, obvious differences. These committees had been incorporated as a matter of policy into the formal workings of the miners' unions and were relegated to an absolutely subordinate position within them. Therefore, the differences brought to the organization were recognized by the male leadership, which
attempted to control and direct them. The men were fairly successful in controlling the women's movement, as the practitioner explained:

> We started out, really, a mixed group of women and men. We couldn't work exclusively with women. These were union matters, dealing with their husband's issues, so women were necessarily incorporated. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío XII (unit 09)

The Housewives' Committees gradually transformed, however, and "each woman began growing a little bit stronger."

The practitioner adopted an activist role, accompanying housewives to their homes to confront hostile husbands, transmitting their meetings live, and adopting the language and perspectives developed by the committees to interpret social changes. The radio programs were used to spotlight the differences exerted by women during this time when they were still working under the control of the union leadership. The movement toward greater autonomy reached a breakthrough, however, with the mass layoffs of workers provoked by the executive order--Supreme Decree 21060--which privatized most of the state mines. The Housewives' Committees began to call meetings independently and drafted actions such as the hunger strike, which was the centerpiece of my interview with this practitioner.

As a result of spotlighting women's efforts to achieve autonomy within the union, at least three transformative consequences occurred: a change in the women's movement itself, a change in the practitioner's understanding of social struggles, and a change in the focus of the practitioner's work. The women's movement itself was changed as a result of the gradual adoption of increased autonomy within the union structure. This change manifested itself in the language and actions of the housewives:

All of the analyses done by the women were transmitted, and the discourse that existed back then had changed. They no longer talked only about the company store, the price of bread and meat. No. The discourse of the housewives had changed. They began to say, "Compañeras, we cannot permit our husbands to be thrown out of work. We cannot permit our lives to end, that the mining industry decay. We cannot permit these things." And as the problems
intensified, the women grew and matured, and they said, "No longer will you
teach be the only ones to go on hunger strikes. No longer will you be the only
ones who struggle." . . . The movement of the Housewives’ Committee had
changed in its essence. --Marta M., outreach worker with palliris at Radio Pío
XII (unit 09)

In addition to the change explained above, the practitioner explained that she acquired a
new understanding of social struggles:

This hunger strike helped me a lot. First, it helped me to know my people, with
all their shortcomings. Second, it strengthened my commitment, personally. I
said to myself, "What we do is not in vain. There are always results
somewhere." It helped me because I said to myself, "We are not alone. we are
not so ignorant, so poor. We have incredible riches. We have, as someone said,
all the potential of the people that is yet to bloom." --Marta M., outreach worker
with palliris at Radio Pío XII (unit 09)

Ironically, the practitioner’s greater commitment and more sophisticated understanding
of social struggle resulted from a hunger strike that failed to achieve its stated objective:
the return of salaried positions in the mine. What this means is that consequences must
be read with extreme caution, as obvious failures to transform the status quo can mask
significant and long-lasting changes in social movements.

Finally, the case of the hunger strike brought changes to the direction of the
practitioner’s work. Perhaps because of the failure of the hunger strike to achieve the
reinstatement of jobs, the practitioner changed her focus to the miners’ cooperatives,
which had swelled in numbers after 1985. This change in focus stimulated criticism
from the remaining state miners, who accused her of contributing to the downfall of the
Bolivian labor movement. Nevertheless, her actions--monitoring the social situation,
enacting responsive programs--were fundamental to sustaining the housewives’
movement.

The differences arising in the case of the women hunger strikers were internal
and obvious within the union organization that had incorporated Housewives'
Committees as legitimate subgroups. They exerted independence gradually, a move that
was facilitated by a practitioner who adopted activist actions of accompanying the
women in their domestic struggles and incorporating their perspectives into radio programs. These spotlighting strategies were accompanied by several consequences changing the housewives' movement, the practitioner's perceptions, and the direction of subsequent media work. This was a prototypical example of spotlighting actions leading to transformation of the status quo. Other examples, however, displayed more complexity in the use of communication procedures and their consequences. I will turn to those examples now.

**Sequential Ruptures**

Although patterned sequences were clearly displayed in this study, practitioners adopted a variety of responses to situations and achieved mixed consequences; situations and actions were complex, not monolithic or linear. The pattern of spotlighting actions leading to transformative consequences occasionally included backstaging actions, as well. Likewise, the pattern of backstaging actions leading to maintaining consequences occasionally included floodlighting and spotlighting actions. Both of these patterns, additionally, elicited consequences other than those noted in the dominant, patterned chains. In other words, sequential chains often contained flexibility or ruptures that defied simple theorizing of movement from situation to action to consequence. I will focus briefly on two examples to flesh out the complexity of these chains: the case of women's *sindicalismo* (trade unionism) (unit 07) and the case of internal union dissent (unit 04).

In the case of women's sindicalism, the practitioner initiated a program directed at housewives concerning the principles of union organizing and thinking. The program was conducted with women in leadership positions within the Housewives' Committee, not with union officials—a move that immediately raised the suspicions of union leaders. Aside from the difference that this provoked between the union leaders and the
practitioner, the Housewives' Committee itself experienced an internal antagonism between two of its leaders, as well:

The Housewives' Committee had its own problems of "she said this" and "she said that," especially with the compañera Nora de Moncada and the compañera Emiliana de Solis, who was voted out during a magna assembly. They decided to vote her out of office. --Sara S., former producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 07)

For the most part, the differences manifested in this episode were spotlighted by the practitioner, leading to transformative consequences. At one point, however, the practitioner backstaged differences to domestic settings:

But Emiliana de Solis--since I was friends with all of them--she would invite me to her house, to talk about her problems. And the compañera Nora de Moncada would see that I was talking with her archenemy. She thought that I was trying to cause problems between the two of them. She was afraid we were going to create problems for her on the radio. Why would I be talking with her archenemy, and then turn around and invite her to be on the radio? This was a problem for me but I managed to overcome it. --Sara S., former producer at Radio Nacional de Huanuni (unit 07)

Later in this interview, the practitioner and her husband (who helped her produce the program) told me that the difference between the women was overcome and the Housewives' Committee came together under its elected leader--a consequence they considered a transformation of the status quo. They attributed this chain of events to "working tactfully." While that may be true, from my analytic perspective the chain of events was partially attributable to the backstaging actions taken in conjunction with spotlighting actions. The clear sequential pattern suggested in the previous section--spotlighting leading to transformation--was altered in this case with contradictory actions--backstaging leading to transformation--by a practitioner who seemed to select coping strategies as they best responded to situations. Hence, sequential patterns were not blindly repeated, but were adjusted according to situational contingencies.

A second instance of rupture within patterned chains accompanied the dissent within the miners' union in Huanuni (unit 04). For several weeks the union had been
fractured among competing factions, each trying to oust the secretary general. By and large, the radio workers backstaged dissenting opinions, refusing to give them coverage and presenting, instead, pleas for unity, solidarity, and fuerza (strength). At various points in this process, however, differences were sporadically spotlighted by errant practitioners and through the sheer force of the workers. My field notes explained the case where sheer force of the workers spotlighted the difference:

10/7/94 6 p.m. 10 workers—rank and file and dirigentes—arrive at the radio. Say they must go on air to present a declaration resulting from a meeting of sections. All go down to studio and Loren facilitates discussion. My camera is used to interview and broadcast on TV. They all agree that the secretary general must go. Everyone speaks. Lots of people note that this is in the interest of democracy.

The press conference with the miners lasted 40 minutes and was broadcast twice on the local television channel. As observed in the field notes, each participant was given an opportunity to speak—most of them had two turns—and their opinions were delivered uninterrupted by the facilitator.9 This show of force ruptured the backstaging actions by spotlighting the differences within the union.

At an assembly of workers 2 days later, the secretary general resigned his position and shortly departed for his position in La Paz, which I interpreted as a transformation of the status quo. Yet attributing this transformation to a singular spotlighting action would be erroneous. I learned from interviews that the agitation within the union had been bubbling since July when the secretary general had been elected to a new post in La Paz. During that time, dissent within the union intensified and was handled by backstaging differences, for the most part. Obviously, this process was complicated by ruptures in this action that I have noted here and in earlier sections of this chapter. All of these behaviors may have influenced the eventual outcome of the secretary general stepping down. Furthermore, this apparently transformative

9 Video footage of this event has supplemented this analysis.
consequence may have been temporary and illusory. Because I left the field shortly after this resolution, I was unable to see if the abrogation of leadership actually brought the workers together in a more unified force, or if the transfer of leadership was merely a temporary blip leaving more fundamental structural problems intact.

The patterned chains that emerged in this study were frequently marked by complexity and contradiction. The cases above illustrate the subtle interaction between the multiple exercise of coping strategies (backstaging, spotlighting) and the sometimes tenuous connections to consequences. The very nature of consequences needs to be interpreted cautiously, as demonstrated in this and the preceding section, not only because consequences may be multiple and contradictory (as in the cases of the women’s hunger strike) but because they may be illusory (as alluded to above). Cases of deceptive patterns will taken up next.

**Deceptive Patterns**

The cases in this study that manifested deceptive patterns involved the use of floodlighting as the principal strategy for dealing with difference (units 05, 15, 19). Recall that in each of these programs, the practitioners were positioned relative to social organizations in a way that allowed them to gain some distance, to rise above the particular differences that had become problematic within or between organizations. Being one step removed from the problematic difference allowed them to mediate and facilitate a discussion of issues among various social actors. In two of these cases, however, this strategy appeared to result in consequences of maintaining the status quo (units 05, 15). These outcomes may be somewhat deceptive given that the time frame in which I was able to observe was abbreviated and the time frame of these programs was long range. In other words, I was in the field only for a total of 3 months, while these practitioners had invested years in working with each of these communities. I will
summarize one of the cases to illustrate how the bracketing of time may have led to deceptive conclusions regarding consequences.

An example from CISEP illustrates the difficulty of determining the consequences of a given event (unit 15). The institution had planned a seminar examining the state of the mining industry for several months. The seminar was organized by the mining affairs office of the institution, which has worked in this area for the last 10 years. The institution invited a broad cross section of social actors--some with competing interests--to participate in the seminar, thus incorporating the shifts in the labor force occasioned by changing national policies and international markets (see Table 7 in chapter 4). Their efforts to bring together a diversity of actors constituted floodlighting action.

At the end of the seminar, all of the participants worked in small groups to draft components of a document that would represent the opinions of the diverse participants. The idea was to draft a unified document that could be presented to the government as a message of unified discontent:

The fact is we have said, "In response to this fight between cooperatives and salaried workers, why don't we try to open a common road that they can both walk down?" And this isn't the first time we've done this. Last year we made the same intent, in the same place, with the same topic, trying to draft documents together. --Victor A., director of CISEP

As mentioned above, this activity was a continuation of an effort undertaken a year earlier. At the end of the seminar, however, the two groups representing the main differences among the miners--state workers and cooperatives--each drafted their own documents, which contradicted each other in some way:

This time was marked by specific circumstances in which the commission was hegemonized by cooperatives. There was no joint document. Nevertheless, it is a possible route and we will advance down it, searching for spaces where we can work together. --Victor A., director of CISEP
The seminar appeared to end with the divisions between workers still intact, the status quo maintained. But the comments of the practitioner above indicated that this episode was but a step on a long road being traveled by the institution. To draw any vast conclusions from the consequences of a single event—as I have done for all of the observed examples—would dishonor the long-term projects undertaken at all three research sites.

Deception was a potential for all of the patterns I have noted above, but it seemed especially acute in the cases where floodlighting was the primary strategy used to cope with differences. Because my study was conducted within a very narrow time frame, I had to bracket time as a factor when analyzing observations and interviews. The risk of doing this was quite clear. The patterns in different sequences ran the risk of unduly foreclosing on the progress achieved by long-term projects. In the end, consequences may not have been what they appeared to be.

By synthesizing selected cases I have tried to illustrate that procedures are both patterned and unordered. I have found evidence that provided direction for practitioners, but not in the form of recipes, such as spotlighting most often had transformative consequences, while backstaging led to maintaining the status quo. Rather, the evidence of patterns and ruptures emphasized the contingent and complex nature of procedural sequences. The patterns displayed tendencies between actions and consequences, but they pointed out the importance of contextual factors, as well as the situatedness of the practitioner. Finally, this synthesis demonstrated the illusory, deceptive potential of drawing conclusions from short-term consequences embedded in long-range projects.

Summary

This chapter has examined problematic differences in media practice by breaking selected instances into parts of a sequence. Each part was examined for its characteristics, which were illustrated with examples. Finally, several examples were
reconstructed holistically to demonstrate patterns and ruptures in the situation-action-consequence sequence.

In examining how differences arose in practice, my intention was to demonstrate that practitioners took an active role in "differencing," or in constructing heterogeneity. I illustrated this by arranging the data into categories that implicated the practitioners' role in constructing difference. Of the 22 units analyzed in this chapter, 14 contained differences that were internal to the various organizations. This overwhelming display of internal differences indicates that this topic--generally neglected in the alternative media literature--warrants concerted attention because of its prominence in everyday practice. Within the internal differences, most were obvious to practitioners, and some were allowed to emerge because of organizational structures. That is, internal boundaries of organizations, such as the union, constituted narrow spaces of freedom where people could exert autonomy. In the few cases where internal differences were hidden, they were either kept secret by social actors exerting control or were rendered invisible by routine practices of mobilizing, slogaing, and news sourcing the same people. In the remaining 8 cases, differences faced by practitioners involved external groups. In these cases, practitioners either had lost touch with external groups or wished to reach out and forge closer bonds with them.

In examining how practitioners coped with differences, I wanted to show that multiple moves were available to practitioners across situations and that some moves were much more difficult to enact than others. I sorted coping strategies into three kinds of actions: backstaging, spotlighting, and floodlighting. In 9 of the 22 cases, practitioners backstaged differences, that is, they diverted discussion of them to nonmediated arenas. An interaction seemed to occur between backstaging and the hidden quality of differences, such that backstaging contributed to the hidden aspect of differences and the hidden aspect of differences led to backstaging actions. Also, a high
degree of internal differences tended to be handled by backstaging strategies. In 10 of
the 22 cases, practitioners spotlighted differences, that is, they focused media attention
on a specific set of social actors. In these cases, practitioners either were reaching out to
new social actors or were already in a committed relationship with people occupying a
marginal position within an organization. In the smallest number of cases--3 of 22--
practitioners floodlighted differences, that is, they focused media attention on a broader
range of social actors. Practitioners in this case had committed bonds with social actors
but were not obliged to adopt the position of either side expressing the difference.

In presenting consequences, I attempted to demonstrate both the difficulty of
identifying and assessing them and the multiple and sometimes contradictory nature of
consequences. I had to eliminate 7 cases for analysis in this chapter, for example,
because consequences could not be identified due to limited time in the field and
incomplete information. Nevertheless, 12 of the cases brought consequences that
transformed society either by changing media practices, altering social movements
themselves, or improving the material living conditions of people. In 6 of the cases I
identified consequences that maintained the status quo because differences essentially
remained unchanged from the beginning to the end of a story, event, program, or
episode. It should be noted that maintaining consequences all came from field notes and
not interviews, a factor that should temper any conclusions regarding maintaining and
transforming consequences. Finally, in 4 of the cases, practitioners identified important
personal consequences that changed the way they thought of themselves and their
practice in ways that affected how they conducted their work.

The last section of this chapter synthesized several cases to display some of the
patterns, ruptures, and deceptions in the data. I encountered strong patterns of specific
communication strategies--spotlighting and backstaging--leading to particular
consequences--transformation and maintenance of the status quo. Despite this
patterning, I also found considerable freedom to incorporate multiple communication strategies, as well as to achieve diverse—even contradictory—consequences. Finally, the consequences identified in several cases appeared deceptive due to the time limits placed on the observational component of this study.
CHAPTER VI

PARTICIPATION IN MEDIA: THE CASE OF THE REPORTEROS POPULARES

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the notion of participation in media by examining a particular effort at building a corps of reporteros populares (people's reporters). Participation has been a central theme in alternative communication theories, yet there has been only sporadic description of how participation is constructed and enacted. Rather, most work on participation is of a normative and prescriptive nature, advising practitioners and policymakers on the should be's of structures and results, not on the how to's of building them. Where scholars have attended to the hows of constructing, work has been piecemeal, a few examples from here and there that point to the procedural view adopted in this dissertation. Their work has been valuable in providing conceptual direction and justification for focusing on the hows of participation. This chapter is intended to add descriptive substance to this literature by examining an exemplar of participatory communication: the people's reporters affiliated with Radio Pío XII. The data for this chapter constituted the one complete exemplar of a participatory program that I was able to collect in this project. Because it focused on a conceptual category of central importance to the alternative media literature and built on ideas in the preceding chapters, I positioned it as the final data chapter in this dissertation.

The 2-year-old people's reporter program at Radio Pío XII involved the recruitment, training, and support of peasant farmers, who filed regular contributions to the station concerning the life of their villages. I have selected this program for two
reasons. First, this program was initiated with the explicit goal of increasing participation of a marginalized sector of society: peasant farmers. Therefore, the notion of participation was defined by the practitioners—not just by me—as central to this exemplar. Second, the people's reporters program involved a reaching out to a marginalized social sector, so it represented a microcosm containing many of the issues faced by practitioners striving to involve social actors outside of their specific organization, but facing similar conditions. The lessons to be learned from this program, then, speak to concerns in various settings even though they are grounded in a particular place and time.

This chapter is ordered into five sections:

- Overview—an account of the data used in this chapter and an explanation of its structure.
- Overview of the People's Reporters—a review of the secondary literature examining people's reporters programs in Latin America.
- Building Relationships in Campesino Communities—a discussion of where people's reporters are located and how the radio station workers establish connections with them.
- Training People's Reporters—a detailed description of a week-long training session in rural Bolivia.
- Consequences for Participants and for the Radio—a summary of the accomplishments of the people's reporters program.

Overview

Multiple sources of data contributed to this chapter: (a) field notes from participation in an intensive, week-long people's reporters training class; (b) field notes of activities related to people's reporters taken during my 4 weeks living at Radio Pío XII; (c) interviews with two rural outreach workers who taught the course and designed the overall people's reporters project (I refer to them interchangeably as "people's reporters teachers" and "rural outreach workers" in this chapter); (d) interviews with four experienced people's reporters; (e) 2 years of archival data from the station
including maps and actual contributions from the people's reporters; (f) photographic slides of activities at the week-long training class; and (g) secondary research on people's reporters in Latin America.

I have chosen to incorporate all of these data sources into this chapter because, together, they constituted a comprehensive set of the aspects bearing on the people's reporters program. I have relied most heavily on my field experiences and interviews, using archival data and slides to flesh out hunches derived from observations and to stimulate my recall of the events as they happened. I included secondary research here in order to situate this particular people's reporters exemplar within the wider context of a practice that has spread throughout Latin America. I turn to the secondary research first, as it provides a global perspective of the people's reporters.

Overview of People's Reporters

People's reporters are volunteers who work with radio stations by filing reports of news and activities from their communities. The recruitment and training of people's reporters was initiated in Latin America by the Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica (ALER) a Catholic organization. This organization hosts regular training sessions for its affiliates on technical and organizational aspects of popular radio and recently published a booklet titled, Guide for Working with Popular Correspondents (ALER, 1993). According to the acknowledgments, this publication formalized the work in this area that the institution has sponsored "for many years." Without specifying the particular place and time of the birth of the people's reporters, the booklet identified projects of this nature in Bolivia, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru.

The spread of this movement to the Caribbean and North, Central, and South America gives testimony to the pragmatic utility of people's reporters. Furthermore, the few researchers to have examined these reporters have lauded them as an optimal form
of popular participation in media (Aguirre Alvis, 1991; Cornejo Portugal, 1993; Crabtree, 1993; Kaplán, 1985; Rodriguez, 1993; Valderrama, 1987; White, 1990). These studies have provided a good descriptive sense of who people's reporters are, what they do, and where they come from, as well as an idea of the difficulties confronting this movement. I will draw on these studies and my own experiences to trace out a general picture of these issues.

As mentioned already, people's reporters are volunteer contributors to radio stations, drawn from the most marginalized sectors of society. In Latin America, this means that the reporters have come largely from rural, isolated areas that are ignored by most media. Rural campesinos [peasant farmers] have been excluded from media, in part, because their villages are reachable only by arduous journeys on rivers, footpaths, or dirt roads. They usually have no telephone or electric service. Nevertheless, physical isolation is not the only reason that radio stations have turned to enlisting people's reporters, who have been drawn from towns and urban areas, as well. Rather, the people's reporters movement has been identified as a way to incorporate voices that have been marginalized or ignored by most media (ALER, 1993). What is irrelevant detail for most media--the everyday lives and struggles of ordinary people--is the lifeblood for communicators trying to incorporate popular participation (Kaplán, 1991). People's reporters are viewed as a means to access that lifeblood.

Although they are not paid, the people's reporters receive training and support from sponsoring radio stations. ALER has suggested that reporters be given tape recorders, batteries, cassettes, stationery, and postage. At Radio Pío XII, people's reporters received notebooks, news forms, pens, and envelopes. The station could not afford tape recorders for any of its reporters, so it relied on written accounts of events and issues in the countryside. Reporters sent their written accounts to the station in a variety of ways--asking a passerby headed for Siglo XX to carry them to the station or
entrusting a truck driver to deliver them--none of which was very reliable. The unreliability of this system bothered reporters, who frequently complained about news items that had been lost on their way to the station. Receiving written accounts, rather than equipping reporters with technical equipment, is the standard practice of radio stations that have been documented in the books and articles cited above.

The topics that reporters write about have not been studied systematically in any research that I have found. Where topics have been mentioned, however, they seem to be as broad as community life itself, including reports of farm activities, organizational meetings, diseases, military activity, sports, and fiestas (Rodriguez, 1993; White, 1990). These impressionistic conclusions were born out at Radio Pío XII, which I will discuss in more detail in the section on consequences later in this chapter.

How reporters were recruited and selected varied from place to place. According to the training booklet from ALER (1993), for example, reporters should be carefully screened to include individuals who are literate, involved with community activities, committed to social change, available to devote time to the task, and willing to work without remuneration. In Nicaragua, the selection criteria shifted over the years from incorporating representation by geography and social status to involving only volunteers who were committed to the Sandinista front (Rodriguez, 1993). In Peru, at Radio Pío XII, and at other stations, correspondents were elected by their fellow villagers (Kaplún, 1985; Valderrama, 1987).

The people's reporters program at Radio Pío XII began in 1992; the second year of the project was coming to a close in the months that I conducted my fieldwork. In that time, a staff fluctuating between two and three men had worked in 80 communities in the three departments--Cochabamba, Oruro, and Potosí--reached most clearly by the radio's signal. These same workers trained about 180 campesinos to work as people's reporters. Aside from conducting outreach visits and training sessions in the
countryside, the two staff members who worked with people's reporters during my study also edited their contributions for news programs, intermittently hosted shows aimed at the rural audience, and maintained an archive of their activities and of the reports that they received.

Although I have not explicitly spelled out why practitioners attach importance to the participation of marginalized members of the audience, the reasons have been implied in the selection criteria and kinds of topics discussed by the reporters. To begin with, popular participation in radio is seen as a way to recover and preserve traditional language, values, and cultural practices that have been assaulted for 500 years and are struggling to survive the current age of mass communication. Second, popular participation is seen as a way to support grass-roots efforts to organize locally and to establish contacts, share ideas, and coordinate actions with other grass-roots organizations. One of the staff members at Radio Pío XII explained the goals of the work:

We want to integrate by using communication. We want the problems people have to be shared at a regional level. Regional and national. As far as the radio [signal] can go. This is our idea. Also, we want to support union movements, and likewise, other institutions, motivating them to keep on working, encouraging them. We want to give them a little support to continue working to better their condition. --Manuel J., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

The root of this program, then, was to transform society, to improve the living conditions of the most marginalized people in society. The steps taken to realize this goal were based, in large part, on the theories of communication and social change discussed in chapter four, especially those taking Liberation Theology as their starting point. I will not rehash those beliefs here but will turn now to the concrete practices of constructing participation in the form of the people's reporters.
Building Relationships in Campesino Communities

Tacked to the wall of the office shared by the rural outreach workers at Radio Pío XII was a map of three contiguous provinces studded by some 80 tiny pennants attached to pushpins. The miniature flags marked the locations where the outreach workers had traveled to recruit, train, and support people’s reporters over the previous 2 years. Before the actual training of people’s reporters took place, practitioners expended enormous amounts of time and energy traveling the countryside to cultivate the trust and cooperation of the peasantry. More effort was expended on this task than in training sessions, on-air presentation, or editing of materials. I have no firsthand experience with the outreach workers on this phase of the people's reporters project, as my fieldwork in Siglo XX did not coincide with their travels to the countryside for the purpose of establishing and maintaining contacts. Nevertheless, I have constructed a sketch of this important phase of their work based on interviews with the outreach workers and have included it here because it was critical to the success of the program.

Homegrown Teachers

The work of establishing contact with campesino communities and building a relationship of trust with them seemed to be facilitated by the organic connection between the instructors and the towns they visited. I learned of this connection as we were en route to an isolated town where a training course was to be held. I was riding in the back of the cargo truck with the two instructors when we made one of our many stops to allow people to climb aboard or to get off. The only difference this time was that one of the instructors grabbed a large bag of groceries and began running into the town. His partner explained to me that he was born in the village, Huancarani, and that he wanted to take some fresh food to family members that still lived there. The partner informed me that he, too, was born and raised in a campesino community in the
Department of La Paz, which was to the north of the radio station and was not included in the people's reporters program.

That these workers were of campesino origin gave them obvious advantages in facilitating contact with rural villages. First and foremost, they spoke fluent Quechua, which was essential to working with rural residents. In the training sessions that I observed, about 90% of the speaking between the teachers and students was in Quechua. Occasionally, the conversations changed over entirely to Spanish, but more often they were marked by code switching--using a Spanish word when a Quechua equivalent was unavailable. Many of the conversations were reinforced with notations on the chalkboard or on large sheets of newsprint that the teachers hung around the room, and these were always written in Spanish. By piecing together the occasional verbal use of Spanish and the frequent written expressions, I found that I was able to follow the issues being discussed and to formulate follow-up questions for the teachers and students. In addition to Quechua, the native Aymara language was spoken in a few of the communities visited by the workers. Both of the teachers noted that being fluent in native languages was indispensable to establishing meaningful contacts with campesino communities.

A less obvious benefit from the workers' rural origins, but also of importance to the success of their project, was the storehouse of tacit cultural knowledge they brought to bear on their interactions in campesino communities. My study did not focus on cultural norms affecting communication, yet these norms were evident to me continuously during the study. For example, on our arrival to the rural town of Macha--where the training course was held--participants greeted the teachers and me with a stylized handshake where first, right hands were extended, grasped, and shaken once. After that, the two greeters tapped each other simultaneously on the shoulder and elbow. I did not perform this greeting very smoothly at first, and this set me apart from the
group immediately. Of course, this was just one example of a culturally loaded behavior that had an impact on the rapport, trust, and confidence between myself, the people's reporters, and the teachers. Others recurred virtually every minute of the day--in casual conversation, in eating meals, in classroom decorum, in using the bathroom, in spending leisure time--leaving no doubt in my mind of the enormous asset the teachers' rural origins brought to the success of the program.

**Designing for the Communities**

The structure of the people's reporters program could have taken a variety of forms, but the ones that emerged were adapted to the material and cultural circumstances of the rural participants. To begin with, the outreach workers spent two-thirds of their time traveling to isolated communities, often enduring hostile conditions and long treks on foot. One of the workers told me, for example, of being refused lodging in a community where he was attempting to establish contacts. This periodically occurred in locations where the teachers had no contacts and residents did not trust them sufficiently to open their homes. "I had to sleep outside, and when I woke up in the morning I was surrounded by pigs wanting to eat the food in my bag." The worker laughed as he recalled the experience, yet it illustrated the challenges and hardships of the job. In addition to being difficult, promoting the program by traveling to individual villages was painstakingly slow and seemingly inefficient. Other people's reporters courses, for example, have reversed the process, using the radio to publicize their activities and to invite communities to travel to the stations (Valderrama, 1987). That method was rejected at Radio Pío XII for a couple of reasons. First, asking people to travel long distances was considered an unreasonable request, as one practitioner explained:

There are places that are so distant that motor vehicles cannot reach them. So it is kind of difficult; there are a lot of accidents for travelers. We cannot say to a compañero [companion, friend, partner], you have to walk for three days to attend a course here. Though they have done this. Up here in, what's it called, in Charcamichi, they came to San Pedro and walked for two days. They did this
just to take a course. That's a lot of interest. --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

Clearly, campesinos were willing to sacrifice to attend the training sessions, and the rural outreach workers reciprocated this willingness by traveling to remote locations. Second, the rural outreach workers found that going to local communities, rather than bringing participants to the radio station, had a qualitative impact on the training sessions. The two outreach workers that I met shared their experiences with me in a joint interview, which I have drawn from below:

We had the experience with the ayllus [pre-Hispanic organizational structures that brought together a number of families into an agricultural collective], that when you bring people to the city, people who have a way of life that is different than that of the city, their very behavior, how they carry themselves, is somewhat depressing. It is not loose, they cannot open themselves the way they would if they were in their own communities, or at least in a community where they habitually visit. --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

Right, and more than that, they open up so much better in their own environment. The way things are in the little towns, in the countryside, in their living environment, makes our work much easier. --Manuel J., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

Organizing the people's reporters courses by conducting them in the countryside, then, had important pragmatic implications, as well as moral ones. The work of the rural outreach teachers was easier because the students were more comfortable, relaxed, open, and willing to share their experiences, which were invaluable to many of the classroom activities.

When establishing contact with communities, the rural outreach workers moved through local institutions and organizations, many of which were remnants of pre-Hispanic and colonial times. For example, in the rural town of Macha, where I attended a 1-week training session, the teachers told me that they had visited each of the 15 invited communities on a number of occasions. By and large, their visits to the various villages followed the same steps. First they contacted local leaders, which varied from community to community. Village organizations might include a campesino union, a
neighborhood federation (the Federación de Juntas Vecinales [Fejuve] is a nationwide movement), a civic union, a corregidor (an indigenous leader delegated by the Spaniards, this title is a remnant of colonial times but harkens back to aylu organizations), and a comuna local (a communal leader). They worked through existing organizations to gather entire villages together in a meeting where they explained the purpose of their visit. By the time of my visit, all of the villages were already aware of the work of Radio Pío XII, including the use of people's reporters. At that point, the collective meetings were held mainly to begin organizing an election of the town's delegate to the people's reporter course that was going to be conducted.

The selection of people's reporters is highly variable according to the few existing studies of this particular practice. In Nicaragua, selection procedures were once based on representativeness, both in terms of regional geography and social status, but later they were guided by ideological allegiance to the Sandinista Front (Rodriguez, 1993). In the ALER manual (1993), the suggested selection criteria included a combination of factors involving technical ability and social consciousness. In Peru, "come all" invitations were broadcast by radio stations, leaving no sense of how local communities determined delegates, while Kaplán (1985) suggested that each locale should elect its representative (Valderrama, 1987). This last procedure was the one adopted by Radio Pío XII. The procedure of electing local representatives was congruent with many of the direct democratic practices that I witnessed in miners' unions and cooperatives. The procedure was also influenced by the training received by station employees, many of whom had attended alternative radio conferences and workshops and were aware of the various selection options noted above.

Elected representatives was done independently, after Radio Pío XII's outreach workers had left the communities. While villagers elected their people's reporter delegates, the radio station's outreach workers sought out a regional institution where
they could hold training sessions. The institution needed to have enough beds for 10 to 20 delegates, adequate classrooms, and a cafeteria or local restaurant to feed all of the delegates. In addition, the workers sought an institution that was geographically central to the invited communities. At the training sessions I attended, we were hosted by a Catholic Church that had a room filled with bunk beds where we all slept. New classrooms with a chalkboard and desks were adequate to handle the 15 participants in the course. The church was in a fairly large rural town, accessible by trucks and buses. Nevertheless, of the 15 participants, 5 arrived on the second day of courses because of the long walks they endured. Once initial contacts had been made, elections conducted, and facilities arranged, the outreach workers announced the dates of training sessions, sometimes by broadcasting them during programs aimed at the campesino audience and occasionally by making a personal visit to the invited communities. I will now turn to the actual work done in the training sessions.

Training People's Reporters

The course for people's reporters that I attended drew 15 participants from Chayanta Province in the northern half of the Department of Potosí. Only one of all the trainees was female—a common distribution pattern of people's reporters that I will discuss more fully below in the section on consequences. Ages of the participants ranged from 20 to 53 years, with a nearly equal number of people in their 20s, 30s, and 40s. Education levels reflected both the lack of schools and the need for children to work in the Bolivian countryside. Half of the participants had not finished primary school, and the other half had between 1 and 4 years of postprimary education. During written exercises at the training session, participants—especially the older ones—struggled with Spanish and made frequent grammatical and orthographic errors. For nine of the participants, this class was the first time they had received training as people's reporters, whereas the remaining members had attended similar classes once or
twice before. The diverse ages, education levels, and training experiences should be kept in mind when examining the classroom activities.

The data from the people's reporters' training classes clustered around four themes: (a) planning, amending, and evaluating; (b) performing; (c) norming; and (d) skilling. I will provide examples of each cluster after giving a brief definition of them:

- Planning, amending, and evaluating--formal steps taken with students to structure, monitor, and judge the classroom activities.
- Performing--activities that explicitly assigned roles, settings, and plot or narrative sequencing in the classroom and during radio production.
- Norming--the ascription of general qualities and characteristics of a variety of phenomena (news, people's reporters) in terms of what they are and what they should be.
- Skilling--the presentation of explicit, concrete, and practical material concerning technical aspects of radio and formal practices of journalists.

**Planning, Amending, and Evaluating**

The participatory spirit with which the people's reporters classes were organized--through existing institutions, by personally visiting villages, by electing representatives--was carried over into the classroom setting. Even though the teachers had an established set of tasks they wished to accomplish within a set period of time, they negotiated the substance and pacing of the course with the students. This was done before any formal training sessions began.

Before introducing any materials, one of the teachers taped a large piece of newsprint on the wall and wrote out "Activity Schedule." He told the students that in the few days of the course they would be covering a wide range of materials and therefore needed to adhere to a schedule. After dialoging with the participants concerning when to get up, length of meals, and the like, he wrote out (drawing on field notes) the following schedule:

7 a.m. breakfast
7:30 a.m. participation on morning radio show
9 a.m. begin classes
10:30 a.m. snack
11 a.m. class activities
12:30 p.m. lunch
1:30 p.m. class activities
3:30 p.m. tea
4 p.m. class activities
6 p.m. dinner
9 p.m. participation on evening radio show.

There were no clocks in the classrooms, and only a few of the participants, besides the teachers, had watches. Nevertheless, we held to the schedule fairly closely. By the middle of the second day I began to notice that the schedule included a lot of eating, as each snack involved a heavy dish prepared at the local restaurant where we always ate. This provoked laughter and an explanation from the teachers, who told me that they had to program five to six meals per day because of the eating routines in rural communities.¹ Although the teachers had come to the course with an activity schedule in mind, they had adapted the pace and content to fit the routines of the participants.

Similarly, the teachers had specific topics to cover in the course, and they listed them on a large sheet of paper: news, identity, institutions, Radio Pío XII, editing, news gathering. They explained a little bit about each item and told the class, "This is just a proposal of what we had been thinking. Perhaps there are other things people would like to add." Indeed, members of the class had some specific suggestions, including concrete examples of reports, how to interview, how to help interviewees overcome fear of participating, how to write news, how to use tape recorders, and a discussion of communication and media. Opening the direction of the course to students was more than a way of determining the group's interests. One of the teachers explained to me that

¹ In rural communities, meals are particularly frequent because peasants enter the fields early in the morning after eating a light breakfast. Mid-morning and mid-afternoon meals are taken before main lunch and dinner. The teachers told me that this eating pattern was due to the bulky but non-nutritious nature of meals, which generally consisted of noodles and potatoes.
it was a mode of forging compromise (a sense of commitment between the students and the activities).

The participants are going to direct the course; this goes with a commitment. They say, "We are going to participate equally, to say that this course is going to do such and such a thing." So we go into it with this idea of setting objectives of what we are going to accomplish during the course. --Manuel J., rural outreach worker at Radio Pfo XII

Just as they were asked to determine the direction of the course at the beginning, the students were also requested to evaluate the training at the end. The teachers used this occasion to get feedback on the course and to measure the students' comprehension of the material that had been presented during the week. The teachers passed out blank sheets of paper to the students and wrote six questions on the board. The first three questions asked about specific course content; the last three were open-ended queries of what the students liked and disliked and their suggestions for the class. All of the answers were read back to the class by the teachers, and I was surprised to learn that the most frequent response to the question, "What did you like most?" was "Being with other people's reporters." Indeed, during the 1-week course the students and teachers did virtually every activity as a group. As already mentioned, we all slept in the same room, ate at the same restaurant, and attended class in one place. At one point I was invited to go to the bathroom with the participants who had established the custom where, as a group, they visited a field at the edge of town after lunch, explicitly rejecting the individual outhouses available at the church. It seemed that just as the eating schedule conformed to the rural customs, so, too had the entire structure of the course been adapted to fit the collectivist values of this population.

In a very formal sense, then, the teachers took steps to incorporate participation at different stages of the training session. I found that many of their less formal communication procedures spoke to the notion of participation, as well.
Performing

One of the most striking procedures that the teachers used to evoke the participation of class members was "performing" within the class and on the air. I classified these experiences as performative because of the explicit assignment of roles, settings, and plot or narrative sequencing.

Prior to our first class sessions, for example, one of the teachers suggested that the students organize an "inauguration." When we gathered in the classroom, the students selected a man who had attended the training courses in the past to facilitate the planning of the inauguration. This man wrote on the chalkboard, "Inauguration Program." He jotted down ideas from the class and took suggestions on what items should be included. One of the class members suggested, for example, that someone from the host town, Macha, speak to the group, pointing out that it is the custom for a host to make visitors feel welcome. By the end of the discussion, the program included the following items: singing of the national anthem, a speech by the representative of the radio, words from the delegate from Macha, a song by Edgar F., a story by Julio S., a greeting by Ramiro C., and an open forum including a greeting by myself and others.

The desks in the room were arranged in a semicircle, and the man who had taken down suggestions acted as the master of ceremonies. As the emcee called on participants, they moved from their desks to the front of the room, as if they were taking center stage of a ceremony being performed for a larger audience. As each person moved through his or her assigned part, one of the instructors followed with a tape recorder, which heightened the performative sensation. The participants moved through the ceremony with ease as if they were accustomed to such formalities. One of the teachers told me later that such performances are a common part of Bolivian education:

Well, how can I explain this to you. This comes from the Bolivian education system. The whole national education system has come with small things like this, built into the national curriculum and found in the communities now, as
well. As long as these things have happened, generation after generation, the
people have had the custom of accompanying any little thing with a special act,
an inaugural act. For example, if a school is built, or a hall is built, well, the
locals oblige the teacher with the question, "When do we inaugurate it?" So, this
has been included in our work. --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío
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The other teacher agreed with this assessment but took it one step further, arguing that
formal inaugurations are an importatnt part of indigenous practices that date back to
preconquest customs:

Fine, like I said, the native way, whenever we get ready to do something is to
begin, not with speeches, not with words, but with the ch'alla [ch'alla is a native
term for a ceremonious offering to the pachamama (mother earth), usually of an
alcoholic beverage at the beginning of a festival, workday, construction project,
or at the dedication of a new building]. We always begin our work with our
ch'allita (the diminutive form of ch'alla) so that everything goes well for us. --
Manuel J., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

This observation reinforced a claim I have made elsewhere in this chapter: that
the procedures used to enact participation in the people's reporters program were often
adaptive to native customs, rhythms, and conditions. In this case, the teacher
demonstrated an awareness of deep-rooted traditions, like the ch'alla, in thinking about
the inaugural ceremony. The practice of staging an inauguration, then, was more than a
mere copying of an institutional habit; it reached into the historic custom of initiating or
inaugurating any special project in the Bolivian culture.

Understood as a syncretic action of precolonial and modern forms, the inaugural
performance fostered a degree of continuity between communal and mass media
practices. That is, performing allowed the participants to transcend their rural origins
and gain their new place as people's reporters in a fashion that smoothed over the many
peculiarities and contradictions in the two experiences. Yet the teachers also used the
syncretic inauguration as place to highlight some of the contradictions swept up and
incorporated into the performance. As the class developed the program, for example,
one of the teachers questioned the incorporation of the national anthem, its author, and
who it served. He explained his reasoning behind this intervention after the classes had ended:

The way they sang the national anthem is something that is very Bolivian and all. This is also a problem of the national education system, and is not of us proper, not of the natives. We natives did not participate in the crafting of the national anthem. . . . So we who work in popular education and in popular communication, we try to challenge this as not the greatest, the best, the national anthem. We can suggest that they, as natives, have every right to say, "This is not a good part of the inauguration for me," or "We can create a native's anthem," right? Just like the Huipala [a native people's flag that is used widely in Bolivia] has been created. --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

The practice of performing the inaugural act, then, was not only a way of achieving continuity and transcendence, but it was also a way of providing a place to question, challenge, and critique specific cultural assumptions. The critique also led to the suggestion of an alternative inaugural event--a native anthem--which was rejected for the moment, but may have been important to future actions. In fact, the explanation cited above went on to note that the closing ceremony, which was nearly identical to the inaugural performance, did not include a singing of the national anthem.

Aside from performing in the classroom, the trainers used this strategy with the radio transmitter, as well. We had carried with us a car battery as a power source and a shortwave transceiver with which we could establish contact with the radio station each morning and night. All of the people's correspondents were familiar with the dispatches filed from the training courses, as they had heard them broadcast many times before on the two daily programs aimed at the rural audience. When we set up the equipment, then, no one puzzled over its purpose. Rather, the participants, young and old, novice and experienced, lined up to send a greeting to their home communities. Students who had been reticent to talk in class were not spared from this activity but were pushed into a single-file line leading up to the microphone, which was held by one of the teachers who introduced each participant. As each person took a turn sending a greeting to the audience, a small group huddled around a nearby radio we used to monitor the
transmission of the program. The introduction of each participant was long and enthusiastic. Laughter and chatter among the program hosts in the studio back in Siglo XX, along with musical interludes, punctuated the pauses between the introductions of the participants. The choreography of introductions, people's reporters greetings, music, and commentary left little doubt that the students at this training session were important cast members of the morning and evening shows. One of the teachers told me that the participants expected to be put on the air as a way of validating their own sense of participation and of establishing a connection with their home communities:

They participate on the radio and the people listen. Wherever you go, those taking a course will ask you, just as you have seen here. "We better do it [go on the air]. We have to make ourselves feel, we have to say that we are here. How are the people going to know if we are here or not?" --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

Performing was an important pedagogical, as well as media, procedure. It was a simple and dynamic way of fostering participation while drawing on existing cultural practices such as the "inauguration." At the same time, it led to critical and reflective moments, as potentially alien practices--such as singing the national anthem--were mindlessly incorporated into the performances. Finally, performing created a dynamic that pulled in even the most frightened and reticent participants, thus helping to calm nerves and bolster confidence. Not all classroom practices were as dynamic as those named above. Nevertheless, even when more traditional pedagogical approaches were used, the tasks in the training sessions incorporated substantial student participation.

Norming

After the students had established a schedule and determined the curriculum with the teachers, formal classroom instruction began. About half of the classroom activities constituted norming, that is, communication procedures that in effect defined the general qualities and characteristics of a variety of phenomena in terms of what they were and what they should be. These activities constituted nothing less than discovering
themselves, inventing communication, defining journalism, and creating comunicación popular (people's communication).²

For example, one of the first sessions dealt with historical identity by putting the question to the class, "What are our roots?" The topic was unexpected for me as I had anticipated most of the instruction to focus on practical skills related to radio practice. After the classes had ended, one of the teachers explained the reasons for attending to the students' background:

Well it is necessary to know your identity because there are times when if you don't know yourself well and if you don't analyze your historic past--where we come from, where our roots are from--then it is impossible to grow. --Manuel J., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

Thinking back to chapter four (theories of communication and social change), we can see that this practitioner was putting forth a sequential understanding of how transformation occurs, a process in which historical awareness was considered a critical condition for growth.³ In this particular session, the teachers employed predetermined communication procedures to achieve this historical awareness. The predetermined procedure they used was to lecture information at the students with very little feedback or interaction with them. The lecture was conducted primarily in Quechua, but I wrote down the words in Spanish that were interjected verbally or written down periodically. They included the following words and phrases:

² The use of the word "popular" refers to things of the people, from the grass-roots, not to things emanating from the culture industries. For a terse explication of this sense of the popular, see White (1980).

³ Recall that in chapter four, social change was theorized in two ways: the sequential perspective (change understood as occurring in a predictable, controllable, and evolutionary succession of steps) and the emergent perspective (change was in the process of becoming, a process without predictable order, sequence, or direction). These views ran parallel with two kinds of communication procedures: predetermined procedures (given, constitutive, predefined notions and prescriptions of situations and actions) and alternative procedures (dynamic and fluid understandings of situations and actions causing alterations to communication actions making them different without changing into something else).
Chullpas>>>Aymaras, Incas>>>Quechuas, somewhat socialist; 1492--
Spaniards, domination; rapists, ambitious, violent; he who has money, has
justice; for the poor, there is no justice; for the poor, there is jail; who makes the
laws?, the magistrates; then we have to use this [media]; quite a bit of
exploitation and domination.

The teachers seemed to have provided a two-dimensional, essentialist view of
historical identity, with the good, socialist Chulpa-Inca roots and the evil Spanish
domination. During my fieldwork I suggested that this perspective was but a caricature
of both the Indians and Europeans that ran the danger of promoting mindless and
romantic nativism. The teachers responded to my interpretation as follows:

If we make the technological advances of the radio seem like the greatest thing
that ever was, then we would be continuing to step on the Andean culture. We
are valuing it. The objective is to raise the value of the culture based on native
media [referring to the Chasqui, precolonial messengers]. --Quiroga V., rural
outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

Sure I agree with this [the author's suggestion], but not entirely. But finally,
when we talk about the identity, it's that man, the Aymara-Quechua man, has
always had, as we said, his own communication media. We Bolivians, as
Aymaras, as people of this blood that we are, we cannot trample on these things.
Rather, we have to admire these good things that the Aymara and Quecha had.
But admire the Spaniards, with the kind of people they were?... Our culture
was held back by them. In those times, there were advances, possibilities of one
day arriving at technological advancements in our own language, in Aymara or
Quecha. But with the help of the Spaniards--we have had their culture, their
language, their ways imposed on us--we, the Aymaras and Quechuas, have been
left with displeasure. --Manuel J., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

In a sense, their responses did not refute my observation that the picture of the historical
identity they presented was a two-dimensional oversimplification. Nevertheless, they
rejected my suggestion that this presentation should be otherwise. From their
perspective, the two-dimensional lecture was the best way to raise historical awareness.
From their perspective, the Spanish conquest was a totalitarian imposition and attempted
obliteration of language, culture, and identity. Their response was a totalizing projection
of social and cultural norms at their students.

Norming historical identity was the only example of totalizing projections of
reality that I experienced in the classroom. Other norming activities drew on student
conceptions of the world when constructing understandings of communication, news, and people's reporters. In these norming activities, the instructors wrote on the chalkboard, "What is communication?" and "What should a people's reporter be like?" Rather than lecturing the appropriate responses, however, the teachers divided the class into three small groups, and gave each group a large sheet of newsprint on which to record their answers. Groups were asked to present their thoughts to the whole class and the teachers commented on each one, weaving their own views into those of the students.

In responding to "What is communication?" students recorded numerous definitions that were repeated from group to group. The patterns that emerged in the responses are evident in these samples taken from their papers:

- Communication is where the community comes together to tell about the needs of the community.
- The search for justice, equality, kindness. Expression of the marginalized poor. Respect for our cultures, people, and community.
- Communication is an art of expressing or informing the feelings of a people or person toward each other, events across time and space.

The patterns that I found across the descriptions reflected communal ideals of working together, not in isolation, for goals of social justice. As in the theories in chapter four, communication here was never neutral, but always informed by its relation to oppression and liberation. During this activity of norming communication, the students conducted the entire session by delegating a representative to explain and expand on the group's description in front of the class. The teachers taped each group's sheet of newsprint on the walls of the room; I noticed that between formal sessions, students copied the information from the sheets into the notebooks that they took home with them. This practice of copying from the sheets hung around the room was followed for every activity involving the large sheets of paper.
In another norming activity, the teachers asked students to describe the qualities of a people's reporter. Again, the students worked in groups with large sheets of newsprint and developed these norms, which I include in their entirety:

The people's reporter should be honest, credible, well known, active, impartial, responsible, investigative, neutral, in solidarity, apolitical, respectful, participatory. The reporter should know how to read and write, edit news, understand, speak the truth, run a meeting, record, organize, research, correct. The reporter should send news, mobilize people, look for news, tell the news, help with union activities, help with festivals, visit institutions and authorities, listen to the news, inform self on what's going on, know the community, visit the schools, give guidance, know the communal works going on, know the cultures of the area, make known the issues in rural communities and customs, denounce injustices and announce justices, announce good and pleasant things.

The resulting list was wide ranging and filled with contradictions. The norms of people's reporting seemed to fall into two competing kinds of journalism, as summarized in Table 9. On the one hand, the teachers and students seemed to adopt mainstream beliefs and values (recorded in the first column), leaving the impression that they viewed themselves as independent, objective reporters. Yet the more extensive listing of qualities (in the second column) projected a very different kind of journalist, one that was an interdependent subject in society.

Table 9. Summary of people's reporters norms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional Journalism (^a)</th>
<th>Activist Journalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>credibility, impartiality, neutrality, apolitical, investigative, skilled, report truth</td>
<td>well-known, active, responsible, in solidarity, respectful, participatory, understanding, able to mobilize, organize, run meetings, help with festivals, give guidance, denounce injustices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Not all norms were included in the table, but only those providing contrast. Overlapping norms excluded from the table were honest, record, research, and correct.

The tension between these competing journalistic was discussed in the class.

One of the teachers suggested that context would determine when certain values applied to the work of the people's reporters:

The people's reporter cannot be neutral when he is with his people. He cannot be centralist--here are the poor, here are the rich. When there is an injustice, the
people's reporter should be there in solidarity. When it comes to political parties, there he should be neutral. --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

In this case, the teacher focused on the substantive contextual marker of political parties, which, in fact, are a current source of tension and division within the campesino movement. This explanation might be read on a higher level of abstraction, however, as being directed toward situations involving internal versus external differences. Thinking back to the kinds of differences that emerged across settings noted in chapter five, this explanation seems to speak to those arising within groups and those in opposition or in reaction to the group. Here the practitioner seemed to be prescribing traditional journalistic norms of neutrality and impartiality when coping with external differences but suggesting activist behaviors when dealing with differences internal to the group.

Before completing this session, the teachers asked the students to think about themselves in relation to the criteria that they had collectively developed. One of the teachers prodded the students, saying, "Is this us? Do we have these qualities? You've been elected by your communities, so you must have some of them." The students each shared stories of how they had been elected, naming some of the characteristics that qualified them to be the representatives of their communities. This constituted, in effect, a reflective procedure requiring students to get outside of themselves to see if they measured up to the characteristics that they had determined.

The training given to people's reporters included a number of activities that I have conceptualized as norming. The teachers spent a considerable amount of time determining the group's identity, their understanding of communication and news, and their thoughts regarding their roles as people's reporters. Each of these activities was approached using different communication strategies: lecture, group activity, commentary, self-reflection. Yet taken as a whole, I have conceptualized them all as norming actions: prescribing identities, defining communication, inventing selves as
people's reporters, and reflecting on that invention through personal questioning. These activities gave the training sessions something of an existentialist sensation, but the course was not devoid of practical tasks, which I will turn to next.

**Skilling**

Up to this point I have described communication procedures used in the training sessions that in and of themselves were often highly participatory. Yet a host of other activities that were more traditional and linear were also used. I have gathered these practices under the umbrella procedure of skilling. These activities did not draw much on the students' experiences or opinions. Rather, the teachers presented material that was explicit, concrete, and practical concerning technical aspects of radio and formal practices of journalists.

Early in the morning on our initial day of class, the students received their first radio skill. The teachers dragged a car battery and a large, wooden case into the courtyard of the church that was hosting the course. The wooden case held the transceiver, cables, a walkie-talkie, antenna, and assorted tools. The teachers told the students that we were going to establish contact with Radio Pío XII via the transceiver, but that it needed an antenna raised as high as possible in order to send and receive signals successfully. A number of tools and building materials were scattered around the church courtyard, and the students used them to hoist the antenna high atop a wooden post. Because there was no shovel to dig a hole, the students held the post in place by piling boulders around its base. While some of the students were busy stringing up the antenna, another group gathered around the radio and learned how to hook it up to its power source: a car battery. Throughout these hands-on activities the teachers talked informally, explaining how the transceiver worked, what frequencies and bands were, who typically spoke on which bands and at what time, and how the power source worked. Between explanations the teachers scanned the frequencies and shouted into the
microphone, "chunka, chunka, chunka" (the Quechua word for 10), which was the code that identified Radio Pío XII.

Because Bolivia is a poor country with no telephones in rural towns, many institutions used shortwave transceivers every day. They had regular times and band locations for establishing contact with other institutions, including the radio station. While trying to establish contact with their home station, the teachers often had conversations with churches, nongovernmental agencies (NGOs), and other institutions that worked in Potosí. These informal, hands-on skills gave the students practical experience of potential use in their surrounding communities, while furthering their knowledge of institutions in the region. Hooking up the transceiver, twisting the dial around the different frequencies, and speaking in the codes recognized by the stations occurred every morning and every evening, giving all the students the opportunity to explore the technology.

In addition to direct, hands-on experience, the teachers used more traditional methods of building reporting and writing skills of the students. For example, one session was devoted to the topic of news sources. The teachers did this by surveying the students regarding different institutions that were active in the province. The teachers wrote on the chalkboard, "Our Institutions in the Province." They asked students to name the different institutions that worked with indigenous communities in Chayanta Province in the Department of Potosí. The students brainstormed 18 different institutions--only two of which were state agencies--reflecting the enormous importance of NGOs for social programs (literacy, health, forestation) in Bolivia. After listing all of the institutions, the teachers directed a discussion, giving each student an opportunity to tell about personal experiences with any of the NGOs. The session generated one of the most heated discussions of all the exercises conducted in the classroom all week.
Nearly all of the discussion was conducted in Quechua, but the occasional use of Spanish allowed me to follow the themes. Each person shared disappointing and satisfying experiences with the various organizations. Each person brought a unique perspective and storehouse of information to bear on the different institutions and how they functioned in the province. Several students noted that many of the NGOs were at the service of political parties, which were using the institutions for electoral gains. Others questioned whether or not the reporters should be aligned with any institutions and/or political parties. One student even accused the radio workers of being partial toward the leftist Movimiento Bolivia Libre (Free Bolivia Movement party) and censoring rural reports that were critical of them, a charge that was vehemently denied by the teachers. One of the older reporters in the class launched into a lengthy discussion of one political party's use of such an institution and concluded, "and the campesinos, we're just the same; we are just a step for them." His conclusion, that politicians viewed campesinos as nothing more than steps on the way to a higher office, captured the level of consciousness that was raised in this otherwise straightforward presentation of potential news sources.

The most conventional treatment of journalistic skills, however, concerned the writing and editing of news. The teachers passed out forms that they wanted the people's reporters to use in the field. Across the top of the paper were the words "Date Sent," "Date Received," "Name," "Cantón" (district), and "Ayllu," each followed by a blank space. Underneath those blanks were the words "Who," "What," "Where," "When," "Why," "How," and a series of blank lines, reproducing the standard journalistic narrative format. It seemed like the teachers had merely reproduced a vertical format in their attempt to create horizontal communication. But one of the teachers explained how they came to use the 5 Ws and H format:
One cannot always get 100% of what someone said. You can't write down 100%. The reporter goes around with his notebook and takes down the key points. That's why we have put this down there: we reinforce the elements that a news item should have. This functions as the base. So what is happening with a general meeting, who was there, such and such a person, when, how, where? Really these are the principle things. This is the base on which people have been able to explain, they've done it in this manner. --Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

In evaluating the use of this journalistic recipe one must remember that people's reporters had minimal schooling and struggled with the Spanish language. Furthermore, the Radio Pío XII training was a rapid-fire course involving many topics and skills. The bare bones, 5 Ws and H recipe was a simple, concrete formula that the reporters could grasp quickly and implement in the field. Because of its simplicity and concreteness--being printed at the top of every news form--the 5 Ws and H format was a valuable tool for increasing the participation of this sector in the radio station's programming.

Indeed, the procedure of skilling the people's reporters served the larger aim of fomenting campesino participation at the station. Moreover, the kinds of skills were particularly well suited to the context and conditions experienced in the countryside. A skill such as setting up a transceiver was likely to be of use in the rural reaches of Bolivia. Furthermore, the direct contact with the nuts and bolts of antennas, radios, and power sources demystified this modern technology and provided students with the mechanics of broadcasting. The exercises in determining regional sources of news, likewise, were highly relevant to the rural context, as reflected in the energized discussion during the session. Because the topic was of high salience to the students, it seemed to be more than a mere predetermined listing of area institutions. By tapping these institutions though a brainstorming exercise, followed by an evaluative procedure grounded in the students' experiences, this skill took on the quality of monitoring the environment and evaluating institutional practices that could be used even as institutions disappeared and were replaced. As such it was much more valuable than a mere listing
and description of institutions that might be regular sources of news. Finally, even the most traditional training session of the week--the provision of the news writing formula--was responsive skilling inasmuch as it answered to the circumstances marking rural life.

All of these skills were aimed at making the people's reporters regular contributors to the station. Whether or not they were successful is the subject of the final section of this chapter.

Consequences

As mentioned earlier, the people's reporters program was completing its second year while I conducted my fieldwork. Over those 2 years, the rural outreach workers running the program had kept complete archives of contributions from people's reporters, communities visited, and courses conducted. I used this archive and interviews with four of the people's reporters to determine the consequences of this program for the radio station and the rural participants. This section is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on material consequences documented in the archive at Radio Pío XII and augmented with interviews with the rural outreach workers of the station. The second part tries to ascertain the consequences for the rural communities by drawing on interviews with four people's reporters who talked to me about their experiences.

Documented Consequences in the Archive

In its 2-year life, the people's reporters program touched 80 communities through personal and multiple visits of Radio Pío XII's rural outreach workers. They explained to me that they worked in 3-month cycles in which they could visit all 80 communities. The cycle would then be repeated with some minor adjustments. For most of the rural communities, this meant that a Radio Pío XII representative contacted them up to four times a year. Communities that were extremely isolated, such as those
requiring a 9-hour walk from the nearest road, were visited less often, perhaps only once a year. The outreach workers always replenished supplies—paper, envelopes, pens—and questioned the reporters about problems they might be having with the job. The workers told me that these visits were crucial to the success of the program because the people’s reporters needed regular encouragement and support.

One of the biggest difficulties facing the rural outreach workers was recruiting women as people’s reporters. As I already mentioned, reporters were elected by their communities; these elections infrequently produced female representatives. Of the 180 reporters that the station had trained in 2 years, only 30 (16%) were women. Even so, this figure is deceptively high. After receiving training, women faced gender expectations in their communities—household chores, child-raising duties, and farming tasks—that precluded them from being active participants. The force of history in determining these gender roles was not lost on the Radio Pío XII workers, who were keenly aware of this problem and were struggling to change it:

Yes, this is a problem. We have recognized this already. I don’t know where this problem comes from. It’s just that in all the courses we have given, it’s always the same: participation is practically 100% men. We have tried to push for more participation of women. But in the campesino sector of society, women don’t open up very well when put together with men in the same course. I don’t know what it is. There’s always this sense that men know more, women don’t know. Or women have a better sense of the home. How many times have we talked about this, family communication, personal communication in the family, communal communication, organizational communication. So there are instances, categories, where the woman has participation—in the home. She has more influence. But men have more influence in the communal where more decisions are made. This is what it is in these courses. Even though we have demanded more participation of women, we haven’t seen very much participation. —Quiroga V., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío XII

Although we could call this a social problem, this traces back to our roots, since our grandparents. Back then women were considered unimportant. It was always men, well machismo [masculine quality], paternalistic, men were always considered more important. That’s why little by little through a slow process of change we are breaking these things coming from our history. Women always were relegated to care for animals back then. And in the education of the children, they always sent boys, but less often girls, to school. "Why send the girls? This won’t do us any good; she is going to live with her husband." . . .
There were other factors, too. For example, when women are married, there are
times when the husband will not let her participate. She has her babies and no
one to leave them with. Another obligation is her husband--she must work and
cook for him. So, in situations like that, she cannot participate in courses. But
little by little people are becoming aware and we are moving toward changes and
rights between men and women. --Manuel J., rural outreach worker at Radio Pío
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There was a shared sense among both of these workers that times were changing for the
better for women. Their optimism was tempered, however, by their recognition of the
complexity and enrootedness of the problem, which manifested itself during my field
observations. Of the 15 participants at the course I attended, only 1 was female. She
was a resident in the town where the training was being held and attended sporadically
as her obligations allowed. Another woman had been elected by her community to
receive training but was prohibited from attending the course by her husband for many
of the reasons mentioned above.

A review of the stories sent to the station from 1992-1993 confirmed my
suspicion that the number of women trained as people's reporters was misleadingly
high. The station received an average of 35 news items from rural towns each month,
with a total of 420 dispatches for the year beginning September 1992. I carefully read
the most recent 50 items sent to the station as of October 1993, noting the sex of the
reporter and content of the report. Of the 50 items, 3 were sent by women (6%), 46 by
men (92%), and 1 was not legible. Glancing through the remaining 370 reports for the
year, this proportion appeared representative, giving a more accurate portrayal of the
level of participation of women.

The 50 most recent news items that I examined indicated the kinds of issues that
were commonly featured by people's reporters (Table 10). Two kinds of stories--
development projects and organizing efforts--accounted for 62% of all reports.
Development projects included accounts of nutrition classes, literacy training,
construction-planning sessions, electrification delays, water and sewer inaugurations, and crop-planting activities.

Table 10. People's reporters contributions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Story</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development Projects</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing Efforts</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Festivals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Politics</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Natural Disasters</td>
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They also included announcements of programs, criticisms of projects promised but not delivered by agencies, and demands for attention from regional government offices and NGOs. The following examples illustrate development news reports and provide a sense of what life is like in the countryside:

In the cantón of Rancho Grande in the province of Chayanta, there are many children with intestinal parasites. Alfredo Juanquina, health worker of the cantón, said that the health office will hold treatments on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday of this week. Parents are invited to bring their children to the medical center of Rancho Grande for this treatment. --People's reporter contribution, October 29, 1993

The residents of San Juan de Arrozpata are concerned about the lack of potable water. There are a number of persons who are sick; they are vomiting and have diarrhea. The residents are calling on the institutions that work in the Province of Chayanta, especially Yacupaj, to help out with the installation of potable water in the town of San Juan de Arrozpata. --People's reporter contribution, October 28, 1993

Reports of organizing efforts focused on grass-roots groups, such as campesino unions, neighborhood committees, and parent associations. They included accounts of meetings and projects, as well as calls to action. The following samples illustrate rural issues and actions:
• A new section has been added to the campesino union to work more closely with the community of Qollpa K'asa.

• The campesino union will hold a meeting to discuss the construction of classrooms in the community of Charca because there is a shortage of space at the school.

• The Aylu of Pocoata decided to reconstruct a colonial temple using its own resources.

• The Federation of Neighborhood Associations (Fejuve) of Llallagua met to discuss overcharges in electricity bills and decided that residents should withhold payments.

Obviously there was some degree of overlap between development and organizing, as many development reports mobilized social actors and many organizing efforts aimed to build up some aspect of the infrastructure. I distinguished these two groupings by whether or not they involved a governmental or nongovernmental organization as the catalyst (development) or a grass-roots group as the driving force (organizing). In both groupings, people's reporters used the radio to inform, criticize, and mobilize.

The other kinds of contributions operated in much the same way as the development reports and organizing efforts. For example, contributions that focused on local festivals both reported on activities held in specific towns and called on people to contribute in various ways to upcoming events. Likewise, contributions on local politics reported the activities of local officials and rallied people to participate in the civilian political process. The final kinds of items people's reporters focused on were disasters, crime, accidents, and sports—the effects of things such as droughts, vandalism, accidental deaths, and soccer tournaments.

Whereas the archive provided a good sense of the flow, sources, and content of contributions from people's reporters, it only hinted at the value of this program for the rural communities. Interviews with people's reporters themselves were useful for revealing the meaning that this project had for individuals and their communities.
Consequences Derived from Interviews

At the people's reporters training course that I attended, I interviewed four students toward the end of the week, once rapport had been established between us. I selected the reporters based primarily on their experience. As I already mentioned, of the 15 students, 9 had never been trained before and the remainder had attended classes once or twice in the past. I wanted to talk to those who had been trained at least once, as they were the only students with experience as working reporters. By doing this I learned not only about how this program intersected with community life but also about the utility of their training. I have used excerpts from these interviews and presented each source below by pseudonym and town.

Across the interviews, people's reporters referred to their formal training as having direct benefits. The very concrete 5 Ws and H format that was introduced as a concrete skill was mentioned by several reporters as a tool used in gathering information. The following account shows how one reporter approached the renovation of a colonial church in his town:

When I saw the construction, I went to the parish priest of the town and did an interview with him. The parish priest gave me the answers in accordance with the seven questions I should use, right, the what, who, how, when, where, why, what for. This is the way I get the news. --Julio S., people's reporter from Pocoata

Related to the 5 Ws and H format were the editing skills introduced and practiced in the class. I noticed at the station that most of the contributions from people's reporters contained numerous structural errors that were edited into a fairly uniform format that the rural outreach workers introduced in the training sessions. I wondered if this did not squelch the voice of the reporters and in a way devalue their contributions. Yet one reporter talked about the editing in a positive way, as something that helped with the difficulty of writing in Spanish and contributed to the solution of problems:
At times we have difficulties that are corrected. When people from the cities listen to the news on the radio, it has been corrected. Sometimes they correct us and we find solutions to our problems. --Leo C., people's reporter from Tatan Cachi

In addition to those concrete skills, the more abstract, normative training was mentioned as having value in the everyday practice of people's reporters:

Personally, for me, I've never had doubts or questions because I have always known how a reporter should operate: with care, with honesty, with all, you know, responsibility. The way a reporter should be. So I have never had an anxious time. I have become a good reporter, in my view, because I have followed through on my mission just the way they have taught us. --Edgar F., people's reporter from Tacarani

This reporter was referring to the norming and self-reflecting exercises that examined the qualities of a good reporter. In addition to these very specific references, there was a shared sense that continued training in general was important to the people's reporters program:

This is how, in part, we are guided in our work, you know. We are still not professionals in this field. So for that reason . . . of course we have had, in this case, the first days of training as people's reporters. So difficulties arise because we are not professionals. We haven't been trained in this field of social communication. We have had to suffer. We have suffered with respect to editing. So there is where we have to put our focus. We have to climb up one step at a time, successively. Even though we are all climbing right now, this will be up to each reporter according to his drive. That's how it is, one has to learn, one has to develop. --Julio S., people's reporter from Pocoata

The view expressed in this passage confirmed many of the ideas and practices of the people's reporter program: repeated visits to communities, continual training, a focus on skills. In short, the long-range view of the teachers seemed to be shared in part by the practitioners.

Aside from consequences related to the training sessions, the people's reporters talked about the important outcome of overcoming isolation and of linking with regional institutions and other campesinos living in similar conditions. The importance of linking with other people was an important strategy and was related to the severe isolation and poverty of the campesino communities, as one of the reporters explained:
Here in Chayanta province, here in Bolivia, we are very backward precisely because of economic scarcity. Here in Bolivia we campesinos are not developed. More accurately we are very poor. . . . We always live far away, where [dirt] highways do not reach our community. We walk from 10 kilometers, from 15 kilometers to get to the highway. It is always difficult for us because we have to climb up and down hills on eroded pathways. This is always a difficulty for us. . . . So we have always asked for help, and asking always yields something, right. We always ask because you never know what will come your way. --Carlos V., people's reporter from Zotorá

Linking with other institutions resulted from a variety of factors. At times, it seemed that sheer tenacity--asking repeatedly for help--was responsible for successfully linking to an area agency:

As it turns out, this [Tacarani] is a forgotten town. No one remembers us. Not the government, or the regional or departmental authorities. Even the authorities from the cantón. They don't worry about us. They only look out for personal interests. So, it turns out that this time I sent out a news item indicating that in the town there were several illnesses going around. Illnesses of children and of the elderly, too. So using the radio, I called on the health officials to come to our town to see the health of the people, and on this occasion I achieved it. I had to send reports three or four times back then, but I finally got them. The workers from the health department of Potosí came and vaccinated people and looked in on the health of the people. --Edgar F., people's reporter from Tacarani

Appeals for such assistance were not unusual. In fact, one of the contributions cited in the preceding section--the one referring to the need for potable water--was a direct call for assistance to a regional NGO In the cases mentioned above, repeated calls met with some degree of success. Rallying assistance was not always so difficult, however, as the radio station itself was connected to a number of institutions and facilitated linkages between them and the campesino communities.

The work on our behalf is always done with Pío XII. We are working right now, for example with an institution, I.P.T.K., and we have other institutions that work with Pío XII to vaccinate animals, which they are doing at the moment. For a long time now we have worked on all of these needs in the countryside. --Carlos V., people's reporter from Zotorá

Finally, the people's reporters' contributions may have had an impact on actions in other campesino communities with similar problems. One of the reporters I interviewed believed that successful experiences in one town could serve as an example and impetus
for another town. He viewed the radio as important in establishing this link between isolated communities and expressed a value in sharing success stories with others:

We benefited from building antiparasite baths for the livestock. And our news reaches the entire country. In light of that, I think we need to let loose more news of work that is always occurring in agriculture and livestock. . . . This is the biggest need, in my opinion, in the isolated town. It is a great benefit, the antiparasite bath. Of course, focusing on that shows other isolated communities that they, too, can build an antiparasite bath like ours. The construction that benefited us can benefit other communities, as well, in isolated towns that can construct the same kinds of baths. --Carlos V., people's reporter from Zotora

In discussing experiences as people's reporters, the students largely talked about news as interconnected with community life. With the exception of one reporter, they did not talk about their reports as discrete entities with a life independent of what was happening in their communities. I became aware of this inability, unwillingness, or refusal to separate "news stories" from everyday life immediately in our interviews, though I did not understand what was happening at the time. I recall that when I asked the students to think of a specific time in their work as people's reporters that was valuable or important for any reason, they responded with either a jumble of life events or an in-depth account of something that had occurred in the community. I include here the responses of three interviewees to my first interview question to demonstrate the inextricably intertwined nature of news and community life:

These [news contributions] result from the community in the countryside, the neighbors, and from families. Also from the number of animal illnesses, natural disasters because of the rain and freezes. These are the principal ones. . . . There would be others, too, important news also about the truck drivers and the roads, the things that happen in the rainy season [like impassable highways]. These would be the main ones. Also, as happens sometimes, there are no medics here because they are in faraway communities. For this reason people have died. . . . Also there have been [garbled] about animals, terrible, I had 80 [sheep] and 30 got it, weakened and died. But there were some people, some people who came out all right, bathing their animals during this drought, feeding them to save them from borreria. That's why the animals were nearly wiped out. Only when the rains came did they revive. --Leo C., people's reporter from Tatan Cachi

The important news that we've sent ourselves, but our notes that have been used by Pío XII that are focused on what has happened in our towns. We always use them in order to support our people, in order to make demands to meet the needs
of what is lacking for the towns. Also, regarding construction projects or anything, you know. . . . Yes, like at this time in our town we have built an--with an agricultural institution--an antiparasite bath. So that was put on [the radio]. This has gone, this was put on. . . . This was news because the work that took place, we have constructed. According to [the teachers] this is a construction, a public work for the community. We put the news on the air and it was good. --Carlos V., people's reporter from Zotora

Well, there was a time, for example, I could tell you about last year. Back then, for example, there were problems with education. My town, Tacarani, it turns out that there was a teacher, Felipe Ocoro Plaza, and it turns out that this man--we don’t know the motives--but according to the people and my own research he lived in a place called Tacarani Pampa. Well it turns out that the rain, a natural disaster, created a flood. There is a river, the Urupikiri, and it turns out that the river overflowed its banks. Everything was hit. His house was soaked and it was ruined. Well, this guy worked in Tacarani as the teacher. He had his yard, his animals, everything, and all of it was ruined. He abandoned the town and abandoned the school, making false charges [that parents no longer sent their children to class] to the regional supervisors and to the local directorate, which then took away our school. --Edgar F., people's reporter from Tacarani

In all three of the instances above, the reporters alluded to reports of news, but never as discrete entities with detailed characteristics of their own. It was difficult for me to get the respondents to talk about a media experience as something unto itself. Rather, the reports were subordinate to the lives of the towns and difficult to pull apart from the grounded experiences of floods, sicknesses, construction projects, and the like.

Community life drove the news for these reporters, as illustrated by one explanation of the evolution of a specific report of a school being taken away from a town:

Well, all of the parents of every town, in this case we are talking about Tacarani, they are always on the lookout, you know. Let’s say the school is not opening. Then they call a meeting and from this meeting, everyone knows what’s going on with the school, why it’s not opening. . . . Since they trust me, they all know me, even in the surrounding towns, they let me know. . . . And I look into their charges. --Edgar F., people’s reporter from Tacarani

Despite this overwhelming pattern of understanding news as interwoven with community experiences, one reporter did talk about his work in a detached way. He may have been pushed into this position by the structure of my questionnaire, but nevertheless he talked about his media experiences as discrete entities:
The work of a people's reporter is to go in search of important news and to make an oppressed people speak. This would be the work, so my duty, as a people's reporter, is to go out in search of news. Doing this, I discovered this news item. I found the news that the temple was being worked on by bricklayers, work contracted by the parish of the town. Seeing this, I went of course to find the parish priest of the town and did an interview with him. --Julio S., people's reporter from Pocoata

In the following case, the reporter saw the news report as an independent item that could do something for the town:

Of course this was helpful because perhaps on the national level now, everyone knows about this temple from the colonial period, which has been declared a national monument. Who made this known? The people's reporter. So now the whole town feels the pride of having in town a very important temple of art and culture. At the same time, the temple may act as a tourist attraction, bringing people from other countries, because it is from the colonial period. --Julio S., people's reporter from Pocoata

In contrast, the other reporters conceptualized news as something done with town. In fact, one reporter actually determined "the truth" of a news story in conjunction with people in the community:

In this case, I also asked the teacher, "How is it, sir, that you have acted in such a manner?" Well, the teacher told me, "No. That is a lie." So I reported in the direction that it was the teacher who was to blame for the closing of the school of Tacarani. He had instructed the parents not to send their children to school, and they complied with his instructions. Then he went and falsely claimed that there was no attendance, which led to the school being closed. The radio put this denuncia [censure] on the air, the report was aired, and the teacher, on hearing it, scolded me, "This is a lie," but I had the proof. --Edgar F., people's reporter from Tacarani

In this case, news was not only conceptualized as intertwined with community life, it was actualized in conjunction with townspeople. Important decisions, such as deciding the "direction" that a report should take, were determined in conjunction with a group of social actors, not in isolation by an expertly trained reporter.

Just as news itself was conceptualized as intimately connected to the lived experiences of a community, the value of being a people's reporter was related to material outcomes of their efforts that affected people's lives. All of the examples that the journalists chose to talk about emphasized some material gain or important change in
the environment. These gains, of course, were most likely tied to a community project, such as building antiparasite baths or restoring a temple. These local gains were often a long time coming:

School in Tacarani was suspended for a year. This was the fault of the teacher. However, we have fought and it turns out that the school was once again opened. And the teacher, from that point on, has never come back to the town, in spite of the fact that he is from the town. --Edgar F., people's reporter from Tacarani

Although material outcomes in the community were the dominant ones the reporters talked about, changes were also related to practices at the radio. In one case, the programming at the station changed in response to news contributions from a people's reporter:

In sending a note to the station, the radio changes, too, with communication that tells us how to overcome illnesses. That's the way it is, at least for now. Before, there were not these kind of results, neither help against illnesses nor radio programs like this, dealing with illnesses. --Leo C., people's reporter from Tatan Cachi

In this reporter's view, sending a note did change the material conditions in his community, but it also had an impact on the radio station. This is an important observation for it indicates that Radio Pío XII was not just taking from the communities but actually was using the reporters as a way to change its own practice.

Drawing on the interviews of people's reporters has provided valuable insight into the meaning of this program for the rural practitioners. Their interviews provided an evaluation of the courses, as they drew on predetermined writing and editing skills, as well as norming and defining exercises presented in the class when conducting their reporting tasks. This information justified and reinforced many of the goals and practices enacted by the rural outreach workers. The interviews also provided a sense of the value of this program to the rural communities. Their training and involvement with the radio station helped them to overcome isolation, link to other institutions and other isolated towns, and achieve material transformations in their environments.
Summary

This chapter has provided a comprehensive portrait of people's reporters programs at popular radio stations in Latin America and an in-depth analysis of the specific practice at Radio Pío XII. Because of its breadth and depth, this chapter has extended a body of research by attending to how participation was constructed at a specific radio station.

The overview of people's reporters programs in Latin America laid out a broad understanding of these reporters, distinguished some of the differences in them, and identified areas needing attention by researchers. In general, people's reporters are volunteers drawn from the most neglected and marginalized sectors of society. Their incorporation into media practice has been identified across the research as one of the most successful ways to incorporate grass-roots participation into radio programming. The goal of all of the people's reporters' programs was to revitalize and value indigenous customs, language, values, and perspectives, as well as to improve the everyday living conditions of marginalized people. Programs differed in how they selected reporters, and research has been sketchy in documenting the reporters' contributions and has neglected the details of training altogether.

In examining the practices at Radio Pío XII, I learned that much of the success of the program relied on building relationships with campesino communities. Rural outreach workers spent more of their time visiting campesino communities--building rapport and providing advice and support--than they did editing contributions or conducting classes. The rural outreach workers came from campesino communities, a factor that facilitated their work as they were familiar with the language, customs, and values of the people in the towns and villages. In addition, they adapted their program to the structures, needs, and limitations of the rural farmers by traveling to isolated areas (instead of bringing the reporters to the station) working through established
organizations in the communities, and conducting classes in the field. Establishing contact and conducting training in this way reciprocated the efforts and sacrifices of the rural participants and yielded better results for the outreach workers.

The actual training sessions were marked by a complexity in the participants, which was surprising given the similar cultural backgrounds of the reporters. The training session that I attended brought a wide variety of ages, educational backgrounds, and experiences into the same classroom. The teachers coped with this in a number of ways. They gave the students opportunities to shape the pace and content of the course; this allowed them to assess the students' abilities and interests, but it also worked to forge a commitment with the students, who then had a stake in the direction of the course. They used ingenious--and culturally appropriate--performing procedures to heighten involvement, transcend contradictions, and critique assumptions. They also used norming procedures that defined rural identity and required the reporters to explore the meanings of communication, news, and popular reporting. Finally, the training sessions provided hands-on, practical skills in using a radio, reporting on an event, writing an account, and editing a final version.

The people's reporters project yielded a host of results for the radio station and rural communities, as documented in archival materials and in discussions with several participants. In its total duration, the project has involved 80 communities and 180 individuals who have been trained as people's reporters. Although the program was only 2 years old, the station had received 420 different contributions--35 a month--during its second year, most of which focused on development programs and organizing efforts. The workers had difficulty involving rural women in the program; women constituted 16% of trained reporters but contributed only 6% of all news items. Nevertheless, rural reporters said that the program has helped them achieve material
changes in their communities, and it has resulted in program adjustments at the radio station based on materials sent in from the countryside.

The specific descriptions of how this program was implemented have added concrete, practical information to communication theories promoting grass-roots participation as a goal. I have tried to transcend the limitations posed by the particular living conditions of Bolivian campesinos by discussing specific actions in terms of communication procedures. The full implications of these procedures will be drawn out in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.
CHAPTER VII
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this dissertation has been to break apart the process-outcome conflation that marks the alternative communication literature and to develop a better understanding of communication practice oriented toward participation and transformation. I have tried to do this by purposely refraining from entering this study through the static dualisms that permeate the literature and account for the conflation of process and outcome. Instead, I have approached the practice of Bolivian tin miners' radio by looking at the dynamic procedures of constructing and enacting media programs aimed at public participation and social transformation. Specifically, I was concerned with answering the following questions:

• How are communication procedures related to participation and transformation in the practices at Bolivian tin miners' radio stations?

• How do the relationships between communication, participation, and transformation inform the contradictions that have made the process-outcome conflation problematic for contemporary alternative communication theory?

• What direction could be given to practitioners concerning communication procedures that are both participatory and transformative?

My intention in pulling apart the process-outcome conflation and tracing the linkages between communication, participation, and transformation has been to make a useful contribution to the alternative communication theory, which is in a conceptual deadlock. In this chapter I will integrate results across chapters as they inform the overall goals and questions that have driven this project. Because I have included a summary section at the end of each data chapter, I will not be summarizing my findings...
here. Nevertheless, I will review key terms and definitions before discussing salient points, offering conclusions, and making recommendations for practitioners and for future researchers. The four main sections of this chapter include a review of key terms, discussion, conclusions, and recommendations.

Review of Key Terms

The purpose of this section is to refamiliarize readers with central concepts developed in chapters four, five, and six. I will not cover all of the new concepts discussed throughout this dissertation but will focus selectively on those that are most germane to the discussion, conclusions, and recommendations. I will present the key terms and definitions in chronological order, beginning with the communication-as-procedure theoretic from chapter one before moving on to concepts developed in chapters four, five, and six.

Communication-as-Procedure

The communication-as-procedure theoretic was exemplified in this study by an abbreviated model in which human communication action was understood as being embedded in situation and consequence (Figure 11). Human communication actions were conceptualized as processes grounded in specific contexts, involved in making and remaking social structures, and accompanied by some sorts of consequences. All three elements in this chain—situation-action-consequence—were conceptualized as human constructings with a cyclical effect. Situation-defining led to action-taking that led to consequence-understanding, which often became a new situation faced by practitioners and mediated in communication. The situation-action-consequence chain, then, represented a cyclical dynamic in which each component was constructed, interpreted, and enacted procedurally.
Holding onto this entire procedural chain was posited as a way of centering on communication processes without losing touch of contextual particularities or real-world consequences. This abbreviated model served as the major theoretic template for conceptualizing communication and informing both data collection and analysis.

Key Terms from Chapter Four

One of the first significant procedures to emerge from the data was the action of "theorizing" communication and social change— the topic of chapter four. I developed abstract categories in this chapter to describe situations and actions that explained communication and social change. These abstract categories are defined below under the headings "Macrosituations" and "Macroactions." Before concluding chapter four, I presented examples of practice that illuminated practitioner theories of communication and social change. I define those exemplifications below under the heading "microactions."

Macrosituations. Practitioner theories of social change clustered into two broad understandings of how change came about. I called these two understandings the "sequential" and the "emergent." They constituted, in effect, theoretical worldviews that functioned as macrosituations used by practitioners to plan action. The sequential and emergent views were defined as follows:

- **Sequential view of social change**—posited that social change occurs in a somewhat predictable, controllable, and evolutionary succession of steps. In this view, the role
of the media practitioner was to help create the conditions for these steps and to provide programs that contributed to their fulfillment.

- **Emergent view of social change**--posited that social change was a process without predictable order, sequence, or direction. Social change was in the process of becoming, and this process was both enabled and hampered by contextual factors, including media. The role of the practitioner was to be flexible and responsive to shifting conditions accompanying emergent changes.

  **Macroactions.** Practitioner theories of communication were rich and diverse, yet they led to a fairly unified composite definition. Communication was defined as a concrete process done in conjunction with others through a relationship of being bonded, connected, tied, linked, and committed. These bonds were directed at specific social actors with a shared agenda of striving for justice, equality, and dignity. The macroaction guiding this definition of communication, "committed bonding," was derived from the verbs *ligarse* (linking oneself) and *comprometerse* (committing oneself), which were used repeatedly across research sites. Committed bonding was defined as follows:

- **Committed bonding**--actions that combined linking and committing, which can be thought of as two separate procedures. But in the context of miners' radio, linking actions implied a commitment, obligation, or promise which constituted the foundation for communication. Committed bonds varied in their intensity between practitioner and social actors, and in their level of involvement. For example, practitioners forged formal and weak bonds with institutions, personal and intense bonds with individuals, and so on.

  **Microactions.** The theoretical understandings of communication and social change discussed above were illuminated by specific examples of practice, which I described as "predetermined procedures" and "alterative procedures." Explicit examples of both kinds of procedures included media logic constructing, topic selecting, source identifying, and language choosing. These explicit examples were subsumed under the larger headings--predetermined and alterative--and are presented below using indentations to reflect this relationship. These terms were defined as follows:
• **Predetermined procedures**—referred to given, constitutive, predefined notions and prescriptions of situations and actions. Predetermined procedures were understood as logical outcomes of the sequential perspective of social change.

  • **Predetermined media logic constructing**—provided specific, concrete reference points concerning media practice. This predetermined logic established an identity for the station and parameters for practitioner activities (e.g., lines of authority in the union, appropriate topics within the Catholic Church).

  • **Predetermined topic selecting**—identified appropriate subjects for radio programs depending on their fit within the constructed media logic and the stage of social change of a given social organization.

  • **Predetermined source identifying**—directed practitioners to routine and reliable informants, who provided commentary and elaboration. These sources usually occupied some official position within an organization, such as secretary general of the union, president of the neighborhood group, or section leader of a cooperative.

  • **Predetermined language choosing**—provided already-defined language and style that reflected the media logic orienting practice. At the union station, for example, language was laden with references to class, exploitation, struggle, and imperialism; the style—shouting slogans, inserting interludes of workers' protest songs—was akin to a rally and mobilization of workers.

• **Alternative procedures**—referred to dynamic and fluid understandings of situations (exigencies, contingencies, and developments in social life) and actions causing alterations to communication actions making them different without changing into something else. Such situations elicited appropriate, but not predetermined, actions. Alternative procedures were understood as logical outcomes of the emergent perspective of social change.

  • **Alternative media logic constructing**—provided conceptual reference points concerning media practice. These reference points were located by words such as "reacting," "coordinating," "cocontributing," and "rescuing," which described the relationship between media and social organizations.

  • **Alternative topic selecting**—allowed for and sought to implement organic agenda setting, where program ideas were provided by ordinary people.

  • **Alternative source identifying**—sought to incorporate a broad range of social actors in program production. This often required practitioners to take programs to public places where people normally congregated.

  • **Alternative language choosing**—led to the incorporation of everyday speech, free from specialized jargon.
These were the key terms developed in chapter four and used to draw conclusions. They also helped to interpret the key concepts in chapter five, which I will discuss next.

**Key Terms from Chapter Five**

I used the situation-action-consequence template (Figure 11) overtly and deliberately in this chapter to tease out patterns regarding problematic differences that arose in everyday practice. Each element in the template was presented separately, but later I synthesized cases to demonstrate specific patterns, ruptures, and deceptions in the data. Because all of the cases of difference were grounded in a particular experience, the categories that emerged were conceptualized as microprocedures. I have defined them below in terms of their location in the situation-action-consequence chain.

**Situations.** Four separate situation categories emerged from the data:

- **Internal/Hidden differences**—involved social actors within a practitioner's organization or group and concerned dissimilarities that were surprising, unexpected, murky, imprecise, or unknown but suspected by practitioners.

- **Internal/Obvious differences**—involved social actors within a practitioner's organization or group and concerned dissimilarities that were obvious, clear, defined, known, and readily identifiable by practitioners.

- **External/Hidden differences**—involved social actors outside of a practitioner's organization or group and concerned dissimilarities that were surprising, unexpected, murky, imprecise, or unknown but suspected by practitioners.

- **External/Obvious differences**—involved social actors outside of a practitioner's organization or group and concerned dissimilarities that were obvious, clear, defined, known, and readily identifiable by practitioners.

**Actions.** Three separate action categories emerged from the data. They were:

- **Backstaging**—dealing with differences in off-the-air arenas, that is, moving attention off stage. Discussions of difference were held in private, nonmediated venues.

- **Spotlighting**—dealing with differences on the air, that is, on stage. Involved emphasizing or focusing on a narrow set of actors and the differences they manifested, both internal and external to social organizations.

- **Floodlighting**—dealing with differences on the air, that is, on stage. Similar to spotlighting—in that differences are on stage—but different in its scope. Floodlighting
illuminated a broader set of issues by bringing multiple social actors into mediated settings.

**Consequences.** Three consequence categories emerged from the data:

- *Maintaining the status quo*—occurred when manifest differences were virtually unchanged from initial to final state.

- *Transforming the status quo*—occurred when manifest differences resulted in an important social change.

- *Transforming the practitioner on a personal level*—occurred when manifest differences changed the practitioner's life.

These were the principal terms developed in chapter five and used to draw conclusions. Combined with the key terms of chapter four, they helped to interpret the key concepts in chapter six, which I will discuss next.

**Key Terms from Chapter Six**

By and large, the presentation of data on the people's reporters was a descriptive, microlevel account of reported and observed activities. The focus of the chapter was primarily on the training of people's reporters, with descriptive accounts of the setting and participants and a report of material consequences at the station and in *campesino* (peasant farmer) communities. The main categories having a bearing on conclusions stemmed from the training exercises. They are described as follows:

- *Performing*—activities that explicitly assigned roles, settings, and plot or narrative sequencing in the classroom and during radio production.

- *Norming*—the ascription of general qualities and characteristics of a variety of phenomena (news, people's reporters) in terms of what they were and what they should be.

- *Skilling*—the presentation of explicit, concrete, and practical material concerning technical aspects of radio and formal practices of journalists.

I have presented the key terms as they were developed in each chapter of this dissertation. In the remaining sections I will try to draw connections between the various concepts, connections that have not been explicitly identified in the separate chapters themselves.
Discussion

To begin answering the questions raised in this dissertation, I will first discuss communication procedures that successfully transcended the dualisms contained in the alternative communication literature. By doing this I can show the connections between chapters four, five, and six. Next I will discuss the relationships between communication procedures, participation, and transformation by looking at patterns and contradictions from the data. All of these findings will be discussed in terms of their bearing on the alternative communication literature.

Procedures that Transcended Dualisms

Adopting a procedural perspective of communication resulted in an analytical consistency and a conceptual contiguity across chapters four, five, and six. The topics of the three chapters--theorizing, differencing, and enacting participation--related to one another both in their formal, analytic structure and in their ability to transcend dualistic imposition. The similar analytic structures allowed communication practices to be examined both across a variety of cases (chapters on theorizing and differencing) and in singular depth (chapter on enacting participation) in a way that allowed both pattern and contradiction to emerge. The consistent use of the situation-action-consequence template--sometimes rigidly enforced (chapter five) while at other times present only in the background (chapters four and six)--helped to reveal what was shared and different across cases and generated clusters of categories that provided a conceptual contiguity to these chapters. Rather than generating a series of simplistic, dualistic prescriptions, however, this approach resulted in complex patterns and directions that could be useful in thoughtful application.

The development of categories through the use of the communication-as-procedure theoretic resulted in conceptual contiguity as the chapters progressed from macroprocedures (chapter four--theorizing) to microprocedures (chapter five--
differencing, chapter six--enacting participation). The macroprocedures introduced in the theorizing chapter were helpful for understanding the microprocedures described and analyzed in the differencing and enacting participation chapters. Recall that practitioners who theorized communication in this study defined it as the conjoint construction of meaning stemming from a committed, bonded relationship, and having political, practical, and ethical dimensions. Communication was never discussed as an abstract process that occurred in social isolation. This conceptualization of communication constituted an important background element for the interpretation of subsequent findings. It was because of this understanding of communication that differencing strategies--such as backstaging, spotlighting, and floodlighting--acquired a specific meaning, or that moves to enact participation--enduring long and difficult journeys, scheduling multiple meals for rural trainees--could be fully appreciated. I did not focus on the connections between practitioner theories and subsequent actions described in each chapter, but I assumed that these theories provided background information that assisted in the interpretation each chapter.

Likewise, practitioner theories of social change provided a framework of macrosituations that informed interpretation of data presented in subsequent chapters. Recall that the complementary perspectives of social change were the sequential (social change achieved through progressive fulfillment of steps or stages) and the emergent (social change was difficult to predict, control, or direct, but emerged from contextual shifts). Many media actions fit comfortably into these frameworks. Predetermined procedures of topic selecting, source identifying, and language choosing fulfilled the putative sequences of social change like plot developments in a grand narrative. But alterative procedures of topic selecting, source identifying, and language choosing responded to emerging and developing conditions of social change that did not conform to grand narratives. The macroperspectives of communication and social change
provided an interpretive lens for the various communication actions presented in chapters five and six.

In the analysis of differencing in chapter five, for example, many differences became problematic because they violated a sense of the appropriate social change sequences (housewives who stepped out of their subordinate role) or because practitioners failed to monitor the changing nature of social movements in their towns (the rightward sway of voters who elected a former dictator for president). In these cases, practitioners deployed both predetermined and alternative procedures when backstaging, spotlighting, and floodlighting differences. In the case of the Housewives' Committee that union members pressured to conform to past roles, for example, the practitioner spotlighted difference using a predetermined source-identifying procedure when she brought the leader of the committee into the radio studio. At the same time, she backstaged difference by relying on an alternative media-logic constructing procedure when she attended to an ousted leader in the privacy of her home. I select this example as an illustration because it appears contradictory. One might assume that spotlighting difference always relied on alternative procedures and that backstaging always relied on predetermined procedures. But in this case, practitioner spotlighting was directed at the president of the Housewives' Committee, a predetermined position of importance. In contrast, when this same practitioner backstaged a former leader to the domestic setting, she was responding to conflict in a culturally appropriate manner that emerged out of sensitivity to the situation.

Likewise, in the case of enacting participation with the people's reporters, practitioners used both predetermined and alternative procedures during training sessions-both to good effect. In identifying potential rural information sources, for example, the teachers surveyed the classroom concerning the local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that play an important role in rural Bolivian development. The teachers literally
asked every student to tell what s/he knew about the NGOs active in their towns, focusing on the personal experience of the students. This alternative source-identifying procedure tapped the knowledge and experience of all participants in a way that was mutually informing and beneficial for teachers and students. At other times in the session, however, teachers relied on predetermined newscrafting procedures, such as the 5 Ws and H (who, what, when, where, why, and how) format, for constructing contributions to the station. Yet, this predetermined procedure seemed to produce positive results because it provided a straightforward and concrete model to a group of students who had little formal schooling and would receive minimal support as they carried out their tasks in relative isolation. Both predetermined and alternative procedures, then, could result in positive consequences for participation. The key to these successes seemed to be in their situatedness.

By stressing situatedness, I mean that the practitioners mentioned above seemed to be able to assess the Housewives' Committee in terms of its relationship to the union. Likewise, rural teachers seemed to be able to assess classroom activities and their relationship to rural life. The understanding of the situation helped them to determine whether to take procedural steps that were either predetermined or alternative. The attention to situatedness seemed to be the key to taking steps that would further the aims of alternative communication theory, particularly the search for "the permanent dialogue, participation that is at once spontaneous and pertinent, never arbitrary or conditional, the source of collective decisions, and the instructor of production and its products" (Cápriles, 1986, p. 172). By monitoring situations, practitioners selected procedures that were "never arbitrary or conditional" but responsive to particular moments. Furthermore, an awareness of the importance of alternative procedures seems to be critical to achieving a "self-renewing communication process [that] can be effected within a popular, social dimension" (Reyes Matta, 1986b, p. 367). Alternative
procedures, in particular, were well suited to retaining the popular, social dimension while exemplifying a self-renewing strategy. Achieving an understanding of alternative procedures that are responsive to specific situations is an important step toward realizing alternative communication practice.

In summary, the communication procedures emerging from this study were connected analytically and conceptually across chapters four, five, and six. The macroprocedures of communication and social change presented in chapter four provided important background material for interpreting microprocedures described in chapters five and six. Rather than producing dualistic categories that might lead to simplistic recipes for practice, this study developed complex sets of procedures that were not readily amenable to dualistic reasoning. The value of these procedures is most evident, however, by examining the patterns that emerged from the data.

Patterns

The sets of procedures described in this study settled into three general patterns that provide potentially useful direction to practitioners. The first pattern stemmed from the use of predetermined procedures, the second from alternative procedures, and the third from the relationship between committed bonding and the use of either predetermined or alternative procedures.

Predetermined procedures. In the routine, daily practices that I observed across research sites, practitioners tended to use predetermined procedures in topic selecting, source identifying, and language choosing. The preponderance of predetermined procedures leads me to believe that this strategy was a more efficient, predictable, and reliable method of solving the pressures and constraints faced by producers. Indeed, practitioners at all three research sites made routine informational rounds to sources that had been identified because of their positions as leaders (predetermined source identifying). This was especially true of news departments where a regular flow of
scripts and interviews were expected by supervisors. Practitioners in news departments visited the union, the city government, regional labor federations, and cooperatives each day and relied on leaders of these organizations to supply them with news and information that satisfied the programming needs of the station.

Predetermined source identifying resulted in the repeated presentation of people who naturally used the pet phrases and jargon of their particular organizations and often promoted the same topics day after day. Practitioners were aware of this phenomenon, as reflected in some of the comments expressing frustrations in chapters four and five. Yet these same practitioners relied on routine sources, topics, and language each day as they fulfilled their media obligations. Part of this tendency may have been due to the pragmatic necessities of producing regular programs. Additionally, however, the use of routine sources fit within the media logics of the research sites and dovetailed with the perspective of social change as a sequential progression. This combination of predetermined procedures and sequential views of social change seemed to have an impact on choices to backstage differences. Of the 9 cases where backstaging was the primary strategy for dealing with difference, 8 involved practitioners who shared the sequential view of social change. Also, the majority of these instances occurred at the union radio station, the most rigid of all the sites in utilizing predetermined procedures and in maintaining a sequential view of social change.

The patterned use of predetermined procedures had a narrowing consequence on the programming of the research sites. The recurrent use of the same information sources translated into a limited range of program topics, a reduction in the diversity of perspectives, and an ossification of the language used to describe reality. This tendency was compounded further in that most of the recurrent sources were positioned at the top of the hierarchy of their social organizations. Predetermined source identifying had a consistency across space and time, gravitating toward leaders of organizations. The
monotonous repetition of language, sources, and topics resulted in static, predictable, and monolithic versions of social reality that coincided with the grand narrative status assumed by the sequential view of social change. At the same time, however, this pattern satisfied the structures and demands faced by many practitioners.

**Alterative procedures.** A second set of patterns revolved around the use of alterative procedures, which had many of the opposite consequences of those generated by predetermined procedures. Alterative procedures included monitoring and facilitating social situations, focusing on differences that provided definitional clarity to issues and opinions in communities, and inventing norms and definitions of practice. Frequently, practitioners used multimedia to create *aperturas* (apertures, openings) where a variety of expressions and impressions of information could occur. This was one technique found across research sites that was used effectively to monitor, facilitate, and focus on social life flexibly. Other procedures having similar effects were the spotlighting of difference and the norming and performing used in training the people's reporters.

Most of the spotlighting of differences was accompanied by alterative procedures responding to changing social situations. This was the case when Radio Pío XII surveyed listeners and miners regarding their concerns and desires in the face of a radically restructured mining industry. This was the case at Radio Nacional de Huanuni, as well, when a practitioner decided to accompany a march organized by the Housewives' Committee to demand the payment of salaries owed to their husbands. These cases may leave the impression that alterative procedures of spotlighting differences were always done in response to some sort of situational exigency—a decline in listeners and participants, a spontaneous decision to protest. Such an impression would be false, however, as practitioners in two cases spotlighted differences as a matter of theoretic desire to seek multiple perspectives from diverse social sectors. This was the case at CISEP, where a practitioner spotlighted the differences of a women's
collective that tended a vegetable greenhouse in a mining town. It was also the case at Radio Nacional de Huanuni, where a practitioner canvassed all city neighborhoods and structured a program to include the participation of housewives. These efforts were not accidental or capricious but were focused on differences that would bring contrast to social movements. As one practitioner remarked, "There always has to be contrast. And if there is none, you have to provoke it, get it? You have to provoke it" (Alfredo A., director of Radio Pfo XII).

Provoking contrast was an alterative procedure that was similar to the norming and performing procedures used in training peoples' reporters in that practitioners actively sought out the perspectives and opinions of a wide range of participants. The norming and performing procedures of the people's reporters' training were additionally valuable as concrete illustrations of communication invention, discussed by Dervin and Clark (1989, 1993). During classroom activities when people's reporters generated definitions of popular radio, people's reporters, and ideal qualities of practice, they were doing nothing less than discovering themselves, inventing communication, defining journalism, and explicating popular reporting. All of these activities were in the process of becoming, not prescribed or dictated by tradition, dogma, or textbook. These communication inventions led to spirited discussions in the classroom and provided valuable resources for people's reporters on the job.

The particular exemplifications of alterative procedures--multimediaing, spotlighting difference, seeking contrast, inventing communication--led to consequences that were nearly the opposite of those apparent in the patterns resulting from predetermined procedures. By creating multiple communication entries and exits, practitioners expanded the menu of topics and increased the diversity of sources, which added multiple voices to programs. Because this diversity often was sought in a way that contrasted views, spotlighting procedures, in effect, clarified issues and differences,
rather than merely adding to the cacophony of multiple voices. Differencing procedures
grounded around the notion of contrast defined issues in much the same way that visual
artists define scenes by contrasting field and foreground and bringing objects into
sharper focus. Unlike predetermined procedures, however, uses of alternative procedures
were not as frequent, indicating that they were more difficult, time consuming, and
perhaps unreliable in the production of programs. Their use was also constrained by the
relationship between the practitioner and social groups, which I will turn to next.

**Committed bonding and procedures used.** The third pattern to emerge from the
data concerned the relationship between the bonds that practitioners had with social
groups, the kinds of differences they faced, and the procedures that they selected. In
general, practitioners with the most intense and committed bonds to organizations faced
more internal differences and tended to deal with them through backstaging procedures.
For example, practitioners at Radio Nacional de Huanuni had the most intense
committed bonds, as they were owned by the union. Not surprisingly, the practitioners
there faced the highest number of internal differences. Meanwhile, the practitioners at
CISEP—who were independently funded—spent enormous amounts of time and energy
reaching out from the institution's urban center to social groups in isolated towns or in
suburban neighborhoods. The differences they faced were more often external to the
organization. The intensity of committed bonds between practitioners and social
organizations also seemed related to procedures they selected. Where committed bonds
were highly intense, practitioners tended to backstage differences. Indeed, most
instances of backstaging actions occurred vis-à-vis internal differences, suggesting
either a temptation to protect social organizations by masking differences or a pressure to
keep differences from entering public forums.

This pattern seemed to be operating in the discussion of procedures among the
people's reporters, as well. For example, one classroom session generated a list of
journalistic norms that conversely reflected traditional values (credibility, impartiality, neutrality) and activist values (in solidarity, participatory, able to mobilize). The ensuing discussion of how to negotiate these competing values indicated that the practitioners were guided by the intensity of committed bonds with groups in particular situations. When internal differences arose that were highly problematic (such as political rifts within campesino groups), the practitioners suggested that traditional journalistic values be enacted. Conversely, when a difference arose with an external agency or group, practitioners suggested that they needed to adopt activist strategies. These tendencies appeared similar to those mentioned in the paragraph above, where intense bonds between the practitioner and social organization created a pressure to mask differences or keep them out of the public arena when problematic differences arose. People's reporters appeared to be hamstrung in a similar way from adopting activist strategies that could intensify problematic differences and thereby expose committed bonds to risk.

The patterns that emerged from the data inform the theoretical concerns of the alternative communication literature dealing with pluralism and power. From the very early days of the Latin American critique, scholars were disturbed by the arrogant imposition of communication models from North to South. The call for dialogue and horizontal exchange was nothing less than an endorsement of pluralistic practice (Beltrán, 1976, 1980; Freire, 1970, 1973; Pasquali, 1963). Of course, this eventually led to the conflation of process and outcome (horizontal structures assumed to lead to social transformation) by ignoring human action--communication procedures--altogether. The data from this study suggest that some procedural patterns are of greater service to the spirit of pluralism than are others. Specifically, alterative procedures that responded to the contingencies and exigencies of social life led to more pluralistic consequences. Procedures like multimediaing, performing, and norming created aperturas for diverse actors, voices, and topics able to cope with a mandate for
pluralistic practice. In contrast, the predetermined procedures dealing with difference and seeking topics, sources, and language narrowed the range of perspectives included in media productions. The patterns around predetermined procedures, then, were counterpluralistic in many ways.

Aside from informing theoretical concerns about pluralism, the patterns from the data also provided useful direction to scholars concerned with the reproduction of inequitable power structures by alternative practitioners. Most of the work focusing on the danger of alternative communication practices that reproduce oppressive power structures have come from outside of Latin America (Kessler, 1984; Tomaselli & Louw, 1989). But the more recent studies of tin miners' radios have noted the differential and inegalitarian reproduction of power relations at the stations (Kúncar, 1989; López, 1989). The patterns in these data demonstrate that the use of predetermined procedures fulfills sequential understandings of social change by privileging topics and sources that favor those in leadership positions and, therefore, contributes to inegalitarian aspects of structures. Conversely, alterative procedures—especially those that spotlight problematic differences—provide an antidote to the concentration of power. An understanding of how alterative procedures work, therefore, provides a strategy for resisting the reinforcement and reification of existing power relations.

Although some clear patterns emerged from the data, this study also uncovered contradiction and paradox in tin miners' radio. Like the aforementioned patterns, the contradiction and paradox contribute to alternative communication theories. I will turn to these contributions next.

Contradiction and Paradox

Across research sites and in both interviews and observations, alternative media practice was marked by contradiction and paradox, which often would jar me in their frankness. In numerous conversations, for example, practitioners rejected essentialist
journalistic norms like objectivity and impartiality in one sentence and defended their work as "telling the truth" in the next sentence. Rather than list all of the contradictions that alternative practitioners displayed, I will focus on three that seemed particularly problematic: the potential paradox between the goals of participation and transformation; the contradictions generated by committed bonding actions; and inegalitarian democratic practices.

**Participation and transformation.** One case in the data in particular raised the first, and in some ways most basic, paradox of alternative media practice. That is that the twin goals of alternative media--participation and transformation--can and do move in opposite directions. The case that brought this paradox to the surface involved the coverage of presidential elections by Radio Pío XII and the triumph of a right-wing, former dictator in the districts considered strongholds of the station's listeners. The station had adopted the twin goals of participation and transformation, but the practitioners' notions of transformation in this case were in direct opposition to those of the public. This situation was paradoxical, as public participation in making programs would have been in opposition to practitioners' beliefs concerning social transformation. In this case, the practitioners resolved the paradox by eliminating participation favoring the former dictator. Nevertheless, the paradox remained: How to reconcile ideas of transformation with public participation that is pointed in the opposite direction? The paradox in this case was not unique to Radio Pío XII; it was an issue of potential concern across sites. As communicators concerned with transforming society, practitioners already possessed ideas of where changes should occur. This became problematic for practice when the identified position veered far from the position expressed by large numbers of the public. It was problematic because the stations also strived to be participatory, never to impose positions on the public. Negotiating out of this paradox was not straightforward or simple, but at Radio Pío XII backstaging
differences did not seem to be a viable strategy for handling paradox. The practitioners eventually tried to expand their base of sources and to forge committed bonds with more members of the grass roots to understand why large numbers of people were opting for a former dictator as the candidate of choice. Yet forging committed bonds contained a whole new set of contradictions.

**Committed bonding.** While committed bonding brought practitioners closer to the reality of some people, it simultaneously cut them off from others. Committed bonding liberated practitioners to express what they thought, felt, and saw, yet it simultaneously constrained their ability to comment. The forging of committed bonds gave the practitioners an identity that dissolved many polarities and conflicts as groups were held together with a common purpose as members of the union, cooperative, or church group. At the same time that a solid identity was created, however, a boundary was simultaneously erected between practitioners and nonmembers with whom they also wished to work. This was the case at Radio Nacional de Huanuni when a practitioner was rebuffed by a cooperative miner who felt alienated from the union. It happened to a practitioner at CISEP, as well, whose affiliation with an NGO operated as a stigma for some grass-roots organizations. What this reveals is that procedures that organize, simplify, and unify can simultaneously generate complexity in relationships that have the contrary effect.

Complexity was not only apparent between groups where practitioners had forged committed bonds, it also existed within organizations. This occurred in two ways. First, several practitioners talked about how working at a union radio station gave them a freedom to talk about issues that could not be found in a commercial station. Yet at Radio Nacional de Huanuni, these same practitioners told of being unable to criticize union officials publicly for fear of reprimands and even job loss. Second, the order of social organizations was not seamless and monolithic but was able to generate internal
complexity, as well. The clearest example of this came from the actions of the housewives' committees at both Radio Nacional de Huanuni and Radio Pío XII. The position of the housewives within the union was clearly conceptualized by the male leaders as being one of subordination. Yet that small space within which the women were allowed to operate contained cracks that allowed differences to emerge and challenge traditional gender relations. The women's role within the union became more independent and active as a result. So, while order can generate complexity in relationships between organizations, it also allows for complexity to be generated within an organization.

Inegalitarian democratic practices. The last contradiction involved democratic practices that yielded inegalitarian results. This was displayed most clearly at Radio Pío XII, where practitioners were unable to involve women as participants in any measurable number in the people's reporters program. The lack of participation of women in alternative media generally make this a salient problem beyond the people's reporters program, but this problem is particularly difficult to overcome in this instance. The reason for the difficulty, of course, is that the people's reporter program, with the belief that elected reporters would be more accountable to the people in their home towns, allowed each community to elect its representative correspondent. Nevertheless, the dearth of women participating in the program, along with comments from the rural outreach workers, indicated that rather than being an egalitarian process, the elections allowed the reinscription of historical and contemporary gender inequities. What this finding suggests is that benevolent and egalitarian sounding procedures--such as the local election of correspondents--do not necessarily produce equitable results. Practitioners need to be aware of situational, cultural, and historical constraints that contribute to inegalitarian consequences from practices that seem, on the surface, to be democratic.
The contradictions that emerged from the data contribute to theories of praxis by challenging many of the assumptions in this particular body of work (Festa & Santoro, 1991; Lozada & Kúncar, 1983, 1986; Mattelart, 1986; O'Connor, 1989; Paiva, 1983). Scholars of praxis have projected a worldview that assumes grass-roots participation is implicit in popular social movements. Practitioner connection to a social praxis is thought of as being necessary and sufficient for achieving alternative communication goals. Lozada and Kúncar (1986) summarized the position best when they wrote: "There is no alternative communication without a determining and ratifying social praxis" (p. 204). But the contradictions emerging from this study have rendered problematic the seamless connection from praxis to alternative communication.

The twin goals of participation and transformation—both assumed in praxis—contained potential paradoxes for practitioners who entered media practice with theories of social change and beliefs about the directions that changes should take. As demonstrated in this dissertation, those theories and beliefs could be in diametrical opposition to the conceptions of ordinary people in social movements, thereby creating difficulties for practitioners attempting to increase participation. In addition, the forging of committed bonds—a strategy for engaging in a social praxis—was contradictory in that it created unwanted restrictions and barriers for practitioners interested in working with other social organizations. Social organizations sharing social, economic, and political interests with the work of practitioners were often repelled by the exclusion inherent in the identities forged by practitioners. Moreover, social movements at times contained contradictions that have escaped the notice of praxis research. Although social movements create a unified identity for their members, they also create spaces where marginalized or subordinate members can consolidate important ancillary organizations. Finally, social praxis is considered an ideal form for alternative communication practitioners to follow because of its assumed democratic spirit. Yet findings from this
dissertation suggest that democratic procedures can produce undemocratic results. Therefore, the establishment of collective decision making, for example, is not sufficient to safeguard social equity.

In this section I have discussed the major findings that emerged from the data in terms of how they related to the theoretical concerns of the alternative communication literature. I discussed how communication procedures transcended the old alternative communication dualisms leading to connections between chapters four, five, and six. Next I presented the relationships between communication procedures, participation, and transformation by looking at both patterns and contradictions from the data. These major findings have led to a number of conclusions, which I present below.

Conclusions

Before presenting the conclusions that can be drawn from this study, I want to clarify an important point regarding the social organizations--the unions, the cooperatives, the campesino confederations--with whom practitioners forged committed bonds. Because this study focused on the communication procedures of media practitioners and not those of grass-roots organizations, the democratic spirit of those organizations has been de-emphasized, if not muted altogether. It is important for interpreters of this data to know that Bolivian grass-roots organizations, by and large, are radically democratic and participatory, even though highly structured and hierarchical. During my study I attended numerous meetings of social organizations, all of which were marked by lengthy audience participation enacted in the same way. A leader made opening remarks then opened the discussion to the floor saying "Tienen la palabra" (You have the word). Members of the audience either stood up or raised their hands saying "La palabra" (the word). The leader would recognize the person saying "Tiene la palabra," at which point the group member could speak as long as s/he wished. Audiences usually listened attentively, but they also broke into whistles or
shouted out responses such as "time" or "don't repeat things" to express disapproval. I
found the levels of participation unlike anything I had ever experienced, and I believe
that Bolivian tin miners' radio practice must be understood as being nested within these
radically democratic organizations. Doing so should guide interpretations of media
practices, as even the most hierarchical and predetermined procedures reflected
participatory aspects of social organizations. Furthermore, seeing similarities between
mainstream practice and the work at tin miners' radio stations may be misleading
inasmuch as mainstream media typically are not bonded to social organizations.

The main conclusions resulting from this study stemmed from the patterns in the
data discussed in the previous section and from the participatory achievements attained
by the people's reporters program. The conclusions from the patterns in the data differ
significantly from those in previous alternative communication studies in two ways.
First, because the patterns were conceptualized as dynamic procedures, they transcended
the dualistic oppositions that formed much of previous alternative communication
theory. The findings concerning predetermined and alternative procedures noted above,
therefore, should not be thought of as oppressive/liberating, industrial/artisanal, and the
like. Rather, I have tried to present them as complementary strategies of potential use for
the ends of participation and transformation. Second, the patterns in the data indicated
predominant connections between situations, actions, and consequences, providing
useful direction to practitioners. At the same time, however, these patterns emphasized
contextual contingencies and multiple strategies used by practitioners, which
circumvented the drafting of blind recipes for practice. Simplistic relationships leading to
such blind recipes have been drawn from many alternative communication studies,
leading to the process-outcome conflation currently marking this literature.

Three major conclusions have been drawn from the discussion section. Two of
them stem from overarching patterns in the data, and one emerged from interviews with
people's reporters. The first pattern regards contiguity between views of social change, communication procedures used, and consequences. The second emphasizes the importance of situation, and the third enriches our understanding of popular participation.

**Patterns in Procedures**

In general, practitioners holding sequential views of social change used predetermined procedures in selecting topics, sources, and language in practice. They were also more likely to backstage differences internal to their social organizations, which resulted in maintaining the status quo. The other major pattern reflected just the opposite relationships: practitioners who held emergent views of social change used alternative procedures in selecting topics, sources, and language. They were more likely to spotlight or floodlight differences, which resulted in transformations to the status quo.

By examining these major patterns carefully, I have concluded that alternative procedures are more difficult to carry out in everyday practice. Far more practitioners relied on predetermined procedures, because they were more reliable and efficient methods of fulfilling production needs. Nevertheless, alternative procedures were critical—even if used sporadically—in order to maintain a sense of the changes experienced by ordinary members of social organizations and to put a check on the holders of power within organizations, for they were the people who benefited most from predetermined procedures. The principal conclusion I have drawn from a close examination of patterns and contradictions is that practitioners were in constant struggle between the predetermined and the alternative, between their pragmatic production requirements and the larger need to achieve a self-generating and self-renewing practice.
Importance of Situation

A second conclusion from the patterns in the data was that practitioners received the most useful instruction of how to negotiate between the predetermined and the alternative and between backstaging and spotlighting from an ability to assess the situations they faced. Practitioners' selection of procedures seemed to be informed by their ability to judge situations, including their own situatedness within a social organization. This ability was best summarized by the practitioner who said, "Sometimes you have to have quick reflexes in communication and in popular radio. If you haven't got quick reflexes, you're beat" (Alfredo A., director of Radio Pfo XII). The ability to sense the nature of the context was a critical factor influencing the adoption of communication procedures and the subsequent consequences.

Popular Participation

A final conclusion in this study stemmed not from patterns in the data but from interviews with people's reporters that informed my understanding of popular participation in media. Media practice did not seem to be conceptualized by participants in the people's reporters course as an end in itself, with independent values and virtues. Rather, media practice was described as a means to achieving material gains and changes with and for people living in rural communities. With the exception of one person, every people's reporter whom I interviewed discussed memorable media experiences in terms that foregrounded the events, issues, needs, accomplishments, and angers of everyday life and backgrounded journalistic notions often conceptualized by professionals as operating in isolation. I have concluded two things from this. First, that participation in media may be more usefully theorized and practiced if conceptualized from the perspective of what communication can do with and for people, rather than from the position of abstract yet benevolent values. Second, participation in the people's reporter
program flourished because this view of journalism—communication as a means to an end, not as an end itself—was allowed to operate within the structures of Radio Pío XII.

Recommendations

In this final section of the dissertation I will make two sets of recommendations. One set is aimed at future research, the other at alternative media practitioners.

Recommendations for Future Research

Because of their prominence in this study, differences and how they are successfully and unsuccessfully handled by practitioners are the issues requiring most attention in future research. Problematic differences in everyday practice were salient themes in the cases that I studied, even though I did not design my project to look at them explicitly. Also, this theme is of interest to those alternative communication theorists concerned with incorporating the dominant into the alternative and with building structures that do not reproduce inequitable relations of power. There is a need for future research that focuses on problematic differences, tracing out how they arise, what steps practitioners take to work through them, and what steps have led to deadlocks or other negative consequences.

Spinning off of the notion of differences, researchers should investigate audiences to triangulate perceptions of practitioners regarding communication choices that they identified as significant. An audience study tailored to procedural categories, such as the ones generated in this study, would be valuable at confirming, refuting, modifying, or fleshing out the sorts of patterns and contradictions generated in this study. An audience component would help to solidify and/or weaken some of the procedural relationships generated in this study.

A final recommendation for future research is related to the exemplar of the people's reporters program. The use of people's reporters has been adopted by community radio practitioners throughout Latin America in recent years as an exemplary
mode of enhancing popular participation. Yet all of the programs operating to date--
including the one at Radio Pío XII--suffer from the problem of high attrition of trainees.
A valuable study for these programs, which are growing in popularity, would focus on
the experiences of people's reporters, zeroing in on pivotal incidents, where possible,
that determined whether the participant dropped out or continued in the program. Such a
study could provide valuable direction to practitioners who devote enormous amounts of
time and energy to such programs, direction that might reduce the high levels of
attrition.

Recommendations for Practitioners

The principal recommendation for practitioners from this study is that they
develop a sensitivity, awareness, appreciation, and skill for deploying alterative
procedures in making media. The evidence was overwhelming that alterative procedures
led to self-generating and self-renewing media practices and were connected to
monitoring and facilitating practices that were necessary for responding to changing
circumstances. At the same time, the evidence was quite clear that alterative procedures
were more difficult to enact, as they were less efficient and reliable modes of generating
material to satisfy the production needs of the radio stations. Therefore, alterative
procedures are not simply options that practitioners can adopt. They are serious, time-
consuming commitments that should be used in conjunction with predetermined
procedures in the fulfillment of professional obligations.

A second and final recommendation for practitioners and media educators grows
out of my observations of and conclusions about the people's reporters program. The
positive experiences of the people's reporters were attributed to the value that radio
practice had as a means of improving the material conditions in the rural towns of the
campesinos. In my interviews with rural practitioners, radio practice nearly always was
discussed as a conceptual bundle intertwined with community struggles and
accomplishments. Professional norms, values, and skills did not exist in isolation from everyday life, but took on meaning and direction when placed in practice with grass-roots movements. Furthermore, practitioners made reference to the utility of classroom training that utilized both predetermined and alterative procedures. What this suggests for alternative practitioners and trainers is that a more ethnographic approach to media education and practice is warranted, an approach that continually weds skills and norms to community struggle and accomplishment. Skills and norms were not conceptualized by practitioners as tools that set them apart as gifted interpreters for communities because of their special talents. Rather, skills and norms were valuable when they facilitated action and dialogue with organizations and when they conjointly determined important aspects of media practice, such as veracity and tone. Given the use of both predetermined and alterative procedures—and their dialectical relationship in community involvement—practitioner training ought to emphasize both while highlighting the importance of living and working closely with grass-roots organizations and movements.
APPENDIX A

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRES

Three slightly different questionnaire structures were used in the study. The different questionnaires were used for interviews with radio administrators, producers, and former and irregular producers. Each is included here with Spanish translation in parenthesis and instructions for interviewer in brackets.

Interview Questionnaire "A"--Administrators

1. What are your responsibilities in managing the radio station? (¿Cuales son las responsabilidades de su cargo?)

[List all. Focus on aspects where program production and participation of public might be involved.]

2. [For each production/participation aspect] In dealing with [name responsibility], can you think of a particular success, a time when you achieved an important goal? (¿En cuanto a [tal responsabilidad] cual ha sido su éxito mas grande o un tiempo cuando realice algo importante?)

2a. [Probe] What led up to this success, how did it happen, what allowed it to happen? (¿Como sucedió este éxito, cuales fueron los factores que lo hizo posible?)

2b. [Probe] Did this success help you in any way? How did it help you? (¿En el cumplimiento de este éxito, le ayudó de alguna manera? ¿Como?)

2c. [Probe] Did this success result in any unexpected results, surprises, difficulties, or hindrances? (¿En el cumplimiento de este éxito, tuvo resultados no esperados, difíciles or que impidieron en alguna forma?)

3. [For each production/participation aspect] In dealing with [name responsibility], can you think of your most difficult experience? (¿En cuanto a [tal responsabilidad] cual ha sido su experiencia más dificil?)

3a. [Probe] What led up to this difficulty, how did it happen? (¿Como sucedió este dificultad, cuales fueron los factores que lo hizo suceder?)
3b. [Probe] Did anything help you deal with this difficulty? What/how did it help you? (¿En tratando este dificultad, había algo que le ayudó de alguna manera? ¿Cómo?)

3c. [Probe] Can you think of anything that would have helped you but was unavailable or out of reach? (¿Puede pensar en algo que le pudiera ayudado?)

4. [For each each production/participation aspect] In dealing with [name responsibility], what has been the biggest lesson you have learned? (¿En cuanto a [tal responsabilidad] cual ha servido de la lección mas importante?)

4a. [Probe] What leads you to say that? (¿Que le hizo creer eso?)

4b. [Probe] How has that lesson helped you? (¿Como le ha ayudado este lección?)

5. Thinking of all the outside groups involved one way or another at the radio, which one gives you the most satisfaction, pleasure, or pride? (¿De todos los grupos que producen programas en la radio cual es el que le da mas orgullo o satisfacción?)

5a. [Probe] What do you find satisfying about this program? (¿Que es lo que le da este orgullo?)

5b. [Probe] How has this program helped you? (¿Le ha ayudado de alguna manera? ¿Como?)

5c. [Probe] Has this program resulted in any unexpected surprises, difficulties, or hindrances? (¿Ha tenido este programa resultados no esperados, difíciles o que impidieron en alguna forma?)

Interview Questionnaire "B"--Producers

1. In producing your program (or "in doing your job"), what are the things you have to do from beginning to end? What steps do you take first, second, and so on? [list] (¿En la generación y elaboración de novedades, cuales son los pasos que tiene que tomar para cumplir un día normal?)

   [for each step]

   1a. What thoughts or ideas do you have regarding [name step]? (¿Cuales son sus ideas, pensamientos, u opiniones acerca de [tal cosa]?)

   1b. What worries, uncertainties, or concerns do you have regarding [name step]? (¿Cuáles son las preocupaciones, incertidumbres, o dudas que se le ocurren acerca de [tal cosa]?)

   1c. In doing [name step], is there something that helps you? (¿En hacer [tal cosa], hay algo que te hace fácil cuplirlo?)

   1d. In doing [name step], is there something that hinders you? (¿En hacer [tal cosa], hay algo que le dificulta cumplirlo?)
1e. In doing [name step], can you think of something that would have helped you? (¿En hacer [tal cosa], puede pensar en algo que le pudiera facilitar el cumplimiento de este paso?)

2. Thinking of the community as a whole, are there people or groups that you never seek out when producing your program? (¿Pensando en la comunidad en total, hay personas o grupos con quien nunca busca novedades?)

[for each group]

2a. Regarding [name group], what thoughts or ideas do you have? (¿Cuáles son sus ideas, pensamientos, u opiniones acerca de [tal grupo]?)

2b. What worries, uncertainties, or concerns do you have regarding [name group]? (¿Cuáles son las preocupaciones, incertidumbres, o dudas que se le ocurrén acerca de [tal grupo]?)

2c. Does it help you in any way to avoid this group? (¿Le ayuda de alguna manera el no hablar con este grupo?)

2d. Does it create any problems, difficulties, or hindrances? (¿Le provoca problemas, dificultades, o resultados no esperados?)

**Interview Questionnaire "C"--Former and Irregular Producers**

1. Describe the program you produce(d), both the content and structure, that is, time of day, length, times a week or month and so on. (Describe su programa en cuanto el contenido y estructura (tiempo, hora, veces a la semana, etc.)

2. Now I'd like to know how you came to produce the program. Tell me the steps or events that brought you to the radio, from first contact to going on the air. [list] (Ahora, quiero saber cómo llegó a tener este programa. Describame, por favor, los pasos que tomó, o los eventos que sucedieron desde el principio hasta el momento de salir en el aire.)

[for each] I am going to ask you a number of questions regarding each step you named. (Le voy hacer una serie de preguntas sobre cada paso.)

2a. Regarding [step] what are/were (?) your thoughts, ideas, or opinions? (¿Cuáles son tus ideas, pensamientos, u opiniones acerca de [tal cosa]?)

2a.1 [for each] What specifically leads/led (?) you to say that? (¿Que, específicamente, provoca este pensamiento?)

2b. Do/did (?) you have any questions or concerns regarding [name step]? (¿Cuáles son las preguntas o dudas que se te ocurren acerca de [tal cosa]?)

2b.1 [for each] What specifically leads/led (?) you to say that? (¿Que, específicamente, provoca esta duda?)
2c. Regarding [name step], is/was (?) there anything that helped you? (¿Sobre [tal cosa], había algo que te facilitó el cumplimiento de este paso?)

2d. Regarding [name step], is/was (?) there anything that hindered you? (¿Sobre [tal cosa], había algo que te complicó o frustró el cumplimiento de este paso?)

2e. Regarding [name step], can you think of something that would have helped you? (¿Sobre [tal cosa], puede pensar en algo que le hubiera facilitado el cumplimiento de este paso?)
## APPENDIX B

**UNITS OF ANALYSIS FROM FIELD NOTES AND INTERVIEWS**

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