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# **RADIO PROGRAMMING FOR YOUNG ADULTS: THREE NEW ZEALAND CASE STUDIES**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
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at Massey University.

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## Abstract

The central question posed by this thesis is how radio stations, and more specifically programme directors, attract and construct an audience of listeners aged between 18 and 25 years old. The thesis examines the political and social factors influencing broadcasters targeting young adults both in this country and internationally. It then analyses the broadcasts and programming strategies of three New Zealand radio stations – a student, an iwi and a commercial station.

Broadcasting is examined on three levels: firstly the political and historical context of radio broadcasting is outlined including issues such as media ownership, government regulation and the structure of media institutions; secondly the daily operating practices of broadcasters are assessed, along with how programming choices are made in light of externally imposed constraints such as the desire to make a profit; and finally textual analysis is used to examine the material that is produced for broadcast.

Programme directors are defined here as key gatekeepers because they determine the way a radio station sounds within the parameters of a particular format. Williams (1990) correctly maintains that broadcasting forms a continuous flow, but for ease of academic discussion each of these radio stations is analysed in terms of its music programming, advertising and promotion, news and information and DJ chat. Analysis of the verbal aspects of the broadcast draw on Goffman (1981), Brand and Scannell (1991) and Montgomery (1986). Music programming is discussed with reference to Rothenbuhler (1985) and unstructured interviews conducted by the researcher with the programme directors at each of the three stations.

The New Zealand case studies exemplify international trends evident in radio stations which target 18 to 25 year olds. The programme directors in question presume this age group listens to the radio in the evenings, prefers music to talk and current affairs, likes newly released material rather than older songs and is likely to purchase leisure and entertainment products. The case studies provide a contemporary snap shot of how programme directors construct and perceive a specific radio audience. The thesis concludes that programmers targeting young adults use music to define the station's sound, construct an audience and sell advertising.

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## **Introduction: Radio, Demographics and the Young Adult Listener**

Radio stations seek to fulfil a number of goals, which may include entertaining, informing or educating listeners or maximising their audience share. But stations must also operate within constraints such as making a profit, adhering to a particular format or programming within government dictated regulations. Within the parameters set by these goals and constraints there is still the potential for individuals to choose exactly what material to broadcast and generally this is the role of the programme director. Most New Zealand radio stations employ a programme director who can be defined as a key gatekeeper since it is his or her job to select and reject music for broadcast, employ DJs, determine the length of news bulletins, the amount (and sometimes type) of advertising broadcast and influence the station's generic image and the way it is promoted.

Radio stations operate on three levels. At a political level the government of the day will dictate broadcasting regulations which may affect issues of ownership and the overall purpose of a station (two contrasting purposes, for example, might be to make a profit or to inform and/or entertain the widest range of listeners possible); the station's owners are likely to dictate its format and desired target audience, while it is the task of individual staff to implement, on a day-to-day basis, the goals and regulations imposed by both government and station management. A radio broadcast represents an interaction between the political, social and historical context within which the radio station operates, its owners and those who work there. Radio broadcasts cannot be considered in isolation from the social and political forces which shape them.

Radio is no longer a primary mass medium, rather it has become something to listen to while doing other things. Contemporary broadcasters and media analysts acknowledge radio is only one in a range of media and perceive radio audiences as fragmented on the basis of factors such as their age, gender or ethnicity. In New Zealand, the British broadcasting ethos of playing a range of music, entertainment and news to ensure there is something for everyone has given way to the more American approach of specific radio stations with a particular sound catering to niche audiences. Contemporary radio programmers must have some idea of who is listening to their station and individual listeners are placed in larger audience

groupings primarily on the basis of their age. To a certain extent broadcasters continue to view those within a given age bracket as an homogeneous mass, who take part in similar leisure activities, buy similar products and like listening to similar music. For example, listeners aged under 25 years old are assumed to have an interest in newly released music, to spend much of their discretionary income on leisure products and entertainment and to view news and information as an interruption to the broadcast's primary musical text. Of course broadcasters do acknowledge other factors such as the gender or ethnicity of their audience, but age represents a useful way of grouping individual listeners into a coherent mass whose particular needs, wants and desires can then be sold to advertisers.

The central question posed by this thesis is how radio programmers perceive listeners aged between 18 and 25 years old and what type of broadcasting they think will attract listeners in this age group. Following a general description of the structural factors influencing broadcasters targeting young adults, both in this country and internationally, the broadcasts and programming trends of three New Zealand radio stations are examined. All three programme directors perceive music as the central broadcast element to attract young adult listeners. This thesis examines how radio formats targeting young adults differ from other radio programming in terms of music, news and information, advertising and promotion and DJ chat. Factors which impact upon this central thesis include the decision making process surrounding music selection, how particular funding strategies affect what a radio station broadcasts, the extent to which New Zealand broadcasters (particularly those targeting young adults) are influenced by international trends and the way political regulation has impacted upon New Zealand broadcasters.

### **The young adult radio listener**

Currently young adults are an audience neglected by radio broadcasters, but during the 1950s teenagers were a primary target audience with most American music oriented stations adopting a Top 40 format based on the singles sales charts and juke box plays. Nearly fifty years later this same group is still being courted by radio broadcasters, only now it is with formats such as classic hits and newstalk. This thesis deals with how those who are aged between 18 and 25 are perceived by radio broadcasters. Terms such as "youth" and "young adult" are imprecise, however generally this thesis will adopt these terms to describe those aged in their late teens to mid-twenties.

Age can be a biological, social or economic construct. Gaines (1994: 47), for example, defines youth in biological terms as anyone aged between fourteen and twenty-four. Abrams (1959), by contrast, defines teenagers in terms of their economic power and argues that teenage is "a collective word describing young people from the time they leave school till they either marry or reach twenty-five". Alternatively, Weinstein stresses the importance of youth as a cultural construct. She claims "the cultural formation of 'youth' [has] floated free from the social group of young people. No longer restricted to adolescents, 'youth' became firmly available to all" (Weinstein 1994: 72).

"Youth" is now defined as an image which can sell products and advertisers have increased the category's applicability so that instead of just targeting potential audience members on the basis of their biological age, radio programmers and advertisers now aim at anyone who remembers being young and aspires to youthful ideals. Youth has become synonymous with physical fitness, health, fashion and popular culture. There is an element of nostalgia and an appeal to "youth lost" evident in many current radio programming formats. The increase in the number of stations adopting "classic hits" formats to target "the youth of yesterday" who are "today's adults", reinforces the concept that popular music is now a cultural product which is available to everyone, not just the young. Music radio stations now have more than fifty years of popular music to draw upon for their programming requirements and as Turner contends:

FM's audience listened to the Eagles in the 1970s on its record players, it tuned into FM in the 1980s so it could listen to the Eagles on its car radios, and now it is the 1990s it *still* wants to listen to the Eagles – perhaps so it can remember the 1970s.

(Turner 1993: 145)

Many western countries show a trend towards an aging population.<sup>1</sup> This is one reason why an increasing number of radio broadcasters reject listeners who are teenagers or young adults and devise formats to suit the more

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<sup>1</sup> This process is known as "demographic transition" where mortality and fertility rates decline and populations tend "to stabilise at a much larger size with ... an older age structure. This process is common to most industrialised nations" (Statistics New Zealand 1995c: 13).

financially established, numerically greater number of people who are aged over 40 years old.

Age is only one indicator of a person's entertainment preferences and other factors include class, gender, ethnicity and taste cultures. "The blanket term 'youth' conceals more than simple age divisions, as a social category it embraces a wide variety of taste groups, subcultures, and fandom<sup>2</sup>; all audience segments themselves differentiated by class, ethnicity, and gender" (Shuker 1994: 227). Radio stations continue to use age as a primary indicator of a person's entertainment preferences, however they may also consider young adult radio listeners on the basis of their ethnicity (as recognised by iwi stations), musical preferences (as acknowledged by student radio stations) or gender (for example female listeners are often catered for by commercial stations).

People of the same age may have totally different outlooks, abilities and tastes, however there are certain experiences which are shared on the basis of a person's biological age. O'Donnell (1985: 27) maintains "two elements in modern society affect nearly all young people in one way or another. These are (1) compulsory education, and (2) the relative affluence of modern youth in relation to the consumer goods industry". Since the 1970s a number of other trends have effected 18 to 25 year old New Zealanders, including high youth unemployment; an increase in the number of young adults undertaking some form of tertiary training; an increase in the number of couples living in de facto relationships; and the fact that, on average, women are giving birth to their first child later, having fewer children and not marrying until they are in their late twenties, if at all.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> "'Fans' ... collect the records put out by their favoured 'star' performers, but [this is] only one aspect of an interest which focuses rather on the image and persona of the star" (Shuker 1994: 244-245). For a more in depth discussion of 'fandom' see Shuker (1994) pp. 242-246.

<sup>3</sup> In the year ended March 1994 the unemployment rate for 15-to-19 year olds was 21.5 percent, more than twice the national average rate of 9.4 percent, while the unemployment rate for 20-24 year olds was also higher than the national average at 14 percent (Statistics New Zealand 1995: 24). The number of equivalent full time students enrolled in New Zealand tertiary institutions has more than doubled in the last ten years from 69,092 in 1984 to 152,319 in 1994 (Ministry of Education 1996). The average age for both sexes marrying (27 years old) is (Footnote continues on the next page.)



Between the ages of 15 and 24 “most young people are expected to establish a sense of personal identity and become progressively independent from their parents” (Statistics New Zealand 1994: 59). Unemployment or tertiary education however may serve to delay the process of entering into adulthood and financial self sufficiency and to prolong the youth period. Santrock (1996: 26) defines youth as “the transitional period between adolescence and adulthood that is a time of economic and personal temporariness”. He claims this period is often characterised by frequent changes of residence, low sporadic earning levels and that marriage and family may be shunned. It is also evident that this age group has little career stability at this stage of their lives and the UK General Household Survey (1987) states “40 percent of 16-24-year-olds leave their jobs every year” (cited in Willis 1990: 14). Willis (1990: 14) contends that this is owing to low levels of job satisfaction.

The period of youth which exists between childhood and adulthood now includes many who are aged in their mid-twenties as people delay full time employment either to undertake tertiary study or because the jobs are not available. Those New Zealanders who are employed between the ages of 18 and 25 are less likely to have the financial responsibilities of children and mortgage than their adult counterparts. Many “kiwis” choose to do their OE (overseas experience) during their early to mid twenties owing to an agreement between New Zealand and Britain that New Zealanders aged under 27 may undertake working holidays in what was formerly “the mother country”. For the purposes of this thesis those aged between 18 and 25 will generally be labelled “youth” or “young adults”, however it is acknowledged that “youth” may describe someone as young as thirteen, while the term “young adult” may be extended to include all those aged under thirty five years old.

Government policy can directly affect the financial status of young adults, which may dictate an individual’s living arrangements (ie whether a person continues to live with his or her family, lives in a flat, is married or living in a de facto relationship) and entertainment choices. Finances, accessibility and available free time are three factors likely to affect a person’s media

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rising and New Zealand women marry, on average, four years later than they did in the 1970s (Statistics New Zealand 1994: 86).

and/or entertainment preferences. Radio, as a cheap and personal media, may be more accessible than television, which is usually situated in a family space. Young people tend to participate in a high level of what Stewart (1992: 216) calls "away-from-home activities", even if "away-from-home" only means listening to a radio in the bedroom, rather than watching television with the rest of the family in the lounge.

Terms are coined for each generation and the "teenagers" of the 1950s became the "baby boomers" of the 1970s. Today 18 to 25 year olds are often known as Generation X, a group of media savvy, somewhat cynical twenty-somethings who cannot remember a time when popular music was not widely disseminated, who have grown up in a culture of high divorce and crime rates and huge advertising pressures. All these images grossly over-generalise characteristics held by many differing individuals on the basis of their age, however they are useful in determining, to some extent, how the media perceives and creates material for particular audiences. This thesis examines how radio broadcasters go about catering for an enigmatic group of listeners who are no longer children and are generally free from overt parental control but who do not yet have the financial stability, responsibilities nor career prospects associated with adulthood.

### **An overview**

This thesis is split into three sections: Part I discusses theoretical and methodological considerations, Part II provides the social, historical and political context of broadcasting for young adults, and Part III uses three case studies to apply and exemplify some of the theories and concepts discussed in Parts I and II.

Chapter 1 locates the thesis firmly within the realm of media production, using critical political economy theory to stress the importance of issues such as media ownership, the boundaries within which media workers are required to produce material and how the actions of individuals are influenced by the broader political and economic environment within which they work. Critical political economy illustrates the political and organisational constraints affecting radio stations, whereas the concept of "gatekeeping", also introduced in the first chapter, highlights the day-to-day work practices of programme directors who must operate within these constraints to select and reject material for broadcast.



Chapters 3 and 4 examine the historical development of radio broadcasting which focuses primarily on young adults. Chapter 3 discusses how Britain, the United States and Australia have three differing approaches to broadcasting for young adults; while Chapter 4 investigates the New Zealand situation, to show that pre-1980s broadcasting in this country had a history of government regulation, state ownership and political interference. New Zealand's broadcasting system was deregulated in 1989 and the sale of radio broadcasting frequencies has forced contemporary commercial radio stations to operate in a saturated, intensely competitive market environment. The government did however reserve some frequencies in order to fulfil cultural and social objectives and iwi and student radio are two types of stations to have benefited from this state intervention.

Part III of the thesis represents three case studies and Chapters 5-7 on 2XS, Radio Massey and Mai FM rely on information gathered using unstructured interviews with programme directors and a textual analysis of nine hours of radio broadcasting across the three stations. Earlier in the thesis, Chapter 2 examines why these three stations were chosen as case studies, and how the specific broadcast segments were selected, along with ethical issues such as the need to identify the station's programme directors. Chapters 5-7 show how all three stations stress the importance of music programming, rely on advertising to either make a profit or cover at least part of their operational costs and cater to younger listeners. However, 2XS, Mai FM and Radio Massey have adopted differing formats, operate under a variety of government regulations and broadcast to distinct groups of listeners, who although they may be the same age, have other defining characteristics.

A range of theories and methodologies are drawn together and discussed in Chapters 1, 3 and 4. These chapters present and critique literature relating to various aspects of youth broadcasting, however this thesis does not isolate one chapter as a literature review. The first chapter examines theorists who have addressed critical political economy and gatekeeping, whilst Chapters 3 and 4 cite literature relating to topics such as popular music, radio programming and differing types of radio structures.

Primarily, this thesis deals with the production context of three New Zealand radio stations which perceive their audience as containing a sizeable number of listeners aged between 18 and 25 years old. Radio audiences are dealt with in a secondary fashion: finding out what listeners think about the radio broadcasts they hear is rejected in favour of establishing what radio broadcasters **think** their listeners want to hear. Thus, the stress is on the programme directors' perception of their audience, rather than the audience itself. The methodological approach is therefore, to use textual analysis to examine what comes out of the radio speaker and to gauge why the programme director has chosen to play that particular music or to appoint a DJ who sounds a certain way. It is conceded that a programme director only has limited choice and is under considerable pressure to adhere to a format, charter or workplace structure imposed by the station's owners or management. It is to these issues that we now turn.

**PART I:  
THEORY AND METHOD**

## Chapter 1 – Theoretical Considerations

### Introduction

Critical political economy theory may be used to examine the production of cultural texts and the way organisations exist within a wider social, political and economic context. Broadly Marxist in its approach, critical political economy rejects the argument that capitalism necessarily produces certain types of institutions and cultural products. Thus, a range of institutions may exist within capitalist economies. For example, New Zealand continues to have a number of radio stations which are protected, to a greater or lesser degree, by the state. These include state funded public service broadcasters (National Radio, Concert FM), non-profit media which cannot compete directly with their commercial counterparts (student and Access radio) and government subsidised media which must comply with specific cultural objectives (iwi stations).

Individual choice and autonomy continue to have a place within a political economy model. Audience and profit maximisation are the most important factors in determining the decisions made by commercial media workers. However, even in a deregulated and intensely competitive market, media workers may, within certain boundaries, still exhibit individual creativity and oppose workplace norms.

Gatekeeping is a concept which investigates the decision-making processes of key players within the media. Gatekeeping theory is an appropriate method of examining the decision-making process of those whose job it is to select, reject and formulate material. Initially used to analyse news production processes, this thesis will utilise gatekeeping theory to explore how programme directors determine the overall sound of a radio station whilst remaining within the boundaries of a specific radio format.

### Classical political economy theory – a critique

Critical political economy developed out of, and in reaction to, criticisms of a more classical approach which many contemporary theorists view as overly simplistic and deterministic. Classical political economy theory draws heavily on Marxist ideology, but it has been criticised on several counts. Namely, the idea that those who own the media determine its content, secondly its failure to allow individuals sufficient autonomy and finally an

over-emphasis on economic factors to the detriment of day-to-day work practices. Murdock and Golding (1977: 17) claim the Soviet version of Marxist sociology “reverted to a crudely deterministic view of base-superstructure relations in which cultural forms were reduced to more or less simple reflections of economic and class relations”. Murdock and Golding (1977: 16) reject this so-called “determinism” in favour of interpreting capitalism as a constantly changing system and consequently they maintain that any analysis must be “both concrete and specific” (ibid: 17). The research undertaken as part of this thesis is located both temporally and geographically and it focuses on three “concrete” radio stations and examines a segment of their broadcasts during a very “specific” three hour period.

Shuker (1994: 24) also warns that classical political economy theory “can all too easily slip into a form of economic determinism, married to (capitalist) conspiracy theory; seeing culture as produced [only] by economic relations”. There is no simplistic equation or theory which can predict media content, media practices or the structure of media institutions on the basis of ownership. The drive for profit and tensions between the state, market and individuals effect the structure of media institutions and the type of content they are likely to produce and/or disseminate.

### **Instrumentalism versus structuralism**

Wood (1982), Golding and Murdock (1991) and Garnham (1990) all reject an instrumentalist interpretation of Marxism and political economy theory. “Instrumentalists focus on the ways that capitalists use their economic power with a commercial market system to ensure that the flow of public information is consonant with their interests” (Golding and Murdock 1991: 18). This leads to a propagandist model of the media such as that espoused by Chomsky in *Manufacturing Consent* (c1988). It ignores any contradictions within a capitalist system such as media which exist outside the market economy, audiences who actively oppose the messages being disseminated or the fact that cultural and informational products are classic “public goods” (Garnham 1990: 34). Wood instead concurs with Poulantzas’ view that:

rejects the notion that the State is an instrument that can be appropriated by classes ... Instead his structuralist approach

comprehends both the autonomy of political structures and their functioning for the economic structure of capitalist relations. The State functions to reproduce capitalism, not by representing the immediate, frequently contrary interests of the bourgeoisie but either by directly intervening in the accumulation process itself or less directly by maintaining the stability of the system as a whole.

(Wood 1982: 97)

There are also potential problems with structuralism which various theorists have criticised for its rigidity and failure to locate material within a particular historical context (Wood 1982: 93; Golding and Murdock 1991: 18). A structural approach is useful providing that one discipline (such as economics) does not come to dominate over all others; there is an acknowledgment of the constant change which takes place within any economic system; and theory is not overgeneralised so that any analysis is grounded in a specific time and place.

### **What is critical political economy theory?**

Critical political economy offers a more sophisticated theoretical framework which acknowledges possibilities such as individual autonomy, state owned organisations and institutions which operate outside the capitalist system. The structures of institutions, media ownership and the actions of individuals are effected by the broader context of the political and economic environment within which the media operate. The mass media are, therefore, viewed as systems which, in western democratic societies, are structured to a greater or lesser extent by government regulation and subject to the market forces of capital. Critical political economy is concerned with the drive for profit maximisation, media ownership and the balance between state regulation and market forces. The theory is relevant to a number of broadcasting trends apparent in New Zealand and internationally, such as a concentration of media ownership and a lessening of state control in favour of “deregulation” or “privatisation” of state assets (see p. 65).

Critical political economy asks questions about the role of the state in broadcasting, the external constraints on those working in the media and how this affects their output. At the micro level it entails an examination of

specific work practices and how they relate to overriding economic concerns. Essentially the theory operates at three levels to examine:

1. the historical, economic and political structures of media institutions;
2. the day-to-day operating practices of broadcasters;
3. and media content or the "texts" that are produced.

This thesis analyses international trends and examines the programming practices and history of American, British, New Zealand and to a lesser extent Australian broadcasters (particularly those seeking to target a youth audience) to show the historical, economic and political culture which has shaped radio broadcasting in these three countries. The interviews with programme directors reveal everyday work practices, if only to a limited extent, and the analysis of nine hours of broadcasting across three radio stations provides an example of the media content produced. Media institutions represent an interaction between an economic base and a superstructure which focuses on ideology, the state, culture and institutional practice.

Academic theory changes as modes of cultural production, the nature of capitalism and state structures change. Garnham (1990: 24) and Abercrombie et al (1988: 148) continue to adapt a classical Marxist approach. The notion that the state is controlled by the ruling class has shifted to acknowledge that other classes do exert pressure through the parliamentary process, although ultimately the state continues to favour the interests of capital (ibid). Garnham (1990: 44) concentrates on the issue of commodity production, rather than the ideological content of the mass media, when seeking to understand and change the distribution or mode of cultural production. He rejects the classical Marxist position which presumes "that an image of the world favourable to the ruling class or the capitalist system would be embedded in media texts" (McQuail 1994: 258).

A capitalist system does not, according to Garnham, necessarily produce media content which adheres to a particular ideology. Critical political economy acknowledges cultural institutions with broader goals than just making a profit (for example public service broadcasting or community radio stations). Stations with public service goals still need to convince their state owners that they serve a sizeable audience in order to receive



continued government funding. Issues of funding also effect non-profit stations which are forced to keep their costs to a minimum by relying on voluntary labour and partly operating within what Garnham (1990: 38) describes as an "artisanal mode of cultural production", that is operating as a craft outside the capitalist economic system. Some broadcasters are able to operate outside the dominant system, but still they must continue to function according to its rules.

McQuail (1994: 82) defines critical political economy as "a socially critical approach which focuses primarily on the relation between the economic structure and dynamics of media industries and the ideological content of the media". Here, McQuail directly links the economic structure of media industries and their ideological content. As already stated, capitalist media do not necessarily produce messages that inherently favour capitalist objectives. However, commercialism is more pervasive in an economic system which relies on market based values and although individual films, television programmes or radio broadcasts do not necessarily promote consumer objectives, collectively media in capitalist countries evoke a climate of consumerism.

McQuail (1994: 82) maintains the consequences of media concentration include a reduction in the range of independent media sources; concentration on the largest markets; avoidance of risks; reduced investment in less profitable markets; neglect of smaller and poorer sections of the potential audience; and often a politically unbalanced range of news media. Some of these observations are applicable to the current New Zealand situation. Most commercial radio stations, for example, avoid taking risks when programming music by sticking with songs which have already proven popular in international, primarily American, markets. New Zealand has an aging population which causes fewer broadcasters to target the numerically smaller (and arguably poorer) number of listeners aged under 25 years old. Finally, some of the debate surrounding the sale of Radio New Zealand's commercial network focused on whether its new owners would reduce the number of radio stations operating in small rural centres. McQuail claims political economy theory is increasingly relevant because of trends such as concentrated media ownership, the development of a "global information economy", and a decline in the public control of the



mass media in favour of "deregulation", "liberalisation" or "privatization" (ibid: 83).

Golding and Murdock (1991: 18) maintain critical political economy "always goes beyond situated action to show how particular micro contexts are shaped by general economic dynamics and the wider structures they sustain". They allow for the complexity of cultural products and concede that economic factors cannot provide a complete explanation of communicative activity (op cit). Golding and Murdock argue that economic activity is not the sole criteria determining media content and some analysis of the media product (such as textual analysis) is essential to a better understanding of the role and functions of the mass media.

Golding and Murdock contend that a political economy of the media has three core tasks. The first is "to investigate how changes in the array of forces which exercise control over cultural production and distribution limit or liberate the public sphere" (ibid: 23). Often the idea of "the public sphere" has been applied only to forms of media which disseminate information, such as news or documentaries on the basis that everyone in a democratic society should have access to such information in order to fulfil their obligations and rights as citizens. The importance of securing a place for a range of groups in the public *entertainment* sphere is equally important however, and this rejects the cultural hierarchy which puts advertising, popular music and comedy below public service broadcasting, classical music and news and current affairs. Secondly, textual analysis aims to elucidate "how the economic dynamics of production structure discourse by promoting certain cultural forms over others" (ibid: 27). For example, within radio, music programming decisions tend to favour certain types of music and established rather than new artists. Finally, cultural consumption explores the barriers limiting consumer freedom, such as the cost which prevents some people from buying media hardware.

Garnham raises a number of problems which are central to media and information industries operating within capitalist countries. He correctly asserts that the "central characteristic of capital is growth and accumulation" (Garnham 1990: 39), but maintains this causes difficulties for informational and cultural products which are classic "public goods" and cannot be bought and sold in the same fashion as other, more tangible commodity products.

The market attempts to solve these anomalies through the use of strategies such as copyright, selling audiences to advertisers, State patronage, control of access to information either through point of sale access (cinemas) or by controlling the distribution mechanism (radio or television) and built in obsolescence through the manipulation of time (eg newspapers) (Garnham 1990: 34).

### **Why is it "critical"?**

McQuail maintains "an 'alternative [or critical] paradigm' rests on a different view of society, one which does not automatically accept the prevailing liberal-capitalist order as just or inevitable or the best one can hope for in the fallen state of humankind." Golding and Murdock (1991: 15-16) claim a theory is critical when "it draws for its analysis on a critique, a theoretically informed understanding, of the social order in which communications and cultural phenomena are being studied". In this case they are referring to a neo-Marxist approach which is concerned with "the constitution and exercise of power" (ibid) within society. Critical political economy tends to critique the status quo and seriously consider how, what are generally western capitalist countries, could operate under an alternative economic system.

Abercrombie et al (1988: 56) maintain that during the Reformation critical theory "came to mean uncovering hidden assumptions and debunking their claims to authority, as well as simple fault-finding." The Frankfurt School foregrounded the ideal that critical theory also had to be *self* critical. There has since been a move away from classical political economy theory on the basis that capitalism is constantly changing as an economic system and consequently "it was impossible to remain entirely within the framework of Marx's criticism of nineteenth-century capitalism" (ibid: 57).

Golding and Murdock (1991: 18) claim that unlike mainstream economics critical political economy "goes beyond questions of technical efficiency to engage with basic moral questions of justice, equity and the public good". The authors fail to define what they consider to be "mainstream" economics however and within the many branches of the discipline there are economists likely to disagree with the assertion that their profession fails to

deal with "basic moral questions". New Zealand economist Brian Easton<sup>1</sup>, for example, has written extensively about the way issues such as health, education and the welfare state impact upon the "public good". Easton is an economist who exhibits an underlying concern with the inequitable distribution of available resources. It is an approach which, unlike a liberal pluralist view, does not assume that the rules of capital and the marketplace are necessarily the best ways of assuring consumer choice and satisfaction.

*Critical* political economists are concerned to avoid the danger of depicting the actions of individuals as predetermined and overridden by economic structures. The theory acknowledges "the autonomy of the superstructure" (Shuker 1994: 24) by historically grounding its examples to acknowledge that different systems of capital produce differing institutions. As Shuker maintains, capitalism and mass production do often determine the texts produced, but this determination is never absolute since "'alternatives to 'mainstream' commercial music [or more generally mainstream commercial media] are always present" (ibid: 37). Garnham (1990: 6) maintains that human action is not predetermined in any unilateral sense, but that determination "does make some courses of action more likely than others ... and also acknowledges ... certain absolute, often material limits to the range of human action". Critical political economy theory involves predicting the most likely courses of action given external constraints such as government legislation or economic activity. Nevertheless it is impossible to completely rule out individual autonomy within these contexts. "A full analysis of control, then needs to look at the complex interplay between intentional action and structural constraint at every level of the production process" (Murdock 1982: 125).

### **Why critical political economy is historically specific**

Golding and Murdock outline four historical processes vital to consider when addressing a critical political economy of culture. These are: "the growth of the media; the extension of corporate reach; commodification; and the changing role of state and government intervention" (op cit). Because critical political economy is both historically and geographically

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<sup>1</sup> Whether or not Easton can be considered a "mainstream" economist is debatable. However his views are widely disseminated and for several years he has had a weekly column in the *New Zealand Listener*.

specific, it is necessary to apply these processes to the general topic of this thesis, that is radio broadcasting.

*Media growth* has changed radio's status as it has moved from being a primary to a secondary medium with the introduction of television. Following the increasing popularity of television as a primary entertainment source in the 1950s, radio was forced to adopt an alternative format for its survival. This was when radio drama, informational programmes and comedies began to dwindle and music became the primary element of most radio programming. (This initially took place in the US, although internationally most commercial radio stations<sup>2</sup> now follow North American programming norms.) Radio's peak scheduling times shifted to when people tended to watch less television (for example at breakfast time, 7-9 a.m. and "drive time", 5-7 p.m.). Radio formatting will continue changing with the introduction and growth of new technologies, examples are radio's presence on the internet and the technological ability to relay signals and have a network of geographically disparate stations broadcasting the same material.

The *corporate reach* of private enterprise has recently increased in the radio industry with the sale of the formerly state owned Radio New Zealand commercial network to private interests.<sup>3</sup> *Commodification* deals primarily with the "climate of advertising" prevalent in the majority of media which exist in capitalist countries. Commercial radio stations only continue if they can sell sufficient advertising to make a profit. Finally, drastic changes to New Zealand's broadcasting regulations provide a good example of how *the changing role of the state and government intervention* can effect the broadcasting milieu. Since the 1960s New Zealand radio broadcasting has moved from being closely regulated by government to being one of the most free market and deregulated broadcasting systems in the world. There were only five private radio stations operational in New Zealand in 1972 (Pauling 1994: 13), compared to approximately 160 in 1996 (Statistics New Zealand 1996: 243).

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<sup>2</sup> Commercial radio stations sell advertising to try and fulfil their primary goal of making a profit. Commercial stations may include state owned broadcasting networks such as the former Radio New Zealand commercial network.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 65 for more details on this sale.

Garnham (1990: 25) stresses an historically specific approach on the basis that "the ways in which (that) surplus is extracted and distributed, and the relation of that economic form to the political, are historically distinct and specific." He is critical of "a tendency to focus on discourse within a relativist, largely ahistorical and individualistic frame of analysis" (ibid: 20). Garnham maintains that capitalism itself is an historically distinct and specific form.

Under capitalism the means of cultural production may be provided: either in commodity form as part of the accumulation process (e.g. records): *or* as part of the realisation process of other sectors of the capitalist economy (e.g. advertising): *or* directly out of capitalist revenue (e.g. arts patronage): *or* through the State.

(Garnham 1990: 42)

In this way the structures and practices of specific media institutions must be examined in conjunction with the broader economic, social and political contexts that regulate them. The same economic environment does not necessarily produce the same broadcasting structures. The way which the state regulates a broadcasting industry will effect its structures. Australia, for example, has a strong public service ethos with the ABC and the publicly funded Triple J youth network, as well as legislation requiring broadcasters to air a certain amount of local content, where as New Zealand's current, but historically specific, broadcasting environment has no "local music quota" nor is there a publicly funded youth radio network. There is, however, no indication that this will always be the case. While critical political economy is primarily concerned with overriding organisational factors such as ownership and government regulation, gatekeeping provides a framework to examine the day-to-day operating practices of media organisations.

### **Gatekeeping**

The term "gatekeeping" was first applied to media practice by White (1950) who analysed how a telegraph wire editor selected items to be printed in his local newspaper. "Gatekeeping" is now an established method of analysing the way in which media workers are constantly selecting, rejecting and reformulating material for broadcast or publication. Initially researchers focused on the subjective decision-making process of individual



gatekeepers, to highlight issues such as personal bias or to focus on the type of material which was rejected. Later studies<sup>4</sup> recognised a certain uniformity amongst news media products and examined the impact of organisational values on individual decision makers. Most of the research using the gatekeeping model has centred on the news media, analysing how editors select items for broadcast or publication and the way journalists construct news stories by concentrating on certain sources and adopting common "news values".

Gatekeeping is, however, applicable to any area of the media where messages are selected and produced. Rothenbuhler (1985: 211), in his study of an American radio station, relies on concepts derived from "gatekeeping" to try and determine how, within a given format, the programmers decide which songs to play. The study highlights a whole series of "gates" which the song has to pass through in order to move to the next level and ultimately radio broadcast. The most obvious gatekeepers in Rothenbuhler's case study are the station's programme director and music director, along with an outside consultant. The radio programmers were strongly influenced by trade publications which carried both industry aggregated data, or charts and anecdotal advice and opinions. The editors of the trade publications also became gatekeepers since the music they chose to promote was more likely to be broadcast. Likewise, music company promoters who dealt directly with the radio programmers played an important part in determining which product to push. Other radio stations also had some impact on which songs this particular station playlisted.

New Zealand programme directors also play a crucial role in determining the overall sound of contemporary radio stations. It is their job to determine what music is played, the duration of news bulletins, to deal with personnel issues relating to DJs and to monitor the way their radio station sounds. DJs (particularly morning DJs) may retain some control over their show, but in commercial radio at least, it is the programme director who decides whether they should sound "laid back" or "young and hip", whether they should be a personality or a continuity DJ, what music they play and when and how

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<sup>4</sup> For example Tuchman, G. (c1978). *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*. New York: Free Press.

they should structure their show in terms of advertising, voice breaks, competitions and music.

The programme director's role may be somewhat different at stations which do not have profit as their primary motive. New Zealand student radio stations, for example, still have a playlist compiled by the programme director, but volunteer DJs are also able to choose a great deal of the music they play. As volunteers, student radio DJs may determine what they say<sup>5</sup> and how they say it. So although the programme director at a student station still plays a crucial role and is often one of the station's few full-time paid staff members, he or she does not have the same degree of control over exactly what goes to air as a programme director at a commercial station.

Chapple and Garofalo (1977: 104) claim: "The program director is responsible for the overall sound of the station. Anything that goes out over the air is tied to him [sic]." Chapple and Garofalo (1977: 102) and Rothenbuhler (1985: 229-230) show how American programme directors rely on four main factors when choosing music:<sup>6</sup>

1. Listening to tracks which fit the station's format and are recommended by "pluggers" or record company personnel.
2. Examining the charts (in the USA particularly *Billboard*).
3. Discussion with consultants who are contracted to advise the station.
4. A set of work based ethics which take account of what other programme directors think and what other radio stations (particularly those using the same format in the same market) broadcast.

American radio consultants play an important role in determining what is played on commercial radio stations. According to one radio consultant:

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<sup>5</sup> Volunteer DJs must still comply with established broadcasting standards, such as not swearing on air, although if they break these standards the sanctions are likely to be much less severe than those given to their commercial counterparts.

<sup>6</sup> This information is American and somewhat out of date, but in spite of this New Zealand programme directors working at commercial radio stations appear to have many of the same job functions.

A consultant works with research data to help plan a strategy for the station. A consultant puts information into a package that will position the station correctly in listeners' minds, and he or she helps market the station to bring listeners in to try out the station ... from designing music notations, creating "clock hours" on the station, and selecting air talent ... to developing television commercials to advertise the station, executing direct marketing campaigns to ask listeners to listen, to working with station staff to make sure the "promise" of the station's position stays on track.

(Wimmer and Dominick 1991: 304)

Rothenbuhler (1985: 230) notes that consultants appeared to have the ultimate veto over what music was played. It is questionable however, whether consultants employed by commercial radio stations in New Zealand have this amount of control over a station's sound.

Outlining the role of programme directors and consultants shows the degree of control people working in these positions have over the overall sound of a radio station. The station's owner may determine its format, but it is the programme director's duty to implement that format and achieve a consistent sound designed to attract a particular audience. The programme director's job at non-profit (in this case student) stations involves attracting and training volunteer broadcasters, determining at least some of what is broadcast (although generally far less than a commercial programme director) and ensuring broadcasts adhere to any objectives stated in the station's charter.

The music industry has gatekeepers filtering material at each step of the process involving the recording and marketing of a song. Decisions must be made about whether a song moves from an individual artist, to a recording studio, whether there is a video produced and if there will be live concert performances, and then whether this recording is sold by music retailers, marketed by a record company or hyped for radio airplay. This type of pre-selection system "... filters available products, insuring that only a sample of the available 'universe' is ever brought to the attention of the general public" (Hirsch 1970: 5, cited in Shoemaker 1991: 54).



There is a relationship between the media gatekeepers who decide to broadcast a product and the organisations which either produce the product (as with music); provide information (for example, news sources); or purchase broadcasting time (as with advertisers). The power of the programme director's "gatekeeping" role in determining what music is played is exemplified in Rothenbuhler's (1985) study of Y-FM. During a ten week period, of the 467 albums made available to the radio station for airplay, only 81 (17%) were considered, 36 (8%) were given airplay and of those only 29 (6%) had no previous airplay. A number of authors<sup>7</sup> maintain that historically music promoters have placed a great deal of pressure on radio programme directors to publicise certain songs. Promoters do this by placing advertisements in trade publications, offering interviews with the artist, special mailings, release parties or personally pressuring individual gatekeepers.

The organisations which produce cultural products (e.g., recording companies) need to liaise with the media involved in their dissemination (or publication) to a broader audience of potential consumers. The relationship also benefits the media however, since the journalist needs news to fill bulletins and the programmer needs music to fill the schedules. Hirsch (1990: 138) claims that where industries are not vertically integrated and access to consumers hinges primarily on coverage decisions by autonomous gatekeepers – "institutionalized side payments ('payola')<sup>8</sup> emerged as a central tactic ... to assure desired coverage". He contends that even with the outlawing of direct payments to disc jockeys in the US, this system of payments has continued in less direct, more subtle ways.

The current lack of any payola scheme means that music programming and news can be subjected to an analysis which stresses the role of gatekeepers who hold a certain amount of power in determining content, either as individuals, or as cogs within the overall structure of an organisation. Music is one of the most concentrated of all media industries "with five

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<sup>7</sup> See, for example, the section in Street (1986) titled "Bribery and Convention" (pp. 119-120) or the comments made by Peterson and Berger (1972: 143-144) cited in Frith and Goodwin (Eds.) (1990).

<sup>8</sup> A scheme where record companies directly pay media gatekeepers to broadcast certain songs.

international companies (in 1990) controlling over 60 per cent of the global market for all kinds of music sales and income" (McQuail 1994: 166). Consequently these companies can put massive funding into technical production and marketing ensuring gatekeepers (particularly those working in commercial media) are more likely to choose their product. It is often, therefore an indirect ability to pay, which assures a song is broadcast repeatedly on a number of radio stations. Likewise organisations which can afford to package information in a form attractive to the news media and pay to stage events are more likely to receive news coverage. McQuail (1994: 224) defines "assimilation" as an "institutionalized, collusive relationship" between the news media and their sources. He (op cit) claims politics, law enforcement, government, major sports events and big business are "able to claim media attention more or less at will and ... [these organisations have] ... a good deal of control over the flow of information". Thus, even though no direct payment takes place there is an indirect link between an organisation's ability to pay for marketing and publicity, their perceived credibility and the amount of media coverage their product receives.

It is more difficult to examine advertising using a gatekeeper model since the advertiser's ability to pay is the sole criteria (provided the advertising complies with any broadcasting regulations) determining whether advertisements are broadcast. The primary imperative of commercial media is to make a profit and "advertisers can exert substantial influence on what gets into the channel, what gets selected, and how it is shaped" (Shoemaker 1991: 64). Advertiser concerns are likely to shape radio programmers' decisions about content in other areas. For example, there may be conflict between a radio station's newsroom and its advertising department regarding a negative news item about one of the station's major advertisers. Likewise, part of the reason for certain music types of music receiving greater radio airplay than others may be advertiser preference. It is unlikely a station could attract enough advertising to make a profit if it had a heavy metal format for instance, even if it could attract a sufficiently large audience.

The direct (advertising) or indirect (news media sources, music producers) ability of sources to pay to have material broadcast links the gatekeeping model back to the critical political economy theory already discussed. Shoemaker (1991: 63) points out that in profit making organisations "the

gatekeeping process is part of the overall process of maximizing income and minimizing expenses. The rules that govern gatekeeping should be shaped to maximize market appeal, and, therefore, gatekeeping rules might vary according to market characteristics". Thus differing "market characteristics" or economic systems produce differing types of media institutions which produce different types of content.

McQuail (1994: 160) takes this idea a step further and maintains that: "There is a logic in the advertising-based media which favours a convergence of media tastes and consumption patterns (less diversity). This is because homogeneous audiences are often more interesting to advertisers than heterogeneous and dispersed markets". Even in a relatively deregulated environment, such as radio broadcasting in New Zealand, the idea of "narrowcasting" cannot be equated with variety since many profit driven radio stations gravitate towards a small range of formats, namely variations on the classic hits, contemporary hit radio and talkback formulas.

Many broadcasters are what Garnham calls "ideologists who ... are ... hired servants" (32). That is positions such as programme producers, journalists and announcers come within the "cohort of mental workers [who are] not directly and materially productive" (Garnham 1990: 32). These workers are paid in wages for their labour but they are not in a position to determine how the organisation's profits will be distributed. They do have a certain degree of agency or autonomy at an operational level in deciding what is broadcast. Radio staff are not directly integrated as part of the recording industry but they use existing prerecorded material to create a new product, that is a radio show. Thus they may act as gatekeepers who are either involved in perpetuating the rules and systems of their organisation and society at large or in some cases, and within certain boundaries, they may be able to question the values of their workplace or more generally, of society.

Commercial radio stations have the primary goal of making a profit and there are likely to be both formal and informal rules determining content. Commercial stations totally separate the tasks of choosing what to broadcast (programme directors) and broadcasting it (disc jockeys). These roles are likely to be less distinct in non-profit stations and volunteer broadcasters generally have some choice in the music they play (for example announcers on Access radio stations or student radio stations). For volunteer student

radio broadcasters having at least some control over a show's music content is an important motivational factor for doing a show.<sup>9</sup> The decision-making process is less centralised in a non-profit environment because a number of people are directly involved in determining a programme's musical content. Gatekeepers who are announcers in non-profit stations are less likely to be influenced by organisational values than their commercial counterparts who tend to be programme directors.

"The media have to have an assured supply [of material] for their own needs and thus have to 'order' content in advance" (McQuail 1994: 223). The amount of suitable material varies and the number of songs which receive airplay will depend on what the record companies supply to a radio station in any given week. Music programming schedules indicate an order determined by the programme director outlining the music an announcer will play at particular times, including gaps for advertisements, news broadcasts or competitions, or in the case of student stations DJ choice. Journalists order news items into a bulletin, whilst advertising staff and copyrighters sell and produce advertisements to fill a schedule. An automated radio station, where everything is prerecorded to be broadcast at a latter date, represents the ultimate in pre-planned media. It is a paradox that, in spite of all this careful organisation, radio announcers must still sound as if what they say is spontaneous, making off the cuff comments to listeners.

Media workers employed in gatekeeping positions often have their practices regulated by values and routines imposed by their workplace. The organisation may be structured so that broadcasters identify with a professional group (other journalists, advertisers or producers for example) rather than a geographic local community (Rothenbuhler 1985). Self censorship operates to eliminate personal views in favour of those which conform to workplace norms so a professional ideology is prevalent amongst all commercial radio broadcasters to ensure, for example, that programmers do not move outside their prescribed format, journalist's news items are under one minute in duration and commercial radio station announcers do not undertake programming duties to determine what is

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<sup>9</sup> Unstructured interviews with six student radio announcers in 1995 (Brennan 1995) indicated that a primary reason for their involvement in student radio was a desire to play the music that they liked.



broadcast. "In some instances, socialization may only be 'skin deep' – the employee suppresses dissident values in order to keep the job or perhaps even to work behind the scenes to further a goal" (Shoemaker 1991: 60). It is also possible for these boundaries to break down when volunteers play a major role in operating a radio station and profit is not the primary motive. In effect, volunteers may choose to ignore the playlist for either part or all of their show if they disagree with the programme director's choice of music.

McQuail (1994: 214) criticises the gatekeeping model on the basis that it "has a built-in limitation in its implication that news arrives in ready-made and unproblematic event-story form at the 'gates' of the media where it is either admitted or excluded". To a certain extent, this is a valid criticism of the earlier gatekeeping models which concentrated on the role of the news editor who compiled bulletins, rather than the journalist who actually produced the news items. The gatekeeping model can still illuminate news production processes however, by focusing on how the journalist decides which topic to highlight, which contacts to speak with and ultimately which material to include (and for that matter exclude) in the item.

McQuail's criticism that "news arrives in ready-made form" is applicable to the earlier research, such as that undertaken by White, but the gatekeeping model has been expanded to examine not just how existing news items are chosen for broadcast, but also how the production of news is determined by factors such as news values and organisational norms. Shoemaker (1991: 5) contends that gatekeeping provides "a structure for the study of processes other than selection, that is, how content is shaped, structured, positioned and timed". Barnard (1989: 113) argues that in Britain radio's gatekeepers are the programme controllers or producers "who oversee not only what is played on the radio but the environment in which it is heard, the frequency of its playing and its positioning within programmes ... They, far more than the presenters, are the source of power in music radio". Issues such as timing and repetition are crucial to music programming decisions and a distinction must be made between a song which is broadcast once at midnight and a song which is scheduled a number of times during peak listening hours. Radio is an excellent medium within which to apply the "gatekeeping" model since radio stations tend to distribute information, rather than creating or producing it (Hirsch 1981, cited in Shoemaker 1991: 56). News items and advertisements are still sometimes produced by local

radio staff, but the bulk of a commercial radio station's content is made up of prerecorded music and in New Zealand only public service broadcasters have a role in recording music for airplay.

## Conclusion

Critical political economy focuses on the way which media organisations operate within the capitalist market place, who holds the power in determining media content and the context of production. The theory is less concerned with how audience members choose to interpret a text since, as Frith puts it:

what is possible for us as consumers – what is available to us, what we can do with it – is a result of decisions made in production, made by musicians, entrepreneurs, and corporate bureaucrats, made according to governments' and lawyers' rulings, in response to technological opportunities.

(Frith 1988: 6)

This is why it is important to examine issues such as broadcasting deregulation, the structure of differing radio stations and the role of gatekeepers when seeking to understand what is available to us, as radio listeners.

Critical political economy is only a theory within which to make some sense of the historical changes and differences within radio broadcasting. Like all theory it must be grounded in specific everyday practice and applied to specific circumstances to have validity. Contemporary radio stations do not produce a great proportion of the material they broadcast and this is particularly true of stations which target younger listeners and adopt what is primarily a music format. Critical political economy theory and gatekeeping are, therefore, useful concepts to examine where the control lies within organisations which determine what is broadcast and how material comes to the attention of key media gatekeepers. Likewise, these theories can illuminate why so many individual gatekeepers within the commercial broadcasting environment arrive at very similar decisions concerning what content to broadcast.

## Chapter 2 – Methodology

### Introduction

The primary question addressed by this thesis is “how (and to a certain extent, why) selected New Zealand radio stations target an audience comprised of listeners aged between 18 and 25”. Consequently it is necessary to examine both the content and programming practices of several radio stations. This chapter describes why particular radio stations were chosen for analysis, how segments of their broadcasts were selected and analysed and why programme directors (rather than say, station managers) were interviewed. In many ways the analysis of selected radio broadcasts replaces the extensive field observation evident in most pure ethnographic research. The interviews investigate how a programme director interprets and implements the station’s formatting policy to decide exactly what goes to air. The interviews also represent an examination of the way radio programming is affected by social and economic factors and attempts to avoid viewing selected radio broadcasts as “isolated texts”. Fetterman (1989: 47) maintains “[i]nterviews explain and put into a larger context what the ethnographer sees and experiences”, in this case the interviews help contextualise the material heard on the radio broadcasts.

This combination of semi-structured interviews and textual analysis takes account of the opinions, theories and practices adopted by programme directors and examines the actual broadcasts, that is the sound emanating from the speaker when the radio is turned on. There is a lack of research in this area and the few studies which have been undertaken emphasise the role of DJ talk and news at the expense of non-verbal aspects of broadcasting such as music and advertising. *The Radio Book 1994*, edited by Helen Wilson, provides the most complete outline to date of contemporary radio broadcasting in New Zealand, but its approach is sometimes descriptive rather than analytic. Patrick Day (1994) provides the most comprehensive historical analysis of New Zealand broadcasting up until 1960, but the next volume (which was unpublished at the time this thesis was being written) of *The Radio Years: A History of Broadcasting in New Zealand* is likely to be more pertinent to this thesis, on the basis it deals with more contemporary broadcasters. It is necessary to incorporate a number of theories and ideas (such as Williams’ (1990) concept of flow broadcasting, Montgomery’s (1991)

analysis of DJ talk and Shoemaker's (1991) concept of gatekeeping) when analysing the radio broadcasts.

Stations with differing funding bases were chosen to exemplify how economic criteria greatly influence the content of radio programming. Two of the stations, Radio Massey and 2XS, are based in Palmerston North, a provincial New Zealand city with a population of approximately 80,000, while the third, Mai FM, broadcasts to New Zealand's largest city, Auckland which has a population of approximately one million. The two Palmerston North stations were selected because they were easily accessible to the researcher, their programming had a youth focus, and because of their contrasting goals and ownership (one is a privately owned commercial station, the other a non-profit station owned by the Massey University Students' Association). Mai FM was chosen primarily because it is one of the few iwi stations which specifically targets younger listeners. It does so on the basis that a high proportion of Auckland's urban Maori population are under 30. As a radio station operating in a major metropolitan centre, Mai FM also provides a contrast with the two Palmerston North stations.

### **Gaining access**

The first step towards conducting this research was to phone the managers of the three radio stations to introduce myself and briefly explain what was required. The stations' programme directors were then contacted and permission sought to interview them for between thirty minutes and an hour. At this point the programme directors were informed that three hours of the station's broadcasts would be taped and analysed and that the station's programming schedule or playlist was required for this period. After agreeing to take part in the research the programme directors were sent a follow up letter, an Information Sheet (see Appendix A) and a draft question guide. The programme directors were given the draft questionnaire in advance so they could start to think about how and why they programmed certain music. The interviews were semi-structured and a note on the Information Sheet indicated this was to be an informal interview which may raise issues other than those cited on the question guide.



### **Semi-structured interviews**

I conducted the two Palmerston North interviews at the radio station premises. This was done firstly to take as little of the programme directors' time as possible, and secondly because it allowed me to view their working environment. Unfortunately Mai FM's programme director, Ross Goodwin, was not available at a mutually suitable time and so he was interviewed by phone.

Rothenbuhler (1985) relies extensively on observational data in one of the few studies to explore the decision-making process which determines what music is programmed on an American album oriented rock radio station.

The observation periods covered two to five hours a day for one to three days a week, spread over five months (August 1981 to December 1981) ... Quantitative data were gathered in and around the Tuesday afternoon programming meetings over a three month period (January 1982 to March 1982).

(Rothenbuhler 1985: 214)

Such extensive data gathering is both time consuming and obtrusive (in the sense that there is always an outsider – the researcher – present). Observation techniques prove particularly useful in recording the activities of unstructured social interactions<sup>1</sup> however programming practices, particularly at commercial radio stations, have become routinized and professionalised. Consequently programme directors are able to describe a daily routine, or to explain which factors are taken into account when choosing music. It would have been difficult to observe the internal decision-making process which involves a programme director deciding which music should be played. Unlike at Radio 1 in the UK where a committee discusses which songs should be playlisted, or some American radio stations, such as the one studied by Rothenbuhler, where the programme director oversees a music director who is in charge of the music policy, all three programme directors at these stations had sole charge when compiling the station's playlists. Rothenbuhler (1985) minimised his influence on his chosen site by observing it extensively over a five month period and then taking a further three months to gather his quantitative

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<sup>1</sup> See Cohen's (1991) observations regarding the Merseyside music industry.

data. This study, however, aims to examine the programming practices of *three* radio stations and there was not the time to undertake such extensive observation at each of the three sites.

All three interviews were taped and then transcribed to provide a complete and accurate record of what was said. The participants were presumed to feel relatively comfortable about being tape recorded because it was a skill commonly required in their workplace. Most questions focused on how music was chosen for broadcast, the role of a programme director, the station's playlisting practices and what the programmers believed appealed to younger listeners.

### **Ethical issues**

This study deviates from standard social science research practices and identifies the participants interviewed. Lofland and Lofland (1995: 30) claim that "the burden of proof that names *are* essential to social science field reports ... should be on the investigator". There are a number of reasons for identifying the primary participants (that is the programme directors) in this research. Providing information about the geographical location of the three stations is essential to understanding their adoption of particular formats and programming strategies and in examining their appeal to particular communities (for example young urban Maori, students and the rural community). Likewise, it is important to identify them as a student station, an iwi station and a commercial station in order to explain factors such as whether they are required to make a profit, how they are funded and what type of audience is being targeted. The programme directors occupy a key gatekeeping role and it is necessary to identify their position within the station. Once the geographical location, the type of radio station and the participants' jobs were outlined, it is unlikely that pseudonyms would have protected their identity.

The Information Sheet (and initial discussions) made it quite clear that they would be identified, unless they specifically desired anonymity. When asked, all three programme directors were willing to be identified. Finally, all three programme directors were sent a draft copy of the thesis chapter which relates specifically to their station and given the opportunity to comment or correct any inaccuracies.

### **The broadcasts**

For the purposes of this study the stations' broadcasts were only sampled for a limited period (three hours for each station, nine hours in total). The programming schedules for these three hours made it possible to identify every song that was broadcast during the survey period.

The stations were in two different cities making it logistically impossible to sample the content of all three radio stations on the same day. Hennion and Meadel (1986) examine how radio has both a daily and a weekly schedule. Accordingly all the broadcasts were sampled on a Wednesday, because radio programming recognises a "succession of hours in the day or the series Monday to Friday/weekend in the week" (op cit: 292). Music programming in particular relies on a weekly schedule, playlists are usually updated on a weekly or fortnightly basis, even songs which are heavily rotated are played only once every three or four hours. The limited survey period made it impossible to generalise about each station's music programming policies on the basis of the sampling alone, although some general music programming trends are highlighted after considering the station's format, listening outside the survey period (particularly for the two Palmerston North stations) and using the interviews as an opportunity to gather more in depth information from the programme directors. All three stations were sampled at the same time of the day (7-8 a.m., 10-11 a.m. and 9-10 p.m.) and on the same day of the week (Wednesday) which permitted some limited comparisons of the three stations' programming practices.

Radio programming which relies predominantly on music for its content is continuous, operating in an on-going flow which cannot be split into discrete units (in the way that a film or even a television broadcast can be examined). Williams (1990) maintains the defining characteristic of broadcasting today is that a series of discrete items such as music, films and advertising are organised to form a continuous flow of programming. Radio news, DJ chat and advertising are elements within a flow of programming but these segments, which include speech, are kept brief because they break the continuous flow of music. Radio programmers working with music based formats view music as the primary programming element to attract listeners and keep segments which use speech to a minimum to reduce the chance of listeners switching off or changing stations because the music flow has been interrupted. Even particular types of music may interrupt the flow,

hypothetically a hard rock song played on a radio station with an urban contemporary format (see pp. 44-46 for a description of those formats which target a youth audience) may destroy the mellow atmosphere created by the programming.

Goffman (1981: 261) also draws attention to the idea of flow programming and describes "a radio station's broadcast output ... as a continuous flow of sound production across all the hours a station transmits". Hennion and Meadel (1986: 285) view radio as a vast generalised mixing console which "transforms speech and music into broadcasts; a mix of records, commercials, news and entertainment into a programme schedule; and recorded speech, readings, conversation, direct reportage and presentation into a unity of tone which characterizes a station". Examining one advertisement, one song or one comment by a DJ in isolation may render it meaningless since singular items may lose or change their meaning when separated from the context of the broadcast as a whole. Radio management follow a format when producing broadcasts, assuming that listeners tune in to a particular station because of its overall sound, rather than because of specific programmes. Formatting aims to achieve a sound which has a certain amount of predictability so listeners will know what they are likely to hear on any given radio station. Consequently this research examines chunks of radio programming, rather than isolated events. Choosing one hour segments ensures that the same DJ will be present for that hour and enables the programming to be examined at different times of the day, namely morning, mid-morning and evening. Ultimately radio mediates content which is often produced elsewhere (eg music and sometimes advertisements) formulating the varying parts into a seamless whole and relaying this sound to listeners.

The three time periods when the broadcasts were sampled (7-8 a.m., 10-11 a.m. and 9-10 p.m.) exemplify how radio stations have programming ideals which target particular groups of listeners undertaking certain activities at different times of the day. Early morning is radio's peak listening time when market research indicates that programmers should target a general audience seeking to be informed, chatted to and entertained during their morning routine; commercial broadcasters assume the mid-morning audience is primarily comprised of "housewives" and in the evenings programming is more specialist and takes greater risks, on commercial

stations newly released music is likely to receive more airplay, and younger listeners are targeted.<sup>2</sup>

After the broadcasts were selected and recorded, the verbal sections were transcribed and then coded. Concentrating only on the verbal aspects of radio broadcasting is problematic because, as with Radio 1 in the UK, on most music stations "the patter is normally only an incidental support to the music" (Montgomery 1991: 154) and of course the advertising. However transcribing what was said by DJs proved a particularly useful way of examining the morning show on 2XS because of its high percentage of speech content. These transcriptions made it possible to highlight and comment on the types of language likely to appeal to the station's target audience. It was more difficult to make sense of why particular songs were broadcast, further hindered by the fact that most research on radio broadcasting concentrates on spoken word programmes – be it news, talkback radio, educational programmes or drama. Studies of contemporary radio stations where music is a primary programming element have also tended to focus on DJ talk.<sup>3</sup>

Appendix D contains the transcripts of various advertisements, conversations and "promos" which were broadcast on each of the stations during the sampled broadcast. These excerpts have been chosen because they exemplify certain trends, theories or ideas that are discussed in Chapters 5-7. A tape of these excerpts, has been submitted with this thesis, and each of the programme directors were informed that this would be the case. This was necessary because transcripts only provide a limited indication of what is happening on radio, thus it is difficult, if not impossible, to indicate factors such as a change in tone or music in a written transcript.

### **Ethnography**

Ethnographers have a long history of examining the practices (which are often oral or visual, rather than written) of other cultures. As a methodology ethnography is well suited to grappling with using written academic material to examine oral, aural or visual experiences. This is

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<sup>2</sup> Barnard (1989) examines in some depth how the BBC's Radio 1 has different programming practices during the day and at night.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Montgomery (1986) and Brand and Scannell (1991).



particularly true of radio broadcasts, which use not only the spoken word in the form of the news, weather and DJ chat (for which a written transcription can be made), but also encompass music as a large part of their content and use a combination of both music and words in areas such as advertisements and station promos.

Saville-Troike (1989) outlines a list of factors for consideration when analysing communicative events. She primarily uses these factors to examine cultural events, but they are equally applicable when considering radio broadcasts.

Analysis of a communicative event begins with a description of the components which are likely to be salient ...

- 1 The *genre*, or type of event (e.g. joke, story, lecture, greeting, conversation).
- 2 The *topic*, or referential focus.
- 3 The *purpose* or *function*, both of the event in general and in terms of the interaction goals of individual participants.
- 4 The *setting*, including location, time of day, season of year, and physical aspects of situation (e.g. size of room, arrangement of furniture).
- 5 The *key*, or emotional tone of the event (e.g. serious, sarcastic, jocular).
- 6 The *participants*, including their age, sex, ethnicity, social status, or other relevant categories, and their relationship to one another.
- 7 The *message form*, including both the vocal and nonvocal channels, and the nature of the code which is used (e.g. which language, and which variety).
- 8 The *message content*, or surface level denotive references; what is communicated about.
- 9 The *act sequence*, or ordering of communicative/speech acts, including turn taking and overlap phenomena.
- 10 The *rules for interaction*, or what proprieties should be observed.
- 11 The *norms of interpretation*, including the common knowledge, the relevant cultural presuppositions, or shared understandings, which allow particular inferences



to be drawn about what is to be taken literally, what discounted, etc.

(Saville-Troike 1989: 138-139)

This research combines the specifics of place, locale and human interaction evident in an ethnographic approach with the more structural concerns of political economy which include questions of power (gatekeeping), the way government policies effect broadcasting and interpretations of meaning as they are related to current social conditions (Finnegan 1992).

Fetterman (1993: 155) claims that ethnographies are usually limited in sample size "because of the great emphasis on 'depth', 'intensity', [and] 'richness'" and he also contends that using more than one site gives the researcher "the ability to compare and contrast between settings in which similar activities occur" (op cit: 156). Thus this research restricts the number of broadcasts sampled and people interviewed, whilst the information is gathered from several sites which ultimately have the same purpose, that is producing radio broadcasts. Fetterman (1993: 157) maintains techniques used by the ethnographer "to record and make sense of experience are likely to include interviews ... the analysis of documents [in this case broadcasts], direct observation of events, and some effort to 'think' oneself into the perspective of the members, the introspective, empathetic process Weber called 'verstehen'". Working as a radio journalist for four years<sup>4</sup> has increased my empathy with radio employees. My more recent experience includes conducting a study at a student radio station using observation and unstructured interview techniques. This practical experience gave me some prior knowledge of my research sites, although it was still possible to distance myself from the topic because it focuses on programming practices, an area in which I have no first hand knowledge.

## Conclusion

This research uses semi-structured interviews, analysis of specific broadcasts and a literature review to outline international and historical trends in radio programming for 18 to 25 year olds and then to focus on three specific

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<sup>4</sup> I worked as a part-time unpaid news editor at RDU, the student radio station in Christchurch and was employed for three years in a full time paid position for two Radio New Zealand stations: Radio B.O.P in Tauranga and 2ZA in Palmerston North.

New Zealand case studies. Programme directors are interviewed because they are key gatekeepers and determine a station's overall sound within the structure of a particular format. An iwi, student and commercial station were chosen to show how the station's content may be effected by the way it is funded, the assumptions programme directors make about their audience and the way that listeners are categorised not only on the basis of their age, but are also targeted because of factors such as gender, ethnicity, occupation, geographical location or family status. The broadcasts were sampled at different times of the day to exemplify how programming (particularly within commercial radio) changes on the basis of who the programmers think is listening. The lack of research in this area has made it necessary to employ a range of different techniques when analysing the programming practices of radio stations. The interviews, combined with textual analysis, aim to overcome any tendency to examine the text at the expense of the context.

**PART II:**  
**THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC**  
**CONTEXT OF BROADCASTING FOR**  
**YOUNG ADULTS**

## Chapter 3 – The International Development of Radio

### Introduction

Internationally the way broadcasting is regulated varies, but two of the most influential systems are the USA's deregulated, commercial approach and Britain's public service broadcasting model. The two countries represent different ends of the spectrum, but are not totally polarised since American broadcasters have always been subject to certain regulation (for example relating to media ownership) and Britain now has radio and television stations which are funded by advertising. Outlining the broadcasting systems of only these two countries may appear ethnocentric, but my justification is twofold. Firstly, the limited scope of this thesis prevents an extended study of how other broadcasting systems target listeners who are aged between 18 and 25; and secondly an extensive examination of other broadcasting systems is not necessary since the New Zealand broadcasting system has been heavily influenced by both the American and British models.

The third model to be examined is that of the Australian Triple J network which is state funded and specifically targets a youth audience. The complete Australian broadcasting system is not discussed on the basis that the commercial stations (some of which also target a younger audience) operate in a similar way to those which exist in New Zealand and the USA. The Triple J network is unique in providing an example of advertising free, state funded broadcasting which adopts many public service broadcasting ideals, but in this case tries to reach a younger audience. The example is also relevant to the New Zealand situation since a group<sup>1</sup> is currently lobbying for the establishment of a similar network in this country.

This chapter outlines the history of radio in the USA, examining the development of formatting and audience segmentation, programme

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<sup>1</sup> The idea was mooted by Arthur Baysting, the New Zealand based director of the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA). A Youth Radio Network conference was held in Wellington in May 1996 and speakers included EMI/Virgin Records representative, Kerry Byrne; musician, Neil Finn; the Commissioner for Children, Laurie O'Reilly; and Jacqui Riddell who works for Triple J in Australia. (NB. APRA is an organisation which oversees music copyright and collects royalties on behalf of New Zealand and Australian performers.)

sponsorship and advertising and the birth and subsequent fading away of Top 40 music stations. The history of radio in Britain developed along quite different lines and the BBC's broadcasting monopoly was always threatened – first by broadcasts from outside Britain, and then by the pirate radio stations. Radio One is dealt with in some depth as its programming strategies provide a counterpoint to what occurs in the USA and because it attracts a large proportion of young radio listeners in Britain. Finally, the Triple J network provides a recent example of a public service broadcasting network established specifically for listeners who are aged under 25 years old.

### **Pre-1950s radio in the USA**

Radio's commercial potential was evident as early as the 1920s in the USA. Radio's first announcement paid for by a sponsor was broadcast in 1922 – a talk advertising apartments in a new suburban development called Jackson Heights. By the mid-1920s the sixty second commercial was established and became the standard form of radio advertising for many years to come. During the 1920s, as today, music constituted radio's primary programming element. At this stage radio stations were owned by groups wanting to promote their own products or services and although the listening audience continued to grow, in 1930 only one out of every seven American stations made a profit (Sanjek 1988: 89). By 1928 advertising agencies produced most sponsored shows on the radio networks and in 1929 the first "ratings" survey took place estimating "the percentages of radio homes that listened to specified programs" (Hilliard & Keith 1992: 58).

Many media theorists (Schiffer 1991: 60; Steiner 1988: 149; Hilliard & Keith 1992: 80) claim that radio's golden age was during the 1930s and 1940s. Hilliard (1985: 29) calls this period "the radio of the arts, culture, news, and entertainment", and Whetmore (1992: 64) maintains that during these two decades radio provided foreground entertainment, as opposed to the background music formats which radio stations developed after the advent of television. Sponsored programmes and variety shows developed into genres (which were later adapted by television producers) such as the soap opera, the police/detective story and comedy and became prevalent on the major American radio networks. Radio audiences continued to grow during the 1930s as it provided a free (once you had acquired the initial set) form of entertainment at a time of high unemployment and economic depression.

Large network audiences and few stations meant that a diverse range of music was programmed. "The slogan of radio became 'something for everyone'" (Whetmore, J. E. 1992: 36). By 1935 two thirds of American homes owned a radio (Hilliard & Keith 1992: 75).

As in Britain, there was concern radio would halt the sales of sheet music, phonograph music and dissuade the public from attending live music performances. During the 1920s, "The Secretary of Commerce prohibited a number of higher-powered, major stations from playing recorded music, and the need for live talent grew" (Hilliard & Keith 1992: 32). Even though the American broadcasting system embraced commercial values and advertising, it has always been subject to some state regulation. Recorded music was increasingly heard on radio stations which were not affiliated with the national networks by the early 1930s (Sanjek 1988: 121). At this time Martin Block in New York and Al Jarvis in California were instrumental in establishing the role of the disc jockey in radio, interspersing chat, music and sponsor's announcements in a show touted as "make believe ballroom".

### **American style Top 40 radio**

American radio as we know it today originated in the 1950s with the introduction of DJ and music oriented programming. It was during this decade that radio stations abandoned comedy, soap operas and drama to television, replacing these shows with prerecorded rock and roll music which appealed to recently financially enfranchised teenagers.<sup>2</sup> If the 1930s and 40s were radio's "golden age" then the 1950s can be viewed as a "golden decade" for the teenage consumer. By the end of the fifties the majority of radio stations had adopted a Top 40 format based on the idea that listeners would want to hear their favourite tracks again and again and their favourites were those singles which featured in "sales charts, juke box surveys, and record store reports" (Hilliard 1985: 188).

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<sup>2</sup> During the 1950s teenagers were perceived as having more free time and a higher level of discretionary income than adults on the basis they did not yet have family responsibilities and their "spending made them a particularly attractive target to the burgeoning 'leisure' economy" (Stewart 1992: 203).



At the beginning of the 1950s 95 percent of all American homes had a radio, as did half of all cars (Hilliard & Keith 1992: 134).<sup>3</sup> Radio began promoting itself as a more intimate, portable medium than television and targeting local advertisers. Radio established an image as the personalised medium, music to listen to while in your car, at the beach or at work. Transistor radios were marketed specifically at teenagers and those who owned one could listen to their choice of music where ever they chose. Schiffer (1991: 181) claims: "The shirt-pocket portable or, simply, *the transistor* (as it was called then) became a metaphor for freedom and independence; the right to express, in music and in things, the style and tastes of youth". Music continued to be broadcast primarily on AM frequencies during the 1950s since: "Duplication of signals by co-owned stations (FM carrying, AM originating) and a lack of inexpensive FM receivers or AM/FM sets prevented FM from being a viable advertising medium" (Hilliard & Keith 1992: 135). By 1955 there were approximately 3400 radio stations broadcasting in the USA.

Early in the 1950s many radio programmers focused on teenagers and young adult listeners but differences within this age group (such as gender or ethnicity) were ignored. Top 40 programmers assumed that young people all liked the same type of music making it possible to apply "a single programming standard to many individual markets" (Barnes 1988: 9). Barnes (1988: 11) maintains that Top 40 programming was primarily targeted at teenagers during the 1950s on the basis that they "controlled the leisure-time choices of their entire families. Adults didn't stop listening to ballgames or make-believe ballroom dance music shows, but they deferred to their kids and left the dial on the Top 40 stations for lengthy periods". The idea that one financially important segment of the audience (parents) would defer to another, arguably less important segment (namely their teenage offspring), could not last within the realm of commercial broadcasting.

Even at the height of Top 40's popularity there were complaints from some advertisers and record companies about the format. During the 1950s the relationship between radio and the recording industry intensified on the

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<sup>3</sup> Car radios were far more popular in the USA than in Britain and at the beginning of the 1960s Paulu (1961: 155) claims that only 4 per cent of all British cars carried radios (cited in Crisell 1986: 32).

basis that "radio was the perfect promotional vehicle for show-casing its [the recording industry's] established, as well as up-and-coming artists" (Hilliard & Keith 1992: 152). The power of radio to determine hit records and the recording industry's lack of direct control over what music broadcasters chose to play lead to the "payola scandals" towards the close of the 1950s.

FCC [Federal Communications Commission] hearings and congressional investigations in 1959 and through much of 1960 showed clearly that a large number of disc jockeys, including some of the most respected ones, took bribes in exchange for promoting certain records. At the same time, there were charges of "plugola" – whereby program directors, producers and personalities accepted products or services from companies in exchange for giving their wares free plugs on the air.

(Hilliard & Keith 1992: 160-161)

Record companies were unhappy that radio was only giving repeated air play to a very small range of hit singles. "An MGM music executive complained that the concentration on single record sales, which teen-agers dominated, ignored the adults, whose purchase of LPs represented 65 percent of the business. Adults were tuning out Top 40 stations, he said, and turning to television" (Sanjek 1988: 443). Advertisers, however, have a greater influence than recording companies over a commercial radio station's decision to adopt a particular format. Advertisers are able to exert either direct or indirect financial pressure on commercial broadcasters to change their formats or to seek certain audiences. Sanjek claims that it was economic expedience rather than pressure from either the public or the FCC following the payola scandals that encouraged stations to move away from Top 40 programming to explore other formats. Sanjek (1988: 461) contends that studies showed "automobile manufacturers, the airlines, and food advertisers – the three largest groups of radio sponsors in 1962 – had embarked on their own undeclared boycott of Top 40 radio".

The programming of a number of FM stations during the late 1960s reflected a growing dissatisfaction with AM Top 40 stations' rigid scheduling criteria. At this time, a change in government regulations reduced the amount of simulcast broadcasting that was permissible between AM and FM frequency stations. FM stations now had to generate at least half of their programming

which lead them to focus on songs taken from albums rather than singles in order to differentiate themselves from their AM counterparts. On FM stations DJs, rather than programme directors, chose the music which lead to a far more musically eclectic sound than was evident on the Top 40 AM stations. Barnes maintains it was not just the music which differed.

... former fast-talkers like Tom Donahue, Murray the K, and Scott Muni mellowed down, adopting conversational on-air approaches closer to the styles of the jazz grotto hipsters on the specialty shows. The freeformers junked the Top 40 jingles, threw out the rotation schedules, allowed DJs to pick the music, and scrapped time restrictions so that extended works of art ... could be aired in their entirety.

(Barnes 1988: 15)

It was at this point that radio formats started to fragment, with each station identifying and targeting a small section of the audience. Commercial radio formats are constantly changing but the idea behind adopting a certain format is to bring an element of predictability to listeners, so that a listener can tune to a particular station and have some idea of what the content will be – that is, the type of music they will hear, how long the news bulletins are, how much DJ chat they can expect etc. Before introducing a format, radio station management must identify which segment of the population they hope to attract and any potential competition (ie other radio stations with the same format, broadcasting in the same area).

Negus (1992: 104) contends the format system “has come about as a result of the combined influence of advertisers, radio stations and their consultants, and record companies”. Listeners feature indirectly in this equation since the primary role of a commercial radio station is to attract sufficient advertising to make a profit and ensure its continued existence. A station with no listeners is unlikely to attract any advertising, however a large audience does not always guarantee advertiser support. A station which devises a format to attract the large number of people who enjoy listening to rap music for example, may prove unattractive to advertisers if it is assumed rap fans are typically young, unemployed and have little spending power. This type of assumption makes it difficult, if not impossible, for some types of music to gain recognition within the formatted radio

structure. It is now possible to examine in greater depth a number of American radio formats which have traditionally targeted those aged between 18 and 25.

### **Formats targeting youth**

*Contemporary Hit Radio* or CHR became particularly popular in the mid eighties and is a derivative of the Top 40 format discussed earlier. "It is based on playing repetitively, and in well coordinated rotation, the most popular hits of the day" (Negus 1992: 102). CHR stations do not play the same range of music as their 1950s Top 40 counterparts. This is because CHR "stations lean toward certain styles of music" (Barnes 1988: 30) and may play predominantly hard rock, black music or chart based singles. There is some debate about exactly which age group this format is targeting. Whetmore (1992: 68) maintains that CHR is most popular with 12 to 17 year olds, "although many CHR stations also draw a large audience of 18- to 34-year-old adults". Hilliard (1985), by contrast, asserts that since the 1980s CHR has been targeting 18 to 24 year olds, whilst Sanjek (1988: 646) contends: "Men in the eighteen-to-twenty-four age bracket found CHR too soft and played little part in determining playlists". In spite of dispute about the exact target group, it is possible to conclude that CHR's concentration on playing recently released music rather than classic hits or golden oldies has attracted listeners who are under 25 years old.

*Urban Contemporary* is another format which appeals to younger listeners. In the USA black listeners constitute the principal audience for urban contemporary formats, but the music also appeals to white listeners, particularly in the 12-34 age group. "Programmers at Black stations are aware that the market is predominantly a young one, with 40 percent of Black listeners under 18, compared with 30 percent of non-Blacks" (Hilliard 1985: 202). Barnes (1988: 39) claims that urban contemporary was originally a euphemism for black radio, but that it is now a more accurate term because it encompasses white artists working in the black music domain. He contends advertisers continue to reject these stations and view "urban listeners as denizens of the underclass" preferring to place the bulk of "their advertising ... with the more upscale CHRs, ACs, and even AORs"<sup>4</sup> (ibid). Garofalo (1993: 243) criticises the urban contemporary format on the basis

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<sup>4</sup> AC is Adult Contemporary, AOR is Adult Oriented Rock.

that it provides white artists with access to what had previously been black oriented stations without giving African-American performers reciprocal access to rock radio stations. Approximately 250 commercial stations or 3 percent of all radio stations are urban contemporary, but fewer than 20 percent of these stations are black owned (Broadcasting Yearbook statistics cited in Whetmore 1992: 75-76). Whetmore (1992: 77) contends that many urban contemporary stations use the AM frequency which may threaten the format's future as people increasingly tune to FM.

Many African-American artists continue to have problems gaining airplay on rock oriented radio stations. With the exception of artists who have attained superstar status such as Tina Turner, Michael Jackson or Prince, African-American artists are generally still expected to demonstrate success with black audiences before they can cross over and achieve more mainstream success. Garofalo (1993: 231) maintains that the term crossover is most commonly used in popular music to connote "movement from margin to mainstream", thus student or college radio, iwi or black stations or stations which support particular genres of music may all have hits which cross over to gain airplay on mainstream rock formats. Negus (1992) defines an American "cross-over" hit as a song which receives airplay on a number of radio stations with different formats throughout the country. There are a number of parallels between American urban contemporary and black music stations and New Zealand's iwi stations. These factors include a youthful audience, a focus on black music and, in some cases, attempts to reinforce an ethnic identity. A major difference is the fact that most iwi stations are Maori owned.

*College radio stations* emerge as the third type of station to target listeners aged under 25. A college station is not a format in itself, but the stations do provide an umbrella for what is essentially a single format that is variously described as New Music, Progressive Music, Modern Rock (Whetmore 1992: 199), Progressive Alternative (Berger 1988: 135) or Alternative/Postmodern (Negus 1993). College stations are noncommercial and although they have a small core of paid management operating in positions such as station manager, advertising manager and programme director, DJs are generally volunteers. These stations are part of a network of more than 800 stations which hold noncommercial licenses and are based at universities and schools (Whetmore 1992: 199). "Most college radio stations offer cultural,



fine arts, and public affairs programming ... [however] ... Across the country many campus stations have dared to follow a modern rock format" (ibid). The non-profit status of these college stations allows them to adopt more innovative and eclectic programming than their commercial counterparts. There have been a number of artists (such as Elvis Costello, R.E.M. or more recently Nirvana or Pearl Jam) who started out receiving airplay on college radio stations, and have gone onto receive major commercial success.

Kruse (1993) maintains that college music and the stations which broadcast this music are defined geographically and that members of this subculture include musicians, fans, record label owners, college radio station disc jockeys, record store owners and employees and music directors. The dominance of the adult contemporary format which is indicative of a trend favouring hits of the past over recent releases has made college radio stations appear an attractive outlet for some types of newly released music, particularly music which has a sound (production values) or content not acceptable to commercial broadcasters. The fact that many record labels now hire representatives to monitor college radio playlists and a number of important music trade publications such as *Billboard* and *R&R* publish alternative or progressive music charts is evidence of college stations' success in launching certain types of music into the commercial milieu<sup>5</sup> (Whetmore 1992: 201-202).

This thesis is primarily dealing with how radio programmers perceive their audience, rather than whether these assertions are correct. The "received wisdom" amongst radio programmers is that Contemporary Hit Radio, Urban Contemporary and the formats adopted by college radio stations are designed to appeal to younger listeners, while formats which rely on playing hits of the past tend to target audiences who are aged over 25 years old. Consequently the formats outlined in this section have been limited to those perceived to target a younger listening audience.<sup>6</sup> The formats described offer an ideal and may be adopted in part or in whole by some

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<sup>5</sup> A number of New Zealand artists, particularly those signed to the Flying Nun label, who have failed to receive commercial radio airplay in this country have achieved some success in these USA college charts, for example Chris Knox, the Verlaines and the Chills.

<sup>6</sup> For more complete lists of USA commercial radio formats see Barnes 1988: 26-39; Whetmore 1992: 67-81; Berger 1988: 135-136; or Hilliard 1985: 181-205.



stations. "It is only in major **markets** that we find pure examples of each of the formats ... Middle and smaller market stations usually offer some combination of two or more traditional formats" (Whetmore 1992: 66). Many New Zealand radio stations service smaller audiences than those in the USA, consequently combination radio formats are also more likely to occur here.

### **Public service broadcasting and the BBC**

In the USA the primary goal of commercial radio stations is to attract an audience in order to sell advertising and make a profit, but British broadcasting acquired a quite different set of values underpinned by a public service ethos. The British Broadcasting Corporation was established in 1927 with John (later Lord) Reith as its first Director-General. The state monopoly raised funds by charging radio set owners a license fee rather than by selling advertising and its workforce was steeped in civil service traditions. Public service broadcasting, as espoused by Reith, meant that radio should not be used for entertainment alone but should have a role in educating citizens and setting moral standards. Reith's goals included making BBC programmes universally available and keeping the corporation a monopoly under the authority of the state. It was Reith's contention that broadcasting had a "role in the formation of an informed and reasoned public opinion" and that creating more informed citizens would promote social unity (Scannell & Cardiff 1991: 8).

Britain's rigid class structure was reflected in the BBC's programming and during the 1940s stations were unashamedly dubbed high brow, middle brow or low brow (The Third Programme, The Home Service and the Light Programme respectively). "The Victorian reforming ideal of service was animated by a sense of moral purpose and of social duty on behalf of the community, aimed particularly at those most in need of reforming – the lower classes" (Scannell & Cardiff 1991: 9). The BBC, and more specifically Reith's, perception was that American broadcasting catered to the lowest common denominator by scheduling only popular music and entertainment shows. It was thought desirable for audience members to actively listen to the radio and "the BBC deliberately left silence between programmes to discourage casual listeners" (Frith 1988b: 28). The BBC's goal was "giving the public something slightly better than it thinks it now wants" (Frith 1988b: 39) and typically programming included "news, drama,

sport, religion, music from popular to classical, talks, variety and light entertainment" (Scannell & Cardiff 1991: 14).

From the 1930s onwards the BBC faced competition from commercial radio stations which broadcast to British listeners from outside the UK, Radios Luxembourg and Normandie are the two best known examples. The BBC faced severe copyright restrictions which resulted in "needle time", or permission to broadcast only a limited amount of recorded music each week. "In the late 1950s the BBC still had only 28 hours per week of needle-time to share between its entire network", the Light Programme could only play 14 hours of recorded music each week (Chapman 1992: 23). BBC programmers initial response to this was to broadcast live from the dance halls and later to hire session musicians to do covers of pop songs. Chapman (1992: 22-23) contends "*Go Man Go* was a typical example of the Light Programme's pop fare ... the show's musical content consisted almost entirely of live cover versions, 50 per cent of which were contemporary pop, the other 50 per cent being standards". During the 1950s Radio Luxembourg was much more in touch than the BBC with developments in popular music. The BBC's continuing tendency to favour listeners with elite, "high brow tastes" over "low brow" listeners who liked popular music was evident in its spending practices.

... by 1952 the Third Programme, with less than 1 per cent of listeners nationwide, was accounting for 46 per cent of the BBC music budget. The Light Programme by comparison accounted for 15 per cent of the music budget, with 70 per cent of the audience.

(Chapman 1992: 20)

The BBC was forced to acknowledge listeners who preferred popular music to the classics following the demise of pirate radio in 1967. At this time Radio London and Radio Caroline, along with a number of other less well known pirate stations, were legislated off the air. The BBC reacted by restructuring to establish Radio's One to Four. Radio One attempted to cater to the growing audience who wanted to listen to popular music.

### The pirate stations

A total of 21 radio stations operated off the British coast between 1964 and 1968 (Chapman 1992: 51). The pirates (particularly Radio Caroline) are stereotypically known for breaking government regulations, rejecting many BBC standards, selling advertising and embracing popular music. Many of the stations were on air for no longer than a few days or weeks, but Radio London and Caroline broadcast for approximately four years.<sup>7</sup>

Radio London was funded by Texan oil moguls, used American commercial radio as its primary model and aimed to operate within the law, in as far as it could considering its illegal status. "The overriding institutional goals were to maximize profit and bring legal commercial radio to Great Britain" (Chapman 1992: 80). Radio Caroline was the first pirate station to go on air and after its audience was decimated by Radio London, the station's owner, Ronan O'Rahilly, appointed Tom Lodge as programme director. It was at this time that Radio Caroline became the legend it is today by refusing accepted programming ideals and rejecting the American commercial radio requirement of broadcasting music familiar to the audience. "The nearest anyone came to defining a working model of what was practised during Tom Lodge's reign was 'one in, one out', that is, one chart record followed by one non-chart record" (Chapman 1992: 110).

Chapman argues (1992: 86-87) "the majority of advertising on Radio London was pitched not at teenagers (the station only had a notional interest in 'youth' as an ideological construct) but at the adult market, particularly at the housewife". However, considering people married much younger in the 1960s than they do today it is possible that many "housewives" of this era would come within the 18 to 25 age group. Much of the music broadcast on the pirate stations catered to a younger audience in a way that the BBC never had. Crisell (1986: 34) maintains that 70 percent of Radio Caroline's audience was under 30 years old and the station rejected the BBC expectation of an audience who actively listened in favour of regarding radio as a background to daily living. By ignoring needle time restrictions the pirate radio stations were able to play the original songs by bands such as The Beatles, the Small

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<sup>7</sup> This section relies heavily on Chapman's (1992) book titled *Selling the Sixties* which provides detailed historical information about the establishment and programming of the pirate stations broadcasting to British listeners.

Faces and Procul Harem (Chapman 1992: 112). This, combined with greater freedom for DJs to create a broadcasting persona, gave British listeners the opportunity to hear the type of programming which had existed in the USA for some time. The format was not totally American however, and the pirates did adopt many BBC practices.<sup>8</sup> On these grounds Chapman contends that it is overly simplistic to maintain commercial and public service radio in the UK were completely opposed, since they influenced each other. For example, once the pirate stations were legislated off the air<sup>9</sup> the BBC attempted to imitate their programming style and the BBC employed many former pirate DJs<sup>10</sup> when it established Radio One in 1967.

### Radio One

Radio One represents the BBC's attempt to provide a station which would cater to the pirate radio stations' former listeners. During the station's early days many former Radio London DJs were employed as Radio One disc jockeys, but most Radio One producers were internal appointments from within the BBC. Like other BBC stations Radio One was required to adhere to needle time restrictions and could only broadcast seven hours of recorded music each day. Radio One originally simulcast with Radio Two (which was the old Light Programme) for much of the day, which made the station's sound easily identifiable as part of the BBC network. Because Radio One management had employed producers from within the corporation, the station continued to use live bands to interpret the hits of the day. John Peel managed to break through this simulacrum of popular music but still adhere to the needle time restrictions on his *Top Gear* show by broadcasting live bands playing new music. "During its first two to three years *Top Gear's* output read like a who's who of rock's avant garde" (Chapman 1992: 246).

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<sup>8</sup> The one station which attempted a wholesale adoption of Top 40 American style formatting was Radio England which broadcast from May to November 1966. Chapman (1992: 151) claims that although the station was extremely popular with teenagers "it was the commercial sponsors (or lack of them) who had the last word".

<sup>9</sup> The Marine Offences Act came into effect on 14 August 1967 and made "it illegal for a British citizen or company either to work on, advertise on, or otherwise supply or assist an offshore radio station" (Chapman 1992: 176). Radio Caroline was the last pirate station to go off the air on March 3, 1968 (Chapman 1992: 223).

<sup>10</sup> 17 ex-pirate DJs were hired in Radio One's initial line-up of 33 presenters (Chapman 1992: 231).

Peel continued to promote new music for many years to come and in 1991 Radio One executive producer Stuart Grundy listed Peel as one of several presenters that young musicians should lobby when seeking radio airplay. Grundy claims "John Peel has encouraged hundreds of musicians on his programmes with his attitude that puts creativity and originality above musicianship" (Grundy 1991: 233).

Radio One has always separated its daytime and night time programming. From the 1960s onwards the day has been reserved for popular music chosen primarily from the Top 40, while specialist shows and music which appealed to a minority were more likely to be scheduled at night. American radio puts different types of music on stations with different formats, but the BBC's public service ethos requires it to meet the needs of a huge range of tastes, thus jazz, reggae or punk fans are catered for at night, while the "average" Top 40 listener (who is often assumed to be a housewife) is targeted during the day.

Barnard (1989: 126) claims "it is in the very nature of Radio 1 daytime policy to divorce pop from its place in youth culture, to cater particularly for an older audience brought up on pop *but no longer part of the culture which buys it or helps fashion it*" (my italics). Adults do however continue both to buy and fashion pop. Artists like The Rolling Stones and Tina Turner indicate that age is no longer a reason for retirement in the rock industry, while behind the scenes producers such as Stock Aitken and Waterman fashion young stars like Kylie Minogue.

Barnard (1989: 126) argues that: "What Radio One effectively does is fashion programmes and select music according to its own definition not of 'youth culture' but of a permanent traditional pop culture to which anybody of the post 1967 generation is admitted". He maintains that the "'twin ideologies' of consensus or 'suitability' and 'consumer sovereignty'" (Gill 1991: 116) cause Radio One's daytime programming to draw heavily on Top 40 music excluding "musical styles which are considered 'disruptive' and to reflect a continuing, nostalgic preoccupation with the 1960s" (Gill 1991: 117). Frith appears to agree, arguing that Radio One in some way changes the relationship between youth and their music.



Radio 1 puts youth music into a setting that drains it of its significance, transforms it into Muzak. The BBC is not concerned with rock as a cultural form; its interest is confined to the music's inoffensive ability to soothe, cheer and comfort a mass audience.

(Frith 1978: 138)

Minority music which cannot be subsumed into this daytime programming is relegated to the night. Thus music, such as punk or rap, which is considered too abrasive, too offensive or what Grundy calls (1991: 231) "too precious" will be marginalised into specialist slots.

Despite this, there is a great deal of popular music broadcast on the BBC (albeit not at peak listening times) which would not receive airplay on American commercial radio stations. Negus examines how getting a song played on Radio One has traditionally involved lobbying the station's personalities (DJs or producers) because they have more autonomy than programmers in the USA. He claims "Radio 1 plays a wider range of music and operates a less rigid playlist system than American commercial radio" (Negus 1992: 110) on the basis that programming decisions are often made by staff, rather than solely being based on format considerations.

An attempt to move away from its status as a Top 40 radio station in the early 1990s lead Radio One's ratings to plummet. Phillips (1995: 11) claims the BBC changed Radio One from a music oriented Top 40 format in 1992 to give more airplay to music that was not established, more live concerts and more specialised music shows. The ratings of One FM (as it was now called) fell dramatically. One FM was attracting fewer young listeners than the Independent Local Radio stations and by 1994 "Radio One managed 46 per cent of 15-24s (down from 57 per cent in twelve months)" (Phillips 1995: 15). Radio One had an overall audience share of 25.1 percent in 1990, but by 1994 this had dropped to 13.3 percent (Phillips 1994: 11). It appears the new format, along with increased competition from Independent Local Radio (ILR) stations which by 1994 numbered more than 100, caused Radio One's ratings to drop, although the station continues to attract a sizeable proportion of the 15-24 audience.



Phillips (1994: 14) condescendingly notes that the BBC's portfolio "would still scoop more than half the pool of listening if Radio One confronted ILR-FM head on, instead of fretting about elevating adolescents' minds". This is indicative of the way which government and often radio broadcasters themselves expect any radio station which broadcasts popular music to sound like a commercial radio station and to attract audiences of a comparable size. Phillips overlooks the fact that One FM continued to attract 13.3 percent of all radio listeners in 1994, more than any other BBC station and markedly more than Radio Three, which attracted only 1 percent of the audience and whose existence and programming style Phillips does not question. The pendulum has swung from expectations that the BBC's most important function is to provide something for everyone and to educate listeners, to assuming the BBC should entertain and attract as large an audience as possible.

### **Independent Local Radio (ILR)**

Commercial radio stations which are funded by advertising rather than a licence fee were not legalised in Britain until 1973, nearly twenty years after the introduction of commercial television. Lewis and Booth (1989) outline a number of problems with the establishment of ILR stations:

- the stations were chronically underfunded
- station managers were not given sufficient autonomy
- broadcasting regulations stated they were supposed to serve a "local" geographically defined community
- they had restricted needle time
- ILR stations had difficulty attracting national advertising because, unlike most countries, British commercial television preceded commercial radio.

Like commercial radio stations operating in other countries (for example New Zealand and the USA) the demographic make up of an ILR station's listeners was all important. As with American stations which adopted particular formats, ILR stations aimed to adopt flow programming so although "particular programming elements – records, news items, weather checks – were collectively important ... [they were] ... individually subservient to the **sound** of the station, to its aural identity, its 'signature'" (Barnard 1989: 78). The difference was that ILR stations were placed under

many more restrictions than their American counterparts, they were required to “retain a community emphasis ... and ... to provide a service of information and even education to the standard required by the IBA’s<sup>11</sup> monitors” (Barnard 1989: 81). “In effect, each of the ILR stations outside London had to provide the full range of BBC services within a smaller, localized framework, and entirely from commercial sources” (Barnard 1989: 75).

In terms of their relevance to a young audience Barnard (1989: 166) claims that each local station has “its own ‘youth show’, offering a local representation of youth culture built around music, leisure and concern for social issues, sometimes involving a degree of listener participation in the production of the programme itself”. Chambers (1985: 250) argues that during the 1970s some ILR stations played more soul and disco music than Radio One.

Three young New Zealanders have recently bid for an FM broadcasting frequency in London, hoping to establish “a ‘contemporary alternative’ music station – a kind of hybrid that falls between student and commercial radio” (Catherall 1996: 36). IRG, the company which is financially backing the bid “has twice before failed to win a London licence” (Catherall 1996: 37). IRG director, Neil Jones, claims London lacks a youth station and he understands that is what the Radio Authority<sup>12</sup> is looking for. There is an indication that even with commercial radio in the form of ILR and INR,<sup>13</sup> British listeners do not have the same number of stations to choose from as American or New Zealand listeners. Catherall (1996: 37) maintains that: “Where New Zealand has approximately 152 full time stations for 3.5 million people, London has just 18 to cater for its 12 million-odd population”.

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<sup>11</sup> The Independent Broadcasting Authority initially awarded the franchises for stations, but the Authority’s role has now been taken over by the Radio Authority and National Trans Com (NTC) (Twyman 1994: 99).

<sup>12</sup> The Radio Authority “awards licences and issues binding codes of practice on programming, advertising, sponsorship and engineering” (Twyman 1994: 99).

<sup>13</sup> The first INR or Independent National Radio station was Classic FM which began broadcasting in 1992 (Twyman 1994: 99).

### The Australian Triple J experience

The final case to be examined is that of the state funded Australian youth broadcasting network, Triple J. The network began as a Sydney based station called 2JJ which first went to air in 1975. "2JJ existed as an autonomous unit within the ABC,<sup>14</sup> its success judged on its popularity with the 18-25 age group" (Potts 1992: 65). The station had a policy of playing alternative music and an anti-establishment stance. Towards the end of 1989, 2JJ was subsumed as the Sydney station which became part of a newly established national youth network, still under the umbrella of the ABC. The network's target audience was 15 to 24 year olds and as well as broadcasting to all Australia's major cities in 1995 it began expanding into 44 regional centres.

Triple J presents a mix of music from Australia and overseas. Its format is mostly music with approximately 15 per cent talk-back. Approximately 85 per cent of the music format is new music which is less than [sic] 12 months old, including new Australian music. Triple J aims to appeal to young people across the country and plays a range of music styles. The same station is heard in all regions and the same music format runs from 6.30 a.m. to 10 p.m. each day with little change. More familiar music or hits are played at breakfast and after school. The main change to the format occurs in the evenings when special programs focus on specialist music, for example, hard rock may be broadcast one night and techno on another night.

(Cupitt et al 1996: 25)

Sepstrup asks why less educated, lower income and younger parts of the audience abandon public service broadcasting if given the chance. He (1993: 107) hypothesises that "these programs do not deal with subjects *they* find interesting and do not relate to *their* point of view, *their* experience, *their* way of understanding, or *their* language". The Triple J charter represents an attempt to provide young people with radio that is relevant to them, in a way that the BBC's Radio One has failed to do. Triple J's mission statement states the network is committed to:

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<sup>14</sup> The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) is the Australian equivalent of the BBC, a body which allocates funding to noncommercial radio stations.

- Being an entertaining, innovative and accessible voice for young Australians.
- Forging a broad musical identity, giving emphasis to new and emerging music and artists including live performance by broadcasting at least 35% Australian music content annually.
- Leading and contributing to the expression of youth culture, encouraging freedom of opinion and artistic endeavour.
- Presenting independent and accurate news and challenging information in a global context.

(Triple J's mission statement as cited in publicity material)

Triple J tries to give more power to those who Sepstrup views as "them" (the younger audience) by primarily appointing staff from the group being targeted,<sup>15</sup> seeking listener participation, recording local bands and having talkback on youth issues. The Triple J network retains many of the more traditional public service ideals such as stressing national identity (the importance of playing a high percentage of Australian music); seeking to educate its listeners (this is one of the few youth oriented radio stations which aims to inform as well as entertain); and, unlike Radio One, the Triple J network attempts to forge some kind of youth culture. Barnard (1989: 62) claims that Radio One's problem lies in its "original brief as a pop music station rather than as a young people's service: pop music may be youth music, but its ever-lengthening history precludes it from an exclusivity of appeal based on age". The Triple J mission statement, by contrast, outlines the network's goal of being a "voice for young Australians" and emphasising "new and emerging music and artists." Its specific youth focus means the network does not have to be as careful as Radio One not to offend older and potentially conservative listeners, nor is it forced to cater to their musical preferences to the same degree.

Potts (1992: 66) criticises the Triple J network on the basis that: "A programming policy aimed indiscriminately at 'youth culture' risks losing an adventurous edge in the attempt to please too many listeners" and

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<sup>15</sup> Most Triple J announcers are in their twenties or thirties and there is an attempt to appoint DJs who are under-represented in commercial broadcasting on the basis of their gender or ethnicity.

claims its programming style, which blends a range of music genres, is "jarringly awful" (ibid). Despite the criticisms, the Triple J network represents an attempt to provide public service broadcasting to younger listeners. Musically the network has similarities with American college radio, New Zealand student radio and Radio One's night time programming.

It is debatable whether a national youth network better serves the interests of teenagers and young adults than a series of localised, regional radio stations. The Triple J network definitely reaches many more rural listeners than New Zealand's student stations which only operate in the six main centres. The presence of a national network may minimise local differences or alternately, if a range of local music and information is broadcast, a Sydney listener may turn off or tune out while the programming is targeted to a smaller place such as Wollongong, and vice versa. However, although major funding cuts to the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) mean that the future of the Triple J network is uncertain, the network currently represents an attempt to inform as well as entertain young listeners.

## Conclusion

This section has focused primarily on music programming policies on the basis that music is the primary way radio programmers go about constructing specific audiences. Historically there has been a contrast between the American mode of narrowcasting to small groups of listeners on the basis of factors such as their age, gender and class and the more mainstream audience construction adopted by the BBC, which attempts to incorporate a range of musical tastes within a single station. Negus correctly asserts that Radio One has been able to take more risks with its music programming because it is not purely commercial. "Radio 1 remains (despite declining ratings and a greater 'choice' of channels) one of the few stations where a plurality of musics can coexist and where newer sounds can at least get some form of exposure" (Negus 1993: 67). New popular music and rock is more likely to gain exposure on America's noncommercial stations, particularly the college radio and black music stations, than it is on commercial stations which are tightly formatted and rely on "playing it safe" in order to attract advertisers.

There is an assumption amongst both British and American programmers that young listeners are not interested in news and talk and use music radio as background noise. Radio One has retained some public service ideals and continues to broadcast a wider range of interviews, news and information than American commercial stations. Radio One's daytime programming however is still primarily, chart based music radio. The same cannot be said of the Australian Triple J network which attempts to incorporate information and news into music based programming, to encourage listener participation and to aggressively promote "local" music to young listeners.



## Chapter 4 – Broadcasting in New Zealand

### Introduction

The history of New Zealand broadcasting has many similarities with the way services developed both in Britain and in the USA, as discussed in the previous chapter. Beatson and Beatson (1994) identify three major themes which have consistently shaped New Zealand broadcasting policies.

The first is the split between state ownership and private enterprise, the second the debate between public service broadcasting (PSB) and commercialism while the third, which twines around and feeds upon the other two, involves the perennial tension between cultural imports and local content.

(Beatson and Beatson 1994: 174-75)

Some of the more specific issues encompassed within these themes include sponsorship and advertising, the operation of a privately owned pirate station which opposed state owned broadcasting and debates about the appropriate balance between education and entertainment when determining broadcasting content.

The history of New Zealand broadcasting and the history of New Zealand politics are closely entwined. From the early 1900s until 1989 successive New Zealand governments had a tight reign over broadcasting, evident in the number of government controlled boards, services and corporations established to oversee radio and then television. Pauling (1994: 34) contends that the 1989 restructuring which offered broadcasting frequencies for tender, and set the scene for the sale of Radio New Zealand's commercial network, was the ninth major restructuring of broadcasting in New Zealand. This chapter will not provide a detailed history of New Zealand broadcasting (see Appendix B) instead outlining the general historical and political context for the three case studies which follow.

### A brief history of commercial radio in New Zealand

Commercial radio stations are those which rely on sponsorship or advertising in order to make a profit. The first commercial stations were privately owned and later dubbed the B stations. These stations, which were established in the early 1920s, initially broadcast only for a few hours each

day and were often owned by retailers seeking to sell radio hardware. During the early 1920s Wellington broadcaster Charles Forrest recognised that radio broadcasting could sell more than just radio sets. After Williams Music Dealers loaned his station records, Forrest "acknowledged the loans and informed listeners where they could be purchased" (Day 1994: 46). This situation did not last for long however as broadcasters were prohibited from advertising after 1923 and radio advertising did not become commonplace until more than ten years later when a state owned commercial network was established.

The government charged the privately owned Radio Broadcasting Company (RBC) which was established in 1925, with setting up stations in all the main centres. These stations were funded by charging all radio set owners a licence fee. Many B stations continued to operate outside this state endorsed system by relying heavily on voluntary labour and community support. At this time two RBC employees personified the broader debate about whether radio's role should be to entertain or educate listeners. Ambrose Harris, who was appointed as the RBC's managing director in 1925, introduced American produced serials and emphasised the programming value of popular music and sporting events. Harris's objective was to maximise the listening audience by playing music which "would encourage people to buy radio sets, pay the licence fee and listen" (Day 1994: 89) where as the Company's director of music, W. J. Bellingham followed more Reithian (see p. 47) ideals and "particularly wanted to broadcast a substantial proportion of high-quality music – by which he meant the established repertoire of classical works" (ibid).

The Radio Broadcasting Company's contract expired in 1931 and it was replaced by the New Zealand Broadcasting Board (NZBB). Between 1932 and 1935 the Board first granted and then withdrew permission for the B stations to sponsor programmes claiming the withdrawal came about because "the regulations were being exceeded constantly" (Day 1994: 184). The 1930s was the decade where listening to the radio became an every day occurrence for most New Zealanders, broadcasting hours increased, as did the number of households holding licences.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "The statistic that at 31 March 1936 New Zealand had 12.22 licences for every 100 people indicated that more than half the households in the country had a radio" (Day 1994: 208).

The 1936 Broadcasting Act abolished the New Zealand Broadcasting Board replacing it with the National Broadcasting Service which was established as a government department (Sullivan 1987: 22).<sup>2</sup> The government purchased selected B stations, whilst others were forced to close since without advertising they were not financially viable. "Thus the government intended to allow commercial broadcasting but proposed that this be part of its own service, not a feature of private stations" (Day 1994: 219).

The YA stations, which were free of advertising and so came under the NBS, "transmitted [a] nationally coordinated programming designed to appeal to an educated élite" (Day 1994: 246). The commercial stations, by contrast, attracted a far larger audience and were community based providing "contemporary light music, with an emphasis in the evening on serials and in the daytime, particularly in the morning, on women's sessions" (Day 1994: 238). This division of stations into the community oriented ZBs which entertained the majority of listeners and the YAs which broadcast to a smaller, educated, élite audience is similar to the BBC's policy of dividing programming into high brow, middle brow and low brow.

Sullivan (1987: 30) maintains: "The arrival of commercial stations, the ZBs, in 1936-37 brought a new dimension to New Zealand radio. The ZBs were entertaining, exciting and determined to bring happiness and make a profit in the communities they served". The war years and the posting of American soldiers to this country, increased the USA's cultural influence in New Zealand. This was also evident in broadcasting and Yska (1993: 30) claims that Radio 1ZM, which was an American Expeditionary Broadcasting Station, introduced "American humour, swing and jive music, and a breezy

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<sup>2</sup> The Act was amended in 1937 separating the commercial and non-commercial stations. Colin Scrimgeour (Uncle Scrim) was appointed controller of the National Commercial Broadcasting Service (NCBS) and remained in this position until 1943, while former University of Canterbury professor James Shelley was appointed director of the non-commercial National Broadcasting Service (NBS). "Both services were under the same minister, but they were two distinct services with different stations and separate programming, administrative and engineering staff" (Day 1994: 221). The commercial and non-commercial stations re-amalgamated and from 1 April 1946 both divisions were known as the New Zealand Broadcasting Service (NZBS). Shelley continued as director of the NZBS until he retired in 1949.

announcing style" and "became Auckland's most popular station, especially among the young".

By the 1950s New Zealand's state owned and operated commercial stations did not appear to be keeping pace with social trends. Pauling (1994: 9) claims the NZBS had difficulty in coping with the enormous changes in social tastes during the fifties and early sixties.

Popular music of the period was often limited in play time or simply banned. With the impact of the Mazengarb<sup>3</sup> Report still fresh in their minds, politicians were determined to keep broadcasting appropriately decent. Hence artists like Elvis Presley were carefully regulated. Discs that contained anything that was determined as offensive were physically mutilated to ensure no accidental broadcast.

(Pauling 1994: 9)

The teenage and young adult listeners courted so avidly by American Top 40 radio stations during the 1950s were, if not ignored, at least neglected by state broadcasting in New Zealand. As in the UK it took the immense popularity of an illegally operated pirate radio station to encourage the government of the day to consider a change in broadcasting policy.

### **Pirate radio and privately owned stations**

The NZBS was abolished and replaced by the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation in 1961, but despite its newly acquired corporate status the

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<sup>3</sup> The Report of the Special Committee on Moral Delinquency in Children and Adolescents (otherwise known as the Mazengarb Report after the committee's chair Dr Oswald Mazengarb) was released in September 1954 amidst a moral panic about teenage delinquency. The report claimed that "adolescent sexual behaviour was on the rise and teenage girls were more precocious" (Yska 1993: 77).

organisation remained firmly under government control.<sup>4</sup> Radio Hauraki began broadcasting to the Auckland region from outside New Zealand's 12-mile territorial limits in 1966 and its illegal status continued until 1970 when the Broadcasting Authority issued the station with one of the first two private radio warrants. Hauraki's popularity was indicative of public dissatisfaction, particularly amongst the young, with the programming of the government owned stations. The primary goal of its owners was to make a profit by providing an alternative to the government broadcasting monopoly and attracting young Auckland listeners. The station employed predominantly young staff and according to Peter Gapes, who was managing director in 1970, Hauraki focused on listeners who were under 25.

We felt that the present broadcasting services, although very good in a number of ways, failed in the area of providing entertainment for young people. We also felt that radio stations have a duty particularly to young people, to keep them up to date on modern topics. Such things as the election. But we felt that before we can educate or inform young people a prerequisite was to entertain them, because you can't educate them or inform them unless you have them listening to the station first.

(Gapes 1970: 10)

Gapes's emphasis on the need to inform young people shows how even a pirate radio station was strongly influenced by the public service ideals of New Zealand's state owned broadcasters whose goal it was to educate listeners and keep them up to date with events in their local communities. The stress on "education" and "information" may also have been one of the reasons that Radio Hauraki was later successful in receiving a licence from the Broadcasting Authority to operate a legal, land based operation.

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<sup>4</sup> Pauling (1994: 10) states "the Act required the Corporation to comply with government directives, and, under the financial provisions, the government was to approve all expenditure proposed to be undertaken by the Corporation in excess of \$50,000". Cocker (1994: 247) maintains the legislation permitted the government to appoint "the highest positions in both the administrative and policy sections of the corporation" and that "the NZBC was given the powers to grant warrants to private radio and television stations".



Author, musician and current APRA director Mike Chunn also remembers the station's youth focus.

A huge change came over our lives. From living day to day in the often fruitless pursuit of catching the odd pop song on the radio, the first New Zealand pirate radio station arrived – Radio Hauraki – and from that day on we were engulfed in a glut of outstanding music ... It poured out of our tinny trannies and we were obsessed, lying awake at night with our heads under pillows, one ear glued to the mono AM sound. The sound of the future.

(cited in Beatson & Beatson 1994: 175<sup>5</sup>)

The allocation of broadcasting warrants proceeded slowly, by 1972 there were only five private stations in New Zealand, by 1984 this had increased to fourteen. Initially the private stations used broadcasting formats with a mass appeal, for example "Radio Avon ... held a stunning 54% of the Christchurch radio market in 1977" (Pauling 1994: 22). As the number of privately owned radio stations increased (particularly after 1989) they began to adopt the American approach of providing specific formats for particular segments of the audience based on factors such as age, gender and ethnicity. One of the most radical restructurings of New Zealand broadcasting occurred in 1989 when regulation of ownership was removed and for the first time broadcasting licences were allocated through a tendering process that ultimately lead to a huge increase in the number of privately owned commercial stations.<sup>6</sup> During the 1980s there was a trend to formats that targeted listeners who were over 35 by playing hits of the past. Wilson (1994: 59) claims that in 1994 "of the 92 commercial music stations, 37 claim to include people under 25 in their target audience". However it is notable that many of these stations were using a classic hits format during the day and only targeted younger listeners in the evenings.

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<sup>5</sup> The original source is Chunn, M., *Stranger Than Fiction*, 1992: 15.

<sup>6</sup> "The Ministry of Commerce estimates there are now approximately 160 radio stations broadcasting separate programmes on a continuous basis, compared with 64 in 1988. Of these, approximately 120 are privately owned, compared with 30 in 1988" (Statistics New Zealand 1996: 243). Note that the recent sale of Radio New Zealand's commercial network means that all commercial radio stations are now privately owned in this country.



The April 1996 sale of the Radio New Zealand commercial network of 41 stations to the New Zealand Radio Network consortium for \$89 million marked the end of an era of state owned commercial radio stations. The Network has continued with the radio brands formerly adopted by Radio New Zealand, that is "Newstalk ZB, Classic Hits, ZM [targeting younger listeners], Community Radio, Classic Rock and Sports Roundup" (Hill 1996: 60). As *National Business Review* journalist Dianne Hill (1996: 60) notes, the recent sale means that: "The two camps, private and state-owned, simply don't exist anymore in the commercial market". Thus ownership of radio stations has come the full circle, from *no* privately owned commercial stations from 1930 to 1970 to *only* privately owned commercial stations post-1996. Radio broadcasting has not been completely deregulated however and a number of frequencies have been reserved for Maori broadcasting, whilst others have been reserved for non-commercial broadcasters such as student and Access stations.

### **Student radio**

The first student radio broadcast took place at Auckland University in 1969 when Radio Bosom went to air as a capping stunt. By the mid-1970s a number of campus based stations had been formally issued with broadcasting warrants and student radio had become a facet of student life. Since the mid-1980s six student radio stations<sup>7</sup> have been operating from New Zealand campuses.<sup>8</sup> The stations have moved from being run solely by volunteers and broadcasting on a part-time basis, to broadcasting full-time and employing up to nine full-time paid staff (typically the positions of station manager, programme director, sales manager, production manager and news editor are paid). These stations continue to rely on up to 100 volunteers, the majority of whom are tertiary students, to act as DJs.

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<sup>7</sup> These stations are now called BFM at Auckland University, UFM at the University of Canterbury, Radio Active at Victoria University in Wellington, Contact FM at Waikato University in Hamilton, Radio One at Otago University in Dunedin and Radio Massey based at Massey University in Palmerston North.

<sup>8</sup> Massey University's Albany campus in Auckland and Lincoln University in Christchurch do not have student stations, although students attending these institutions could tune into BFM based at Auckland University and UFM based at the University of Canterbury.

After the 1989 broadcasting restructuring student stations came under the Seventh Schedule of the Telecommunications Act which "lists 30 stations 'entitled to specific licences', i.e. noncommercial stations already licensed, who were not expected to retender for their frequencies or pay the levy required of commercial stations" (Wilson 1994: 43). Despite the fact that student stations are listed as non-commercial, they are required to sell advertising in order to meet their operating costs and are "permitted up to six minutes per hour of advertising" (Wilson 1994: 43), although these levels are not monitored.

Student radio stations receive their funding through a number of different channels.

- (a) **Advertising.** The stations pay for most of their operating costs by selling advertising. Traditionally student stations have relied heavily on advertisers promoting leisure and entertainment products.
- (b) **Student association funding.** Not all stations continue to receive student association funding, for example Radio Active in Wellington and UFM in Christchurch are now solely dependent on advertising as their primary way of raising revenue.
- (c) **New Zealand On Air.<sup>9</sup>** NZ On Air does not provide on going funding to student radio (in the way that it funds public radio), however both commercial and student radio stations are eligible to apply for one off grants for projects specifically promoting New Zealand music. Under this scheme student radio has received funding for the networked programme *Un-charted* and annual Kiwi music weeks when only New Zealand music is broadcast.
- (d) **Subscriptions.** Student radio listeners are invited to purchase a card which entitles them to enter the station's competitions and provides discounts at various retailers.

Student radio stations have a history of playing more New Zealand music than their commercial counterparts and the stations have a self imposed New Zealand music quota of around 30 percent. Beatson and Beatson (1994: 170) maintain "student radio stations have done sterling work for local alternative rock culture, not only by playing its music but by interviewing

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<sup>9</sup> New Zealand on Air (NZOA) is a government body which distributes a compulsory broadcasting fee which is levied on New Zealand television set owners.

emergent musicians and giving technicians and announcers hands on exposure". The direct effect of student radio on the emergent Flying Nun record label was evident when the stations only broadcast for part of the year. In 1984 Flying Nun manager Roger Shepherd claimed: "Sales of our records plummet when student radio goes off the air. When they are broadcasting? Well I'd say we sell three times as many records" (Brown 1984: 21).

When student radio stations were first established DJs could choose what they wanted to play, but the stations now playlist at least part of their general shows. The programme director compiles the playlist to ensure a number of different genres of music are represented, to avoid repetition, to guarantee that New Zealand artists are supported and to ensure a range of newly released music is played. The DJs who do specialist shows are generally enthusiasts of a particular type of music and although their shows are not playlisted, they are restricted to playing a particular type of music (depending on the show they are hosting that may be New Zealand music, women's music, folk, jazz or dub). These specialist shows are generally scheduled in the evenings and on weekends.

As student radio stations have grown and student associations either reduced or altogether cut their funding, some student stations have moved away from the idea that university based radio is first and foremost for students. A broader listener base is a more attractive proposition for advertisers and Radio Active, in particular, has adapted its programming to suit wider audience objectives. Radio Active station manager Peter Dickens (1995) rejects the "student radio label" instead preferring to call Radio Active "a new rock station" or a "new music station" on the basis that newly released material is the one factor common to all the playlisted music broadcast. Kruse (1993) maintains that American college radio stations attract supporters who are in some way involved in the music industry. Likewise student radio's eclectic programming, along with its focus on local music and new releases, tends to attract a range of listeners who either produce, sell or market music.

Student radio has become a cultural force within the New Zealand broadcasting environment. Despite the fact that most stations operate in a state of financial deficit and continue to attract only a small number of radio

listeners, the university based stations provide one of the only radio outlets for newly released music that does not fit within a commercial format, as well as giving anyone who is interested the opportunity to participate as a broadcaster.

### **Iwi stations**

The desire for an increase in the amount of Maori content broadcast and media which primarily target Maori audiences precedes the 1989 restructuring of broadcasting.<sup>10</sup> However it is since 1989 that government policy has provided the broadcasting frequencies and funding necessary for the establishment of 24 iwi stations which aim to preserve and foster Maori language and culture. "In 1990 Cabinet agreed to reserve frequencies suitable for AM and FM broadcasting in 28 areas throughout New Zealand ... In 1993 two further areas were added to those already approved" (Ministry of Commerce 1994: 5). Prior to this restructuring the Wellington radio station, Te Upoko o Te Ika, was the only Maori station broadcasting continuously. These frequencies were reserved as part of the government's obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi to preserve te reo Maori (the Maori language) as a taonga (treasure). However, the legislation also came about as the result of pressure from Maori broadcasters, several hui discussing the necessity of broadcasting by and for Maori and debate about the lack of Maori content in the mainstream New Zealand media.

New Zealand On Air funded Maori broadcasting from 1989 until 1995 and its primary goal was to establish iwi radio. In order to receive funding<sup>11</sup> stations had to serve a population of at least 10,000 Maori (Wilson 1994: 103). There were no restrictions on the amount of advertising which stations could broadcast nor on hours of broadcasting, but stations using these restricted licences had to ensure "the primary objective of the broadcasting must be the promotion of Maori language and culture" (Ministry of Commerce 1994: 6). Te Mangai Paho took over from NZ On Air as the primary funding body for Maori broadcasting in 1995. "The primary goal of

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<sup>10</sup> The Adams Report (1973), The Royal Commission on Broadcasting (1986) and The Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988) all indicated the need for media which preserved the Maori language and specifically targeted Maori audiences (Te Mangai Paho 1994).

<sup>11</sup> The maximum funding available to each station is an establishment grant of \$100,000 and then \$200,000 operating costs each year for a three year period.

Te Mangai Paho is to develop funding policies and allocate funds to stimulate the growth and development of Maori language and Maori culture broadcasting, and to increase the quality of Maori language and Maori culture programming" (Statistics New Zealand 1996: 238). From 1 January 1995 Te Mangai Paho received a \$5 million Crown grant and 13.4 percent of the public broadcasting fee (an estimated \$11.6 million) to distribute to Maori broadcasting. Te Mangai Paho has come under intense criticism from some Maori broadcasters<sup>12</sup> for the way in which it has allocated funds. The rapid growth in iwi stations has caused a number of problems such as a lack of experienced broadcasters who are fluent in te reo and underfunding.<sup>13</sup> There has also been on going debate about how much Maori language should be spoken on air and whether funding should be allocated to stations or specific programmes.

A 1993 survey commissioned by New Zealand On Air indicates that iwi radio appeals in particular to young Maori listeners. The national survey questioned 1,500 Maori about their local station and Quadrant Research reported a weekly cumulative audience, 12 years plus, of 115,000 of a potential 203,532 listeners, "of whom an extraordinary 53% (of a potential 54%) is between 12 and 30, showing that young people are indeed listening to the stations" (Wilson 1994: 104). Wilson (1994: 109) contends that the music programming policies on iwi stations are more varied than in any other radio sector and that they are largely driven by listener requests and dedications. She maintains (1994: 109-110) that typically easy listening or country music plays during the day, while most of the stations have an afternoon slot "in which they play contemporary music, much of it black American urban dance and rap, but with very little if any Maori language, and Maori music does not tend to get requested by young people". Mai FM (which will be dealt with separately in Chapter 7) focuses solely on this

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<sup>12</sup> The decision to allocate funding to Mai FM to provide network programming distribution to a number of iwi stations attracted criticism on the basis it was claimed that Mai was not programming sufficient news, information and Maori language programming and because very few iwi broadcasters chose to use the material (*Te Maori News* 1996 Hongongi: 9).

<sup>13</sup> Maori stations receive a maximum of \$200,000 per year operating costs. "One broadcaster contrasts this level of funding to the \$500,000 to \$800,000 that RNZ community stations may cost to run, and underfunding soon became a major issue" (Wilson 1994: 103).



younger audience and has been criticised by commercial broadcasters<sup>14</sup> for receiving tax payer funding to operate what they view, as an essentially commercial operation.

Despite the on going debate about the role of Maori broadcasting and the fact that many iwi stations are chronically underfunded, these stations continue to provide listeners not just with a greater numerical choice of stations but more variety in New Zealand's intensely competitive radio environment. Wilson succinctly summarises some of the trends in Maori broadcasting.

In coming to terms with their kaupapa, different notions of Maori radio have emerged; some focus on Maori control and the Maori audience, while others concentrate on Maori content. Some stations have taken their cues from the larger radio environment, finding a gap in the market and filling it with music policy designed primarily but not exclusively for Maori, and targeted at a particular age range. The scope and time scale of the project to revive the language is being uncovered and strategies developed as Maori radio is established.

(Wilson 1994: 113)

## **Conclusion**

The policies effecting New Zealand radio broadcasters have changed radically following broadcasting deregulation in 1989. There are now many more stations on the airwaves, the vast majority of which are privately owned. As in the USA, this intense competition has lead New Zealand commercial broadcasters to cater to niche markets (particularly in the larger centres such as Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch) and often this has meant a move away from programming which targets young listeners towards formats which court the over-35s such as Classic Hits and Newstalk. Although deregulation has lead to an increase in the number of radio stations, this cannot be equated with increased variety in programming.

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<sup>14</sup> For example when Mai was first established in 1992 IBC group programme director Jeremy Millar claimed: "We have no problems with Mai ... Our problem is with the funding and the free frequency. They've had a generous handout to promote Maori language and culture, and initially I don't think they've done that" (Brown 1992: 44).



Most of the stations which continue to focus on listeners aged under 25 (such as student and iwi radio stations) and play newly released music exist by virtue of government intervention. There are indications that this is changing and although the Auckland region has no privately owned commercial stations which target the youth audience, a number of stations of this type now exist in Wellington.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For example The Box and The Quake are commercial stations which play more than 20% New Zealand music and the recently established Channel Z leans towards programming such as that adopted by student radio stations.

**PART III:**  
**THREE NEW ZEALAND CASE STUDIES**

## Introduction to the Case Studies

The previous chapters have outlined the historical and political background of radio broadcasting in New Zealand, the UK, the USA, and to a lesser extent Australia, focusing primarily on those stations which include in their target audience listeners aged 18 to 25 years old. The next three chapters use that information as a base from which to examine three radio stations and their specific broadcasting practices.

As outlined in Chapter 2 which deals with methodology, the two primary techniques for gathering this information were semi-structured interviews with programme directors (and, in the case of Radio Massey, the station manager<sup>1</sup>) and a close textual examination of nine hours (across the three stations) of radio programming. It is impossible to make generalisations about music programming on the basis of this very limited sample, consequently most of the information on music programming is drawn from the interviews, rather than textual analysis. Music programming trends are examined with reference to the programme director's role as gatekeeper to understand how music is chosen within the constraints of a particular radio format. The sections on advertising and sponsorship and news and information draw both on the interviews and textual analysis of the specific sample. Textual analysis is the primary method used when examining DJ chat since although the programme director provides guidelines, he or she does not determine exactly what the DJ says (ie what the DJ says is not scripted).

Radio listeners experience broadcasts as a stream of sound, however for the purposes of description and analysis this "stream" has been divided into its component parts. The broadcasts' overall flow will be discussed by examining programming practices applied throughout the day and the relationship between the different elements of programming (for example DJ chat and music). The sections are:

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<sup>1</sup> Radio Massey's small scale and non profit status meant that all paid staff members were familiar with each other's roles. Although I did not interview the station managers at Mai FM and 2XS, Radio Massey's station manager had been there for two years and because of the high turnover of volunteers was familiar with the programme director's job in a way that the managers of the two other stations would not be.

- (a) *Music* including how each station applies a particular format, playlisting and the factors which influence programme directors' decisions.
- (b) *DJ chat* examines how DJs interact during the broadcast with listeners who call in and with other station personnel, the type of language they use, along with what they say and how they say it. It also includes regular features read by the DJ such as cancellation notices or birthday calls.
- (c) *Advertising and promotion* includes both advertisements and internal publicity such as "stings" or "promos" which publicise the station or a particular show. It includes any programming designed to raise the station's public profile, such as competitions.

Generally, advertisements are defined as pre-recorded items which aim to sell a product or service and promos are short pre-recorded segments which act as internal publicity for the station by either promoting a generic identity or providing information on a particular show or regular feature. The functions of promos and advertisements overlap when a pre-recorded item both promotes a regular feature or specialist show (internal publicity) and advertises its sponsor (an advert for an external client), however these items will also be categorised as advertisements. Any advertisements which are read live by the DJ are dealt with in the section DJ chat.

- (d) *News and information* includes news and sports bulletins, weather reports, traffic reports, time checks and sponsorship issues which are often integral to news, sports and information bulletins.

Each of the three case studies begins with a profile, providing some indication of the station's location, broadcasting competition, and regulatory and funding status.

## Chapter 5 – Radio Massey: a student station

### Radio Massey – the station

Massey University in Palmerston North was originally established as an agricultural college although it now offers a wide range of courses and has a role of nine thousand internal students and twenty thousand distance education or extramural students. "Radio Massey first appeared in 1979 on AM with a restricted licence to operate for the first term of the University calendar" (Stuart 1989: 165) The station, which is owned and operated by the Massey University Students' Association, began broadcasting on FM in the summer of 1982 during student orientation. By 1983 the station had established offices in the student association building, whilst the studio was located on the opposite side of campus. In 1995 the station's offices and studio were relocated to a prefab building on campus which had specially fitted production and on air studios.

Currently Radio Massey employs a full-time station manager, an advertising manager, a production manager and a programme director, along with a part-time news person. The work done by the full-time staff members is supplemented by 50-60 on call volunteers who do two to three hour shows on a regular basis (sometimes weekly, sometimes more often, sometimes on an on call basis). Approximately three quarters of these volunteers are students.

As a student station Radio Massey receives funding from a range of sources (see p. 66). Radio Massey broadcasts for 24 hours a day, although between one and seven in the morning there is no DJ in the studio and stacks of pre-selected CDs are played. Radio Massey's charter states the station must "promote alternative and progressive music and entertainment to the student body". The terms "alternative" and "progressive" are problematic. Prior research (Brennan 1996) indicates that student radio staff believe they are offering an alternative to mainstream media, namely an outlet for a range of youth oriented music and entertainment styles unacceptable within a fully commercial environment.

### Music

Music is the *raison d'être* of student radio. Keeping up to date with music trends, being able to choose at least some of what they play and a desire to

disseminate types of music not broadcast on commercial stations are the primary reasons given by student radio staff for becoming involved with this type of broadcasting (Brennan 1996). Radio Massey's programme director, Craig Black sees his role as being "to choose music that is relevant to people, they [commercial radio programme directors] are there to play music that won't interrupt the ads they're playing".

Craig uses a recently acquired software programme called Selector (which was also used by the programme directors at Mai FM and 2XS) to compile the playlist which constitutes approximately half the music played during day-time general shows, while DJs can choose the other half themselves. The software programme has six files as described by Craig:

There's A for high rotate, B for medium rotate, C for New Zealand which rotates at an amount between A and B, D is for dance, dub etc sort of music, E is the hip hop playlist and F is the lowest rotate which is just general.

These categories give some indication of Craig's programming priorities and how he chooses to define the station's alternative/progressive format. He aims to compile a playlist which stresses newly released music and particular styles of music which receive attention outside the more general A, B and F playlists.

New Zealand music comes first, hip hop and dance music in their various genres are really important because they're minority, they're treated as a minority, it shouldn't be but it is, same with music that features women, and kind of last is basically your ordinary guy rock band because while there is necessarily nothing wrong with that it's important that other things get heard, and often they don't get a chance to be.

The playlist was updated on a fairly ad hoc basis with promo singles distributed by record companies specifically for radio airplay receiving quicker attention than full length CDs. New promo singles may be put on the playlist each day but a batch of twenty or so CDs would only receive consideration about once a fortnight. Craig has fortnightly phone contact with the major record companies which are based in Auckland. As



programme director, he considers between twenty and forty CDs a week and between three to six cassettes. Generally the music which is playlisted has been produced by bands signed to record companies, however some recordings (particularly on specialist shows or songs chosen by the DJ) are supplied to Radio Massey's programme director directly by musicians themselves. Craig still requires a "good quality tape" for the music to receive airplay, but "demo tapes"<sup>1</sup> represent a far cheaper way for musicians to receive airplay than the more commercially acceptable method of signing to a record company, recording a song or an album and then releasing and publicising a CD.

New Zealand's six student radio stations have some contact with each other and their programme directors swap playlists about once a month. The Campus Radio Network<sup>2</sup> compiles a Top 20 which is published in the New Zealand music magazine *Rip It Up*. Craig cites *Rip It Up* as an important source of information about New Zealand bands. Another influence is *Real Groove*, a free publicity magazine, available in Palmerston North, which is produced by the Auckland store Real Groovy Records. Craig attempts to limit the influence of record companies and reviews in his programming choices and thinks overseas music magazines are only of limited value.

*Real Groove* ... has a lot of good content, but a lot of it is reviews and I try not to read reviews before I've listened to something, because I don't want someone else to have already made up my mind for me. But overseas mags generally don't arrive until they're a couple of months old so it's hard to decide how relevant something might be.

This assumes a conflict between the music listeners want to hear, and the songs which critics or record company representatives, with vested interests in the music industry, are seeking to push. The tension of an industry which is not vertically integrated and where record company

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<sup>1</sup> Demo tapes may be recorded "at home" on a four track, at live concerts or at a small recording studio in Palmerston North called The Stomach, which is subsidised by the Palmerston North City Council and so is able to charge only minimal rates for recording time.

<sup>2</sup> The Campus Radio Network (CRN) aims to present a united front to advertisers, recently it has attempted to extend its role beyond advertising to establish a link between student radio programmers.

representatives supply the product but cannot dictate whether programmers will give it airplay is evident within student radio, as it is with commercial stations. Student stations tend to attract far fewer listeners than their commercial counterparts, but they are still valuable to New Zealand record companies (particularly the smaller labels such as Tangata, Wild Side or Failsafe) because student radio programmers favour music which is newly released and/or New Zealand produced. There is always the chance that a song picked up by the student radio network (such as OMC, "How Bizarre" or Supergroove, "Can't Get Enough") will cross over and become a commercial hit. Student radio listeners are also likely to appeal to record companies on the basis of their age. The Household Expenditure Survey<sup>3</sup> indicates almost "one-quarter of people aged between 15 and 24 years (23 percent) reported expenditure on these goods [pre-recorded music], and their average weekly expenditure of \$1.45 was higher than the national average", which was \$1.00 per week.

As programme director Craig's knowledge of the local music scene (obtained through having been a musician, regularly attending live events, reading New Zealand based music magazines and talking with local musicians) helps to make Radio Massey more accessible to bands seeking airplay. Radio Massey has a self imposed New Zealand music quota of around 30 percent, broadcasts a weekly Kiwi Music Show and New Zealand On Air funded programmes such as regular Kiwi Music Weeks (when only New Zealand music is played) and *Un-Charted*.<sup>4</sup>

This support of New Zealand music and other music genres largely ignored by commercial radio (such as dub, world music or jazz) is grounded in Radio Massey's financial situation and stated objectives. The station is not solely reliant on advertising for its funding, nor is it profit-making. The station's programme director and station manager both contend that one of the roles of student radio is to expose people to music they may not otherwise have the opportunity to hear. This directly opposes commercial radio's commitment to repeatedly play songs which the majority of listeners know and like. Radio Massey is quite prepared to play music which *some* listeners

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<sup>3</sup> Cited in Statistics New Zealand/Ministry of Cultural Affairs 1995: 78.

<sup>4</sup> A weekly one hour show focusing on New Zealand music and news which plays on all student radio stations.

may dislike. Station manager James Lissette explains how the station caters to a number of different and often minority tastes.

When you listen to commercial radio you basically hear music which is not going to challenge you as a listener ... well it might broaden your taste as such, but it's of a very flat platform, because they don't want you to go "oo what's that?" and turn off because they rely on you to be listening to hear their advertisers. Where as we do blatantly play music which we know that people dislike because there are people who listen to the radio station and like it. And it's an interesting thing that you will have a band, that will first appear, I mean there's definitely mainstream/alternative. Nirvana's a classic example, they started out as this really underground, small minority grunge band and they got marketed by a major record label, and you do hear Nirvana on commercial radio now. But it's interesting that when they first started appearing on Radio Massey a lot of people didn't like them because they were so noisy and hideous, and admittedly they've changed their sound, but here you have them on commercial radio.

Craig agrees that some bands, such as the Smashing Pumpkins or Pearl Jam, are played on both student and commercial radio stations. He claims "while for commercial radio those might be their fringe elements, for us that's about as middle of the road as we like to go". "Fu-gee-la" by the Fugees was played during the sampled Radio Massey broadcast and is an example of a song which, at that time, had appeal for both commercial and student radio stations.

General show DJs are able to choose approximately half the songs they play, but these DJs must still choose within certain boundaries. If, for example, someone who enjoyed listening to and playing Top 40 music applied to do a show on Radio Massey it is likely they would be turned down unless they were prepared to put aside their personal taste and play music which conformed to the station's format. Craig describes how anyone wanting to become a DJ has to submit to the programme director, a list of songs they would play on a hypothetical show.

Usually what happens is most of the lists are OK and there might be a couple of things where we'd say this isn't really what we play, so please

don't play that. But there are some people's song lists that are just irrelevant, they have no idea, they haven't even bothered to listen to us to find out what we're doing. So we suggest to those people that they take a month, they listen to us and then they come back.

Craig maintains that most vetting of DJ's music tastes takes place at this initial stage, although he continues to monitor the shows of established DJs on a more casual basis.

Radio Massey's specialist shows are scheduled in the evening or on weekends. Specialist show DJs and the DJs doing the 11.00 p.m. till 1.00 a.m. slot can choose what to play and do not have to follow a playlist. Specialist DJs are still restricted because they must play music which fits the character of their show, that is the Reggae Show DJ must play reggae music, the Jazz Show DJ, jazz music and the Women's Show DJ music written, sung, played or produced by women. Several authors (Shuker 1994; Gray 1988: 76; Cupitt et al 1996: 58) indicate that some music consumers in their late teens and early twenties develop more specific music tastes which are not usually catered for by commercial radio stations. These specialist shows are likely to cater to those with particular tastes and station manager James Lissette admits that some listeners may only tune to the station once a week to hear, for example, the jazz show, the folk show or the dub show. These specialist shows appear to cater to the type of audience described by Shuker.

As consumers get older, their tastes in music often become more open to exploring new genres and less commercial forms of rock. This trend is particularly evident amongst tertiary students, reflecting the dominant forms of musical cultural capital within their peer groups.

(Shuker 1994: 235)

Barnard (1989) claims that in the UK, Radio One marginalises certain types of music by relegating it to evening and weekend schedules. He contends (1989: 157) that "creating a separate stream of minority programming enables the broadcaster to remove from mainstream programming anything that might question or threaten the majority consensus, while conferring a limited legitimacy on the minorities concerned". Radio Massey also schedules specialist shows in this way, but Barnard's criticisms are not

applicable because much of the music broadcast on Radio Massey's specialist shows is also present in daytime programming (for example reggae, New Zealand produced and women's music). Shows such as the jazz show, the classical show and the folk show represent a broadening of Radio Massey's alternative/progressive music format. It is likely specialist shows were originally scheduled in the evenings and at weekends because this was when people were available to do them. Specialist show DJs require knowledge of particular types of music, often they are not students, they are likely to be older and to do a show for a longer period than a standard Radio Massey DJ. Successive Radio Massey programme directors have opted to continue with existing programming schedules, particularly considering that, according to current programme director Craig Black, many of the specialist show DJs were "inherited" and already had established time slots.

Listener requests represent another way that music is chosen for play on Radio Massey. During the selected sample, the morning show DJ received one request, while the DJ doing the 10-11 a.m. slot played four songs which he said were requests. Observations of student radio shows (Brennan 1996) indicate that often those who make requests are known to the DJ or are themselves DJs. Station manager James Lissette sees requests as an integral part of the station's programming.

We really encourage the listening public to participate in the station through requests, I mean if you ring up a commercial station you can't request a song cause it's all playlisted but with us you can ring up and request a song and it will get played, you know 90% of the time. So you know in that sense we do have a lot of listener participation, and the DJ has to rely on the listeners a lot more.

Overall Radio Massey's music programming is designed to appeal to a range of specific tastes and there is an acceptance that not all the music played will appeal to the majority of listeners. The programme director and station manager judge music on the basis of cultural rather than economic factors. The music has greater cultural value if it is being ignored by commercial radio stations, if it is New Zealand produced or if it is produced by musicians marginalised because of their ethnicity and/or gender. Radio Massey operates within a progressive/alternative format but this is far broader than the formats applied by commercial radio stations. The programming



includes a range of musical genres and music is generally broadcast on the basis of its aesthetic worth rather than its perceived economic viability.

### **News and information**

Radio Massey does not have regular news, sport or weather bulletins, although during the survey period there were two regular features with the purpose of informing listeners, namely the accommodation guide and the community notices. Both of these were broadcast between 7-8 a.m. and both featured information which related specifically to students. The accommodation guide was sponsored and also read at 12.45 p.m. and 5.45 p.m. The lack of news bulletins is primarily due to a lack of resources and staff to prepare the material on a daily basis, although Radio Massey does have a weekly news hour featuring campus based news and information. Although Radio Massey does not have daily news bulletins, listeners can publicise any activities<sup>5</sup> simply by ringing the station. Time checks were given regularly between seven and eight a.m. (six times) indicating an awareness that radio's traditional role in the morning is to get listeners up and moving and to accompany activities such as showering, dressing, eating breakfast and preparing to leave the house.

### **DJ chat**

There was one female and two male Radio Massey DJs during the broadcasting period surveyed (interestingly this was the same pattern on 2XS and Mai FM, although at Radio Massey the woman DJ was in the 7-8 a.m. slot, at 2XS she did the 10-11 a.m. slot and on Mai FM hosted the 9-10 p.m. slot). As volunteers these DJs did not have the formal voice training expected of professional full-time paid broadcasters and all three DJs had a notable New Zealand accent.

There were twice as many (eight) voice breaks from 7-8 a.m. on Radio Massey as during the other two time slots (see Appendix C). Much of the DJ chat which took place during the morning show was associated with announcing regular features such as give aways, the community notices or the accommodation guide. A degree of uncertainty was evident in several of

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<sup>5</sup> Either on the community notices, the weekly news round up or through specialist shows (although outside the survey period) such as the Womens' Show, the Jazz Show or the Kiwi Music Show which regularly featured information relating to these specific topics.



the statements made by the morning show DJ. Here are some examples, the relevant sections have been italicised.

- The Massey University Postgrad Students' Association Happy Hour is today at the Wharerata Staff Club from five p.m., *I believe* the cost is two dollars.
- And Joelene has gone into the draw to win that CD which is by Ash, *I think it's called 1977, but I couldn't be sure.*

This degree of uncertainty in relation to events, particularly where potential advertising is concerned, as in the second example, would be unacceptable to management at a commercial radio station. However at a student station staffed primarily by volunteers, it is acceptable and perhaps even expected by listeners and station management.

Sociologist Erving Goffman (1981) categorises three types of radio talk as recitation, aloud reading and fresh talk. Goffman claims (1981: 228) "fresh talk, aloud reading, and recitation can be produced in various blends, with rapid and continuous switching from one form to another ...". During the accommodation guide the DJ steps outside the prepared text to wonder at its ambiguity. Here the bracketed section is an example of what Goffman calls "fresh talk", whilst the rest of the notice can be categorised as "aloud reading".

And a female flattee is wanted for a flat on the thirtieth of June the rent is 55 dollars (I wonder if they want her for just one day, or if they want her to actually stay? I suppose you could find out) ah, 55 dollars a week there.

The use of the word "apparently" in the next segment indicates to listeners that this is not the DJ's personal opinion, but rather something she is reading. She goes on to say "if you like this record", which assumes there is some doubt about whether listeners *will* like it. A commercial broadcaster would frame this in a more positive fashion to assume listeners will like the product since give aways represent a form of advertising and provide a way for record companies and stores to receive on air plugs for their product.

AD [a bugle sound, as used for announcements] It's time for a track off the Planet Jack feature CD of the week.

DJ Indeed it is, and the CD of the week is Ash, it's Ireland's finest, it brings you. This is the debut album of the year, *apparently*, from the band Ash, it has top five UK hits on it, Girl from Mars, Angel Interceptor and Kung Fu. I'm going to play track one, it's called Lose Control. *If you like it* and you have a subcard, give me a ring while it's playing and I'll take caller number five.

Radio Massey DJ's often announced advertisements drawing attention to them as if they were songs, rather than rendering them invisible by not mentioning their presence.

- Got some ads, straight after the ads will be Cracker and Nothing to Believe In. (7-8 a.m.)
- I've got a couple of ads here and after them Everything But The Girl, a song called Flipside ... (10-11 a.m.)

Directly referring to advertisements represents part of the on going monologue describing what is happening in the studio. The 7-8 a.m. DJ tells listeners "I'll just turn that down" when the background music being played behind the accommodation guide is too loud. Other comments draw listeners' attention to potential problems with equipment or to the DJ's lack of information on a given subject. Both these examples occurred between 7 and 8 a.m.

- It's about quarter past seven, that was Yothu Yindi before the community notice with World Turning, *before that was not Black Grape, I couldn't get it to play*, so we played Belly, Feed the Tree and Fu-gee-la from the Fugees.
- We've got some Nick Cave now, this is from Henry's Dream, *no it's not*, it's from the Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds live CD. Here's a song called the Ship Song.

The two daytime Radio Massey DJs limited their comments to announcing music, giving the occasional time check and reading necessary scheduled information. The comments below (taken from the 7-8 a.m. sample) give

some indication of the DJ's age and the presumed age and occupation of her listeners.

- Go hang out with other postgrad students, meet people in the same situation as you and have a few beers or whatever ...
- Now there's a few students out there who are coming to the end of their exams this week and what better way to celebrate than with the Tracker and Truck Stop gig...

The language used by the reggae show DJ from 9-10 p.m. differed from the other two DJs. Here was an attempt to formulate a coherent sound, a show where the speech was in keeping with the type of music being played. Generally the DJ spoke over the instrumental introductions to songs, in this sense the music never stopped. The speech was paused, timed to fit with the music and many of the words used were black American street slang rather than colloquial New Zealand phrases, examples include adjectives such as "style", "cool" and "bass". There is an underlying assumption this show's listeners are knowledgeable about reggae music. The phrase "of course" in the two segments here indicates listeners should already be familiar with this information.

- ... *of course* that is a track called Rightful Ruler.
- ... available through elite imports, *of course*, in Tower Music.

At the same time as listeners are presumed to have a certain amount of knowledge, there is a definite attempt to inform listeners beyond simply announcing the name of the band and song to be played. Listeners are told whether the music is a "new release" or "a classic track", which album the song appeared on ("it's off a style new album called Urban Beat Reggae"), which record label the song featured on ("out on the Heartbeat label") and advised that music played during the show is available at Tower Music.<sup>6</sup> Student radio, particularly the specialist shows, attempts to educate its listeners about particular types of music and this is similar to the role of

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<sup>6</sup> This does not represent a direct advertisement for Tower. However the DJ's decision to name Tower, rather than say Planet Jack record store which sponsors Radio Massey's CD of the Week, arises from Tower's willingness to import less well known artists and because it provides some of the music played on Radio Massey's Reggae and Dub Shows.

public service broadcasting which seeks to inform listeners about unfamiliar music in an attempt to broaden their tastes.

### **Advertising and promotion**

The use of language and background music distinguish student radio advertisements from those on other radio stations. The advertisements are generally produced at the station and the music usually comes within the progressive/alternative format. Of the 15 advertisements run during the three hour survey period, seven were for venues where bands were playing and another three advertised cafes or bars. This skew towards advertising which promotes entertainment acknowledges the assumption that young adults spend a high proportion of their discretionary income on leisure activities.

Some of the advertisements and promos were intertextual and referred to other media products. The advert for the Kiwi Music Show ends with the line, "there's only one music we play round here mate, and that's kiwi of course". This is an adaptation of a line in a television advertisement for Lion Red Beer which states "there's only one drink we have around here mate, and that's Lion Red of course" (see Appendix D, RM1). Beer, along with the jandals and fish and chips mentioned earlier in the advert, are considered to be New Zealand icons, and appropriate in a promo for a show playing New Zealand music. The other advertisement which alludes to a famous television character was for the George Street deli and used the accent, style of speech and persona identifiable as Patsy in the British comedy *Absolutely Fabulous* (see Appendix D, RM2). The advertisement alludes to the fact Patsy smokes heavily (reference to the smoking lounge), drinks heavily (the bottle of red) and aspires to a yuppie lifestyle (the cell phone). The woman voicing the advert uses a fake British accent which provides the most obvious clue to link this advertisement with *Absolutely Fabulous*. As with 2XS, Radio Massey acknowledges the existence of television as a dominant medium and in some cases adapts material taken from television for its own ends.

The gig advertisements used music and language to evoke a particular mood. These advertisements include alliteration such as "a huge, flaming pod of grinding, molten metal sounds" and "full force drum and bass grooves". During the reggae show the backing for an advertisement for a

number of bands playing at the Wildhorse Salon contained a loud, guitar based track which jarred against the more mellow sound of the reggae music played during the rest of the show. This is an example of how an advertisement can act against the overall flow of the station's programming. It is recognised in a policy adopted by all student radio stations in regard to advertisements which are run nationally. Station manager James Lissette explains that if one student station turns down a national advertisement because it does not fit the station's sound, none of the stations will play it. He claims that this has worked in favour of student radio because when a client is going through an advertising agency (rather than having the radio station produce its own advert as usually occurs), the agency is now more likely to produce an alternative version of the advertisement specifically for the student market.

The advert for the accommodation guide assumes Radio Massey listeners are young, hip and mostly tertiary students. Thus "if your sack is getting cold or you want someone to fill that winter palace, grab a crayon and listen up" can be translated as "if your bed is cold or you need a flatmate, get a pen and listen to this". Words such as "sack" instead of bed, "winter palace" instead of flat and "crayon" instead of pen provide visual colour and an indication of the station's presumed audience. "Listen up" is American street slang and a verbal example of the influence which black American culture has in New Zealand media, particularly media targeting young Maori or Polynesians (see the Chapter 7 for more detail).

Most of the station promos advertised specialist shows rather than establishing a generic identity for the station. The one generic promo played during the sampled broadcast was somewhat oblique and the references to "sandy, burnt animals" and "felafel" (a chick pea mixture used in vegetarian kebabs) meant that initially this appeared to be an advertisement for vegetarian takeaways rather than a station promo (see Appendix D, RM3). These indirect references which aim to create an image rather than directly describe a product are also evident in the advertisement for the local music show (see Appendix D, RM4).

At least three of the advertisements played during the sampled broadcasts were produced at other student radio stations. The advertisement for the music/information show *Un-Charted* was produced in Dunedin and



attracted the listener's attention by using an echo effect on the voice and ending with the phrase "heaps of juice from the datasphere beamed direct to your comfort zone". The advertisement for the "Temple of Boom" event (see Appendix D, RM5) was produced by the Wellington student station, Radio Active. The term "temple of boom" is perhaps a pun on "the temple of doom". The production of this advertisement was slick and professional, it blended within the context of the reggae show to the extent that the advert gives the initial impression of being a song. It establishes the mood and flavour of the live performance which it is advertising by using a man's and a woman's voice, techno music and phrases such as "a night of loin grinding coolness" and "Aotearoa's top turntable scientist" (disc jockey). There are a couple of indirect references to drug usage, the phrase "wind up your splifometer" is, presumably a reference to a "splif" or a marijuana cigarette, while the term "lush" generally refers to a woman who drinks a lot and so "load up and lush out" has connotations of drinking alcohol and, perhaps, taking other substances. The advertisement replaces the Ecstasy known to be used at "rave parties" in Britain with the two New Zealand drugs of choice, namely alcohol and marijuana.

The advertisement produced by RDU, Christchurch's student station (see Appendix D, RM5), exemplifies the type of music that is **not** acceptable on student radio. The advertisement seeks applicants for the position of RDU music director. Unlike the other advertisements broadcast on Radio Massey it creates a scenario rather than relying on colourful language, music and/or effects to get its message across. Here, job applicants are being asked what they would play should they gain employment as the station's music director. The advert begins with someone singing the Tom Jones song "It's Not Unusual" and a voice, presumably the interviewers, calls out "Next!". Nor is the next song, "Locomotion", acceptable. After establishing the scenario there is some basic information about the job vacancy, and the advert concludes with someone singing "Crackling Rosie get on board" and the interviewer calling out "Noooo!". This advertisement is being discussed in the section on advertising and promotion, but it is just as relevant to the music section since it indicates there are certain boundaries when choosing music for student radio stations. (It is worth noting that some music which may initially appear unacceptable, may be played during a humorous or retrospective specialist show.)



## **Conclusion**

Separating programming into various sections has been necessary in order to analyse the material more closely, but it is also somewhat misleading because music, DJ chat and advertising all contribute to the overall flow of programming. The two daytime DJs primarily announced songs and read notices but the reggae show DJ also included information about the music being played and spoke in a style heavily influenced by black American street slang. Radio Massey's music programming relies on a combination of playlisting, DJ choice and listener requests. Playlisting provides structure and some variety, while allowing DJs to choose at least half of what they play, gives them the opportunity to tangibly contribute to the sound of the station and to draw on knowledge they may have of particular musical styles. Requests provide listeners (who, as students, are partly paying for the station through their student union fee) with the opportunity to hear specific songs. The chapter's last section provides a textual analysis of specific advertisements and general comments on issues relating to student radio advertising.

## Chapter 6 – 2XS: a commercial station

### 2XS – the station

2XS is a privately owned radio station based in Palmerston North which began broadcasting on an AM frequency in 1981. The station had a Top 40 format competing directly with Palmerston North's longstanding community radio station, 2ZA which was part of the Radio New Zealand network. Initially 2XS did not do well in the ratings but it surpassed 2ZA in the early 1990s and current annual ratings put 2XS as Palmerston North's number one radio station. The annual ratings figures taken between 16 September - 27 October 1995 indicate 2XS had 30.1 percent of the listening audience over the age of ten (National Radio was in second place with 10.5 percent of these listeners) from 6 a.m. till 12 midnight, while it attracted 51.9 percent of those listeners aged 18 to 24 (Classic Hits Q91 was second most popular with this age group and attracted 18.7 percent of these listeners).

More than twenty two staff are shared by the four lower North Island radio stations owned by XS-Radio (formerly XS-Corp), namely 2XS, Magic 828 and 98.6 FM (which simulcasts Magic 828's broadcast in Masterton) and Hits 89 FM which also broadcasts from Masterton. 2XS occupies a building in central Palmerston North, which it shares with the easy listening station Magic 828 (which has taken over 2XS's old AM frequency). The company which owns 2XS, then called XS-Corp, had major financial difficulties during the 1980s, but in 1996 2XS was able to pay a dividend to its shareholders. The 2XS studio is manned during the day but broadcasts are pre-recorded between midnight and 6 a.m. each morning. The station now has a Contemporary Hit Radio (CHR) format and its primary target audience is 18-34 year old listeners with a skew towards females.

2XS has taken over the role of community broadcaster, formerly occupied by 2ZA which has increasingly networked most of its programming from Auckland. The morning show on 2XS, in particular, gives the station a local identity and programme director Darren Wallace maintains the morning show is the key to the station's success. The station has won the station of the year in the regional section of the Mobil Radio awards for two years running (1995 and 1996) and in 1995 the awards also recognised the morning show DJs Mike West and Baldrick. These awards are evidence 2XS not only

rates well with listeners, but that other professional broadcasters recognise it as a leading station in a market of its size.

Once again it is necessary to stress that splitting radio broadcasts into various categories is somewhat artificial, but that it facilitates discussion of various aspects of the station. On commercial radio stations in particular, the issue of sponsorship obscures the categories of music, news and information and DJ chat. Much material is broadcast with the ultimate goal of making a profit and in this sense any feature which is sponsored may be categorised as advertising and/or promotion.

### **Music**

2XS is one of the few commercial radio stations in New Zealand which continues to use a Contemporary Hit Radio format (CHR) to attract listeners aged younger than 25. Programme director Darren Wallace claims "CHR leans to what the current trends are in pop or hit music" and that "nowadays the contemporary hit radio is leaning or skewing slightly towards alternative rock". This was evident in the music played during the sampled broadcast on 2XS, which included alternative, guitar based artists such as Smashing Pumpkins, Blur and Green Day. The black, urban American sounds of Coolio and Bone Thugs-n-Harmony are also heard on 2XS, but there are limits here. Darren contends that the annual ratings surveys indicate radio stations which focused on rap music in the late 1980s lost a lot of listeners. Thus, while it may be acceptable to play some music which might also be heard on a station with an urban contemporary format, 2XS generally rejects rap in favour of the smoother, more commercially viable sound of soul and dance music.

Darren views music as the bait which attracts listeners to a commercial radio station, while the advertising acts as a hook to encourage audience spending, increase advertising and ultimately to ensure the station is profitable. Despite the fact that both listeners and advertisers represent the radio station's clients, Darren recognises that sometimes these two groups have conflicting interests. He claims that "you do have to sometimes go to bat for the listener, you know the listeners are clients too, not just the advertisers." "Going to bat for the listener" means ensuring that music is a primary priority, even during periods such as Christmas, when there is great demand for advertising space. Darren also tries to keep a certain ratio

between talk and music during the morning show saying: "It seems over the years that they [the morning show DJs] talk more and more and more and more, and that's something too, you have to say we've got to play some more music." It is notable that for the section sampled 2XS played six songs between 7 and 8 a.m. (see Appendix C), three fewer than Mai FM and eight fewer songs than Radio Massey. The need to achieve a balance between music and news was also evident and Darren claims one of the reasons he reduced the length of news bulletins, when first appointed as the station's programme director, was because "it can make all the difference to making sure you get that third song in".

Music is programmed differently at particular times of the day. Darren describes how specific programming norms are most obvious during mornings and evenings.

In the morning I've got a good grasp on what the listeners want to hear, there's some nice slow music that we play, but you don't want to be hearing it between seven and eight thirty, you need to be uplifted, you need to be out of there, you want something with a beat, something to sing along to and so pretty much the pace ... should be pretty well up in the morning.

Music in the evenings is programmed to cater to younger listeners (namely 15 to 24 year olds). More risks are taken with the music programming at night and this is often when newly released music is trialed.

... so night music it might be that rock song that's just a little bit too heavy to put across during the day, until we are a bit more comfortable with it, or we find some research on it. Or it might be just a little bit too rappy, or it might be a bit skewed left or right of what we consider acceptable to the general listening audience. So we might have a couple of tunes like that, that we're going to try out on nights.

Each week day evening between seven and nine listeners are invited to call the station and vote for their favourite song. These votes provide the basis of 2XS's *Top Nine at Nine*. Charts generally reflect national trends, providing information about songs which receive the most radio airplay and/or are purchased most often. The 2XS *Top Nine* however relies on

nightly listener participation rather than sales for its data. Charts promote the newness of a song reinforcing an ephemeral youth culture with constantly changing styles and fashions. Recorded music, such as that which features on commercial radio stations, is generally distributed by huge multinational corporations and, as Attali (1985) maintains, the hit parade differentiates a great number of identically priced objects. He contends the hit parade provides a legitimate definition of the use value of recorded music for consumers and radio programmers by both reflecting and creating value, since the charts both express current sales and predict a song's likely future success.

As well as taking part in the annual radio ratings survey 2XS conducts its own music research on a fortnightly basis. The research questions both men and women in a range of age groups on their likes and dislikes, whether they know a particular song or whether they are tired of hearing it (burnout). The station employs a number of part-time staff to find people willing to complete a diary questioning them on their musical preferences. Only songs which have been on the playlist for between a fortnight and a month are included in the diary. Participants are asked to identify songs on the basis of their titles and hook lines, but they are not able to hear the music, thus this type of research is limited to establishing what listeners think of songs that they already know.

All songs are listed in a computer software programme called Selector. As with Radio Massey, the way Selector is divided into particular categories indicates the programme director's scheduling priorities. The **A** category contains the seven or so most popular songs as indicated by the station's research, these songs are played once every three and a half hours, while songs in the **B** category are broadcast less often, perhaps once every five to six hours. Songs which have "burnt out" and been removed from either of these categories may go into the **recurrent rotates**, to be played about once a day. There are nearly 700 **gold** songs programmed into Selector and this primarily represents music from the 1970s and 1980s. The "gold" songs are split into two categories, those released between the 1960s and 1990s and a more recent selection of music released between 1991 and 1995. **Night** music is a separate category within Selector and there is also a file for Saturday night's **party show**. 2XS broadcasts one newly released song each hour and **new music** also has its own category within Selector. Finally the **Ice** category



contains about 400 songs which have usually been removed from the “gold” file and are no longer being played, but may be returned to the playlist at some time in the future. Darren explains the role of the Ice section:

Sometimes you just find there are artists or songs that no longer research well and you can maybe either ignore them or play them for a while, find they don't do well and so you just ice them.

As programme director, Darren estimates he would consider between twelve and twenty CDs each week and that most of these would be CD singles. He updates the computer files every Thursday and listeners hear any new songs introduced to the playlist on a Saturday. Usually about three new songs are added to the day time schedule with another two songs added to the night time selection. There is a cautious approach to introducing new music. As previously noted, one newly released song is played each hour and Darren maintains “the biggest key to success is familiarity, even though we're hit music we can't just keep throwing new stuff at our listeners”. New music is trialed in the evenings and there is a regular feature where listeners are invited to call in and cast a vote to determine whether a preselected song is a “hit” or a “dud”. Darren tends to trial new music on the younger listeners.

... I mean kids are most interested in music, if you think of your teenage years that's when music was probably most important to you and you tend to always have that in the back of your mind. So we're probably the 80s people, where as in the year 2000 the kids of today are going to be the 90s people, and mum and dad are the 60s and 70s people. So what we do is we test out music on the generation of today, so we have our preview plays at night. We'll get a song and you think, I wonder what they think of this, so you'll test it out on them and get a response. Not that we have that as our hard and fast rule but it's just another way of getting an immediate reaction from our audience. We may not playlist it, but we may play it that once and say here what do you think of this?

There are a number of factors which Darren considers when deciding what music to play on 2XS. These influences include the charts (particularly the American charts), music magazines (such as *R&R*), record companies and



an outside consultant. Ultimately Darren claims that a programme director's initial "gut reaction" also plays an important part in discriminating between songs.

I mean half the reason you're here is you're supposed to have some knowledge of music and a feel for it, that magical little x factor that makes you some expert at knowing what sounds like a hit and what isn't.

There is a heavy reliance on American trends when determining a song's potential popularity.

The *R & R* magazine is a very useful resource ... I mean America tends to be the hit factory, they still do, even if it's a British act, if they really are so huge, they'll still make it big in America. The Beatles knew that and once they broke in there, well now they're the Beatles and we all know the story about them. It seems to be if you make it in America, you've made it in the world, and we recognise that to a degree, so we always are aware of what's happening in America.

*R & R* publishes the individual playlists of America's major urban radio stations, as well as charts indicating which songs are being added to a range of differently formatted American radio stations and how often they are being played. Despite the huge number of charts available through music magazines Darren claims:

At the end of the day, what I do is I just look at them, I look at the most added songs and what the biggest are, what aren't I playing already, better have a listen to it if everybody's playing it.

Darren acknowledges that the American charts do not help programme directors when considering New Zealand (or even Australian) produced music. As well as putting some New Zealand produced music on its playlist 2XS broadcasts specialist programmes such as the one hour, weekly New

Zealand music show *Counting the Beat* and *Kiwi Yarna*<sup>1</sup> which is a series of short New Zealand music vignettes. Debating the definition of New Zealand music is outside the scope of this thesis, so are the economic and cultural arguments in favour of playing New Zealand produced music on commercial radio stations.<sup>2</sup> Nor is it possible to indicate exactly what percentage of New Zealand produced music is played on 2XS, however a recent APRA<sup>3</sup> survey indicates that only 3 percent of the music played on New Zealand commercial radio stations is New Zealand produced. New Zealand On Air music director Brendan Smythe claims this figure would be much higher if stations with formats which rely on playing "hits of the past" were eliminated and the survey considered only those stations which target a youth audience and programme contemporary popular music. NZ On Air has hired an independent consultant to survey thirty six contemporary music stations and in July 1996 Smythe claimed "results from 13 of the 36 stations in the survey are in and so far the average [amount of New Zealand music played] is 10.6%" (Smythe 1996: 14).

Darren has weekly contact with the major Auckland based record companies. The record companies provide 2XS with giveaways and their representatives often call to find out whether a song they have been promoting is receiving airplay. Darren is aware of radio's importance to the record industry and views information supplied to the station about specific CDs as part of a sales pitch.

They do send you all the, call it propaganda if you like, but all the background on this song and the artist and how it did in Europe ... so you do learn about songs by what they send you. Of course they gloss it

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<sup>1</sup> Both of these programmes are produced with New Zealand On Air funding. *Counting the Beat* is broadcast on 20 commercial radio stations nationwide, while *Kiwi Yarna* plays on 33 stations.

<sup>2</sup> Many of these issues are examined in Shuker and Pickering's (1994) article "Struggling to make ourselves heard – music, radio and the quota debate".

<sup>3</sup> APRA or the Australasian Performing Right Association is an organisation which collects royalties for distribution to New Zealand artists. "It [the survey] is based on a sample of the APRA logs for the six months 1 July to 31 December 1994 which reveals 3.03% New Zealand music" (Smythe 1996: 13).

up and make it look a million dollars, but you soon learn that they're the sales people.

2XS employs a New Zealand consultant for the programme director to contact should he need a second opinion, particularly on matters relating to music programming. Radio consultants originated in the deregulated and intensely competitive American market and, as with the 2XS consultant, they are often former or current programme directors with extensive broadcasting experience. Rothenbuhler's (1985: 228) research on a commercial American radio station indicates that the consultant had the ultimate veto over whether or not a song was broadcast. However Darren contends that consultants only provide a second opinion and act as a guide.

There'll always be a song where you'll think should I or shouldn't I, some songs you get stuck on so I'll just ring the consultant and say what do you think of this? And if he says definitely then I'll put it on.

The music on 2XS comprises part of a package formulated with the primary goal of making an economic profit. As with most commercial radio stations this favours artists who are established, songs which have proven their worth in overseas (usually American) markets and music which fits within the station's format. The programme director considers the charts, music magazines, advice from a consultant and information supplied by record companies when considering whether a new song should receive airplay. Internal research helps to determine how many times a song should be played and when it should be removed from the playlist.

### **News and information**

As with the section on music programming, this section does not focus on individual news items but examines some broader issues surrounding the provision of news, sport and weather. Despite the extensive literature on journalistic practices, news values and editorial power, there is a lack of research examining news bulletins *as only one component* within the entire broadcast mix which may also include advertising, sponsorship, chat and sometimes even music. The broadcast sample surveyed indicates 2XS has half hourly news and sports bulletins between seven and eight in the morning. The two national news bulletins on the hour are prepared and networked by Independent Radio News (IRN) while the local bulletin at 7.30

a.m. is written, compiled and read by the 2XS journalist. There are also networked news bulletins at the top of the hour between ten and eleven, although there are no news bulletins between nine and ten in the evening. The station employs two full-time journalists, a news and a sports reporter.

All news and sports is sponsored with the name of the sponsor prominently placed, along with 2XS, at the start of the bulletin. Sponsorship of news and current affairs programmes has increased in New Zealand with the move away from a broadcasting system which is primarily regulated by the state. Sport in particular has seen an increase in sponsorship and now it is not only the actual bulletins which are sponsored, but often the team, match or sporting code. The 2XS sports bulletin at 7.00 a.m. was sponsored by "Norwood Mowtown, leaders in lawn and garden equipment", while Independent Radio News also receives sponsorship for specific sports items within the bulletin, for example three items on rugby ended with the line "rugby with Air New Zealand, proud supporters of New Zealand rugby", where as the basketball item ended this way: "basketball with Fulton Hogan and Balsen Pacific, neo-shock flooring, world leaders in basketball floors". Sponsorship of regular features such as news and sports provides another way for media organisations to attract regular advertising revenue. Tucker (1995) and Parker (1992) are somewhat disparaging of media (primarily television) sponsorship on the basis it leads to a decrease in editorial independence. Parker claims:

It's one thing to sell advertising around a programme, it's another to sell the whole programme to a sponsor ... When TVNZ's last chief executive Julian Mounter said the network would have to find new ways of making programmes, it did. It found sponsors to do them. Air New Zealand sponsors *60 Minutes*, Electricorp sponsors *Tomorrow's World*. Thus costs were defrayed but the price is counted in the network's diminished authority.

(Parker 1992: 98-99)

New Zealand commercial radio stations operate in a far more competitive environment than the three free-to-air national television channels (particularly the state owned TV1 and TV2). TVNZ tends to sponsor programmes to offset production costs, where as radio, which can produce

broadcasts far more cheaply than television, uses sponsorship money to continue employing staff. Sponsorship is an example of how economic issues and questions of media ownership can directly effect a broadcast's content.

The news on 2XS is brief, there is a two minute networked news bulletin at 7.00 a.m., while sports takes another two minutes. The local news bulletin at 7.30 a.m. is slightly longer (two minutes twenty one seconds) and at 10.00 a.m. there is a news and sport update which is about one and a half minutes long. As programme director, Darren decides the duration of the news bulletins, but not their content. The local morning news bulletins are read live on Magic 828 (2XS's easy listening sister station) but there is a shorter, pre-recorded bulletin on 2XS. When first employed Darren made 2XS's local news bulletins slightly shorter. He explains why:

In my opinion the younger listeners, they want to hear the news, but they just want to know the facts, they want to hear the earth's still spinning and that the volcano hasn't blown up at the moment<sup>4</sup> and that's about it. Where as Magic listeners, an older audience, are more interested in the news, they want to know all the little bits and pieces and hear people being interviewed and all of that, so a longer bulletin.

The weather extends beyond official bulletins to become a common topic of conversation on the broadcasts sampled on 2XS. Weather commentary situates broadcasts within a local context, for example the morning show DJ mentions the fog at Rangiotu, a small town not specifically mentioned in the formal weather forecast. The weather is often the first topic of conversation between morning show DJs and those who call the station. Lorraine from Apiti, for example, is asked, "any snow this morning?". Likewise, the "fake" call with Sir Robert Muldoon begins by discussing the weather. Some of this chat may have taken place because it was an unusually cold day when the broadcasts were sampled. However, the weather is always likely to intrude into conversations and news items because it effects everyone and socially it is also a standard conversation opener. The morning show provides a routine and the first thing most listeners want to know each day is what time it is and what sort of weather

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<sup>4</sup> A reference to the fact that Mount Ruapehu was active at the time of this interview.



is in store. The Spike Lee directed film *Do The Right Thing* (although here heat rather than cold is the central factor) shows how the weather, particularly if it is extreme, can intrude into everyday life and become a central discourse on local radio broadcasts.

During the sampled broadcasts formal weather forecasts are read by the DJ after each news bulletin. There are forecasts after the seven and ten o'clock news and the weather is also read at 7.15 a.m. At 7.30 a.m. the weather is incorporated into the Marine Forecast and read by the station's journalist (rather than one of its DJs). The weather forecasts are more informal and personalised than the news bulletins as the comments below indicate:

- if you can squееееееze a few extra minutes in bed this morning do it and give outside a chance to warm up a bit. (After the 7.00 a.m. news.)
- it's bitterly, bitterly cold out there at the moment (at 7.15 a.m.)
- you'd have to wear a thermal blanket if you went out on the water today. (an excerpt from the Marine Forecast.)
- Chilly start to the morning... (after the 10 a.m. news.)

None of the morning weather bulletins were sponsored because the station had agreed to cite the Met Service which provides the forecasts.

Other regular features to inform listeners include the cancellations, the community notices and "lip service" which features entertainment news. There is only one cancellation notice shortly before 7.30 a.m. and the community notices and "lip service", which are both sponsored and run between ten and eleven, are also kept brief with only one item in each. (The birthday calls and horoscopes are dealt with in the section on DJ chat.)

### **DJ chat**

There were many more voice breaks between seven and eight in the morning and they were far longer than during the other two hours when 2XS broadcasts were monitored (see Appendix C). Many of the features which Hilliard (1985) attributes to "disc jockey teams" apply to Mike West and Baldrick who have been the morning show DJs on 2XS for the last seven years.



A team usually consists of two men or a man and a woman. They respond to or play off each other in an ad-libbed session that is supplemented by prerecorded segments. If the jocks are very clever in commenting on the local scene by being slightly outrageous, crude, and, above all, funny they can attract a large audience and a substantial salary ... humorous routines become standard, such as fictional "call-ins" from the President, product lampoons, and, of course, birthday lists.

(Hilliard 1985: 301)

Breakfast show teams often have one DJ who acts in a supporting role and is required to laugh at the jokes, at times to be the stooge and continue the line of conversation initiated by his or her colleague, while the other DJ establishes himself (and usually it is a man) as older, wiser and more competent. There are several excerpts which indicate that Baldrick has the supporting role in the 2XS team (see Appendix D, 2XS1). The conversation about the tuba is both initiated and concluded by Mike West, Baldrick laughs at the idea, continues the thought and then bows out so that Mike West can reiterate information relating to the *Tuba Tunes* competition. Likewise it is Mike West who informs listeners of the development of a urine powered battery (see Appendix D, 2XS2), while Baldrick makes the appropriate noises of disgust. This snippet of information is not identified, but it is likely to be an item published in the odd spot section of either a newspaper or magazine. Newspapers, particularly items which are quirky, odd or out of the ordinary often provide conversational fodder for morning show DJs<sup>5</sup>, that this item provides the opportunity for sound effects (the zipping sound of a fly undoing), humour and mild disgust is a bonus.

The two DJs play a verbal game and reverse the word order when speaking to two of the callers to the station (see Appendix D, 2XS3). Initially listeners may believe this is a genuine mistake (and this may have been how the game started), but when it continues it becomes obvious words are reversed in order to entertain listeners. Mike West goes so far as to make the purpose

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<sup>5</sup> Another example is when Baldrick refers to the resignation of New Zealand Labour Party deputy leader David Caygill, but then uses the topic of politics to change tack and lighten the tone adding "I don't know if you read it in the paper last night, John Major has turned down a very good offer to appear naked in Britain's *Cosmopolitan* magazine next month".

of this word play explicit saying "I hope we're keeping some of the listeners amused as well as ourselves". The first caller does not respond to these antics perhaps because on air he sounds young and not very confident. This is a case where the DJ's agenda of using word plays to entertain listeners does not coincide with the caller's agenda of saying happy birthday to someone he knows over the radio. The second caller is more confident about this word game (see Appendix D, 2XS3). The fact she says "it's Leanne from Apiti, here **again**" indicates she is a regular caller to the station. She is not only familiar with these word plays but, to a limited extent, is prepared to participate in the verbal game.

MW        2XS FM Morning good, you are how?

CALLER I am how fine

MW        Great, I'm very pleased to that hear

CALLER Yes

MW        And name your what

CALLER Oh don't start this easy speak rubbish [laugh]. Yes, Leanne  
from Apiti here again.

Following a fairly lengthy conversation Leanne herself reinitiates this word play.

MW        You have a day good

CALLER OK, day good to you to.

MW        Thank-you very much

B         Calling thank-you us.

Leanne calls the station to suggest that 2XS runs a competition which has a prize of specific use to farmers. But she pauses after saying: "Have you ever thought of running a competition exclusively for us cockies, where we could win a thousand dollars worth of um ..." allowing Mike West to interject suggesting a prize of hunting equipment, while Baldrick quips "we could have a rifle up for grabs". Free fire arms is a risky idea, even in jest, particularly with the Scottish Dunblane massacre and the killings in Tasmania, Australia recently making world news headlines. Mike West returns the conversation to safer moral ground by asking Leanne where she keeps her guns. When she answers "locked up", he asserts "oh well that's good, that's good". This dialogue exemplifies the fine line between being

provocative and offending listeners. Broadcasting a conversation which discusses giving away a rifle in a competition is acceptable, so long as the idea is obviously fantasy. For any listeners who take it all seriously, Mike West invokes a sense of social responsibility by stressing the need to keep guns under lock and key.

Leanne reassures the two DJs that although she keeps her guns locked up she "is very quick with the locks so anyone who breaks in ..." and the DJs invoke mild sexual innuendo responding: "No, that's OK. You'll never see Mike and Baldrick peeping in your bedroom window late at night I can promise you". They fail to continue this line when Leanne adds "might be a bit of a thrill", rejecting any further opportunity to establish the relationship described by Karpf (1987) and Hobson (1996)<sup>6</sup> between male DJs and female listeners.

There are a number of regular features between seven and eight, namely the birthday calls, the horoscopes and the cancellations, while "lip service" which provides entertainment news, runs between ten and eleven in the morning. The horoscopes, or "horriblescopes" as they are called, are read in a surprisingly serious fashion considering their title. This is particularly evident when Mike West slips up (*italicised*) and then corrects himself without acknowledging the potential humour of his error.

Aries, make sure you tread lightly, friends won't be in the mood for *political* jokes or wisecracks today – *practical* jokes that should be.

The fact that the "horriblescopes" and the birthday calls are scheduled just before eight, when most full-time paid workers have already left the house for the day, may indicate they are targeted toward young listeners who are still getting ready for school or women who work within the home.

American radio talent developer Dan O'Day (1995: 8) advises DJs that it is essential to "remain true to your subject's character" when conducting fake interviews and to write the dialogue "with his/her own voice – not your own". At approximately 7.40 a.m. there is a fake interview with the now

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<sup>6</sup> Hobson (1996: 112) claims DJs "play the role of a safe, though definitely sexually attractive man, in the lives of the women".

deceased former New Zealand prime minister Sir Robert Muldoon (see Appendix D, 2XS4). Muldoon impersonators, such as comedian David McPhail, have made his laugh famous, or perhaps infamous, and in this fake interview it is the laugh which identifies Muldoon to listeners. There is an initial formality to the conversation which begins "Good morning is that you Mr West?", while Mike West answers "Sir, good morning". Predictably the first topic of conversation is the weather and it then moves to politics (another indication this is supposed to be Muldoon). This provides the opportunity for several jokes, for example the bogus Sir Robert claims that David Caygill (who had just resigned as the deputy leader of the New Zealand Labour Party and who is bald) "could always get a job at a chemist shop as a giant roll on deodorant" and quips that if "Helen of Troy was the face that launched a thousand ships" then Labour Party leader Helen Clark was going to be "the face that sunk a pack of twits". The two DJs are able to make these derogatory comments by attributing them to a stand-in, in the form of Sir Robert.

Between nine and ten in the morning and ten and eleven in the evening the DJs are continuity rather than personality announcers (Mike West and Baldrick are required to create personas and entertain listeners through their verbal banter). The single, continuity DJ must read any necessary notices (for example the community notices or entertainment news), introduce and play songs, give time checks (particularly during the day) and occasionally have brief conversations with listeners who call in for requests or competitions. The evening DJ uses language specifically targeted to younger listeners and knows "the current jargon of the youth market" (Hilliard 1985: 301). For example, the *Top Nine at Nine* is "ahappening" and the DJ says "way to go" to a young listener who has just won a competition. A conversation with this listener exemplifies Goffman's (1959: 107, 119) concept of front stage and backstage behaviour. Part of the competition involves knowing the station's "stupid sentence" which listeners are later informed is "Mrs McMurtry's on the run". The DJ discusses someone who works at the station (backstage) with a station caller (who is front stage because her call has become part of the broadcast). When the caller correctly cites the sentence, the DJ claims "yeah I don't know what it means" and goes on to say "this guy Tim Smith who works here, he told me to say that, he's a bit weird".

### **Advertising and promotion**

Most of the 2XS advertisers during the sampled broadcasts were local retailers (although they often belonged to a national chain) offering a geographically specific service (for example Contours Fitness Centre, Manawatu Racing Club and Pack and Save supermarket) although there were also some national advertisers (such as Continental Soup). Most advertisements were played in blocks of six or seven mid-way through and towards the end of the hour. As expected 2XS played many more advertisements in a three hour period than Radio Massey (37 compared to Radio Massey's 15, see Appendix C).

A number of the advertisements were quite brief simply stating where a product was available and using a short musical jingle to act as the advertiser's aural signature (those retailers and organisations which also advertised on television used the same jingle in all their broadcast adverts). These advertisements relied on repetition to get their message across, rather than developing imaginary scenarios or using humour. Most advertisements played during the sampled broadcasts were of this type.

It is something of a cliché to describe radio as "the theatre of the mind", but the advertisement for Carlton Cold exemplifies this concept (see Appendix D, 2XS5). The advert takes time to develop a scenario and to establish the need for a product traditionally associated with long, hot summer days in the middle of winter. The liberal use of adjectives helps to create the picture so that the sun "glistens", the powder is "crisp" and your breath is "steamy". Drinking beer is linked with the thrill and excitement of skiing, while the sound of a tab top tearing and the fizz of the beer gives listeners an aural link with the sensation of drinking.

Another advertisement which creates a visual picture is for Sussan's clothing store (see Appendix D, 2XS6). Once again it relies on images of winter, only this time negative images, and is almost poetic in portraying to listeners a sense of drabness. A woman voices the advertisement and when visualising how winter feels her voice sounds rather flat and monotonous like the weather she is describing, but in the second part of the advertisement her tone of voice lifts indicating the Sussan winter sale can also lift the listener's mood. Here, consumerism is promoted as a mood enhancer, the advert aims to establish spending as a way of shattering the



mid-winter blues. The advert ends like many others with a tune or ditty which, presumably, will be used in any future Sussan store advertisements.

Internal publicity to advertise the station to its listeners usually takes the form of a promo. Promos have a number of different functions on 2XS including:

- introducing specific regular features, such as the news, the community news, birthday calls or the horoscopes. These promos usually include a reference to the feature's sponsor.
- advertising a specific show by stressing either the DJ's personality or the music played, eg three breakfast show promos were played between 7 and 8 a.m.
- promoting the station in a more general fashion (ie the generic promo).
- promoting a station organised event, for example the tuba tunes competition promo (these promos often sound like advertisements, but they advertise something associated with the station, although they may also mention an external advertiser).

There are a range of specific promos advertising the morning show and the *Top Nine At Nine*. Often these promos are broadcast during the show which they seek to advertise. Most promos rely heavily on sound effects and use very brief segments or lines from well known television shows (for example see Appendix D, 2XS7-8, other promos use segments or lines from *The Simpsons*, *Friends*, *Star Trek* and *Mission Impossible*). Two of the promos broadcast between nine and ten in the evening use selections of music likely to be played in night-clubs (Tone Loc and Erik B and Rakim). Promo producers may assume 2XS's young listeners are media literate and can identify the original source of these segments, but even if listeners do not recognise the original, this borrowing represents an economic way of creating a promo from pre-existing material.

Most of the morning show promos use humour and come across as "wacky" or "zany" in line with the image of Mike West and Baldrick (see Appendix D, 2XS 7-8). The promos broadcast between ten and eleven in the morning and in the evening, by contrast, are shorter and more straight forward often emphasising the station's music. Examples include "get set for another hour



of the Manawatu's **best music** and most fun, 92.2XS FM" and "92.2 XS FM with **new music** this week ..." and "hit after hit 92.2XS FM".

Competitions asking listeners to call in to win a prize or to go into the draw for a prize have two main purposes. The first is to encourage listener participation and in this sense they act as internal publicity for the station, but they also advertise the prize donor which is usually a retailer or manufacturer. In the days before television, radio competitions often took the form of quiz shows (such as *It's in the Bag*) with competitors being asked a range of general knowledge questions. Now, however the questions for radio competitions are drawn from the context of the broadcast to ensure that competitors have been listening to the right station. Sometimes there are no questions and give aways (usually smaller items such as CDs or movie passes) are distributed to the fifth (or whatever) caller.

The *Tuba Tunes* (see Appendix D, 2XS1) competition during 2XS's morning show promises listeners who can identify a popular song played on the tuba the chance to go into the draw for a night store heater. Initially there is a discussion between Mike West and Baldrick about playing a tuba at a party, "Nick from the RNZAF Ohakea Base Band" (quoted from a station promo) then plays the Beegees "Staying Alive" on the tuba and a listener phones the station and is put on air because he correctly names this song. The *Tuba Tunes* competition is a source of humour (the idea of a decidedly unsexy, traditionally classical instrument covering mainstream pop tunes), it solicits audience feedback, provides another opportunity for the sponsorship of a semi-regular spot (the competition runs for a certain amount of time) and finally the competition provides a conversational topic for the two morning show DJs. There were three other competitions during the sampled broadcasts and prizes included entertainment products such as cinema passes and CDs and \$225.00 for returning a five dollar note with a particular serial number to the station.

## Conclusion

2XS is a successful commercial radio station in a medium sized market. Programming decisions are primarily based on commercial considerations but also take into account listener preferences. The station's focus on younger listeners means the adoption of the standard Contemporary Hit Radio formula of more music, less chat and a large proportion of

advertising associated with leisure industry products (clothing stores, record retailers, the cinema multiplex etc). The morning show, however provides a notable exception to the Contemporary Hit Radio formula in the sense that talk, rather than music becomes the primary focus. Its music focus has not prevented 2XS from continuing to maintain an identity within the community, primarily through its morning show, local advertising and news and information.

## Chapter 7 – Mai FM: an iwi station

### Mai FM – the station

The iwi station Mai FM was founded in 1992 by Taura Eruera and Vivien Bridgwater Sutherland in consultation with the Ngati Whatua iwi. As an iwi station the Ministry of Commerce provided Mai FM with a reserved frequency and the station received a total of \$600,000 from New Zealand On Air over a two year period (Hill 1995: 39). Owned by Ngati Whatua the station originally sought to target a young, urban Maori and Polynesian audience. Currently Mai FM mixes two formats, rhythmic CHR (contemporary hit radio) and urban and plays primarily black and dance music to target listeners who are aged under 30. The annual ratings indicate Mai FM is now Auckland's number one music station with a total cumulative audience share of 9.7 percent<sup>1</sup> (it is only behind Newstalk ZB, which comes in with 14.2 percent total audience share, in the ratings). During 1995 the station was also "No 1 with 10 to 24-year-olds, claiming just under 30% of available listeners" (Median Strip, September 1995: 1). The first year the station did not receive a government subsidy it made an annual profit (from July 1994 to July 1995) of \$19,586. Approximately 20 staff are employed to specifically service Mai FM which has premises in the Auckland suburb of Grey Lynn.

### Music

Programme director Ross Goodwin is the key person responsible for developing and implementing Mai FM's format of black urban dance music. When Mai FM began broadcasting in 1992 *New Zealand Listener* writer Russell Brown (1992: 43) maintained Ross Goodwin was appointed to enhance the station's "professional credibility" but that appointing a seasoned commercial programme director to an iwi station "was viewed with suspicion in many quarters, including what Mai might have considered its own constituency". Ross contends his primary role has been to ensure the station's continuing financial viability.

I'm the commercial conscience, the management of the station have a conscience towards Maoridom. Your sole job as programme director is

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<sup>1</sup> Research International indicates Mai FM has 9.7 percent of the cumulative audience aged 10+ between 6 a.m. and 12 midnight, Monday to Sunday.

to make the station rate so it will survive in the market. We could come on and go heavily esoteric and nobody listens. So that's my primary job to programme it so it will rate in a 27 station market and hire announcers that will work in such a situation.

When the station first went to air, Vivien Bridgwater Sutherland, who was then Mai's sales and promotions manager, claimed: "At the moment we're playing 13 per cent Maori content, within six weeks it'll be 20 per cent. We already play more contemporary Maori music than anyone else in the country" (Brown 1992: 44). Ross maintains the station no longer has a Maori quota although Mai will play Maori music if it fits the station's format. On the basis that Mai FM no longer receives government funding and is required to make a profit Ross claims "we must stand on our own feet because it's [Auckland's] a market with 27 radio stations, and 16 more to come".

Mai FM has been criticised for not sufficiently supporting Maori artists. Moana Maniapoto-Jackson of Moana and the Moahunters claims that Mai has been a big disappointment to Maori musicians. She contends Mai reaffirms the Afro-American image popular with young people, rather than playing music by artists which reflect a cultural identity specific to Aotearoa. Moana suggests that, at best, the domestic radio environment (here she excludes student and other iwi stations, but includes Mai FM) is hostile toward Maori artists and in particular to those songs which include some Maori language. Moana implies that Mai FM has a *modus operandi* which bears more in common with New Zealand commercial radio stations than with other iwi stations.<sup>2</sup> It is however, debatable whether iwi stations are required to play music produced by Maori or to cater to a predominantly Maori and Polynesian audience. If the former is the objective then Mai FM may fall short, however the station definitely does cater to young, multi-cultural Aucklanders in a way which differs from other radio stations operating in that geographical region. An additional question is whether Mai FM is obliged to meet the objectives of an iwi station now that it no longer receives government funding (although it has done so in the past).

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<sup>2</sup> Moana Maniapoto-Jackson made these comments at her address to the July 1996 IASPM (International Association for the Study of Popular Music) conference which was held in Auckland.

Mai's innovation in music programming within a commercial environment is acknowledged by New Zealand On Air's programme manager for radio and New Zealand music, Brendan Smythe, who has chosen Mai as one of six radio stations advising on tracks for New Zealand On Air's *Kiwi Hit Disc*. Smythe (1996: 11) claims "*Kiwi Hit Disc* [which is based on its American counterpart] provides radio with an easily accessible selection of new New Zealand music that has already been vetted for its airplay suitability by a panel of industry peers". NZ On Air issues a compilation CD of newly released songs which are distributed, free of charge, to all New Zealand radio stations every two months. The fact that Mai FM, and more specifically programme director Ross Goodwin, are asked to help select the songs for this CD recognises Mai FM's place as one of New Zealand's "key music stations" (Smythe 1996b: 3).

Mai FM repeats hit songs more often than stations using other formats, with a song on Mai's "A" playlist being played seven times a day. However Ross claims that songs which make it onto the A playlist do not necessarily remain there.

Our format is very different to others in that basically a rock song will take twelve weeks to get known. Ours are known within two weeks, because it's a younger end of the market, they're onto music more. They react very quickly, if they like the song it will go to A or power rotate very quickly, it'll have a certain life in A and then it starts to fade away. Our kids turn over music a lot faster.

Ross explains the other categories within the Selector software used by Mai FM include:

... a power rotate, hot category, then there's medium rotate which is songs either on the way up or way down. There's an exposure list which plays all day, then there's an exposure list which plays at night and mid-dawn, and then there's recurrent categories and gold categories [there are two levels within both the gold and recurrent songs].

Like other youth oriented stations, Mai FM focuses on its younger listeners later in the day. Chapters 5 and 6 describe how Radio Massey runs its specialist shows in the evenings or weekends, while 2XS programmes newly

released material at this time. Mai FM however, is more likely to play rap music later in the day.

[The programming is] obviously more teen from 3.30 on, 3.30 to 6 a.m., there's a bit more rap in there, the tempo picks up, a lot of the big lush ballad golds wouldn't go in there at all, and the old gold club classics and soul classics would go in the drive.

Ross estimates that about half of the eighty or so singles he listens to each week would receive some airplay. Mai FM's playlist is constantly updated to keep pace with its audience's ever changing musical preferences. As well as keeping in close contact with the Auckland based record companies Ross playlists songs from CDs which are sent to programme directors by American distributors and known as "hit discs". The most useful for his station's format are the rhythmic CHR and urban hit discs. Ross claims that Mai FM's listeners tend to prefer black urban American songs to European dance and trance music.

We don't have those impromptu raves as much as they do in Europe, where suddenly 10,000 kids turn up one Friday night and it [that is the music which Ross describes as "Euro, 150 beats type stuff"] doesn't research, only one in ten English tracks will research. It's sort of the opposite of rock, where as nine in ten English rock tracks will research, but it seems that urban, hip hop thing works a lot better in Auckland than elsewhere ... [in New Zealand].

He contends that the black urban American sound and image is popular with young Aucklanders and "you see a lot of hat to the back look in the streets in Auckland which you don't see as much of elsewhere [in New Zealand]". Judging by articles such as that which appeared in the August/September 1993 issue of *Mana* titled "Why the kids wanna be Black", Mai's popularity has coincided with a general move amongst young New Zealanders (initially young Maori and Polynesian Aucklanders, although this has now spread) to identify with black American cultural trends evident in what they wear, their tastes in music and their "heroes" (for example Malcolm X or Michael Jordan).



Ross stresses the continuing importance of the singles format, whether that be cassettes (on a cassette) or CD singles. He claims that Mai FM has had a major impact on the New Zealand singles charts.

You go back pre- us there were probably 8 black records in the Top 40, now it's probably 38. We do have quite an impact on the charts because our age group will go out and they'll buy singles or cassettes and they'll keep buying them, until there's about two or three tracks from the album that they like and then they'll go and buy the album. Our kids are very sick of being ripped off by albums so they want to buy the CD singles first, until they hear enough hits coming from the album.

Mai FM has capitalised on the popularity of singles with its young listeners by releasing several compilation CDs such as numerous volumes of *The Rhythm*<sup>3</sup> and *Street Jams*. Ross contends that once the single is being played on the radio less often, Mai listeners can then purchase one CD which contains all their favourite tracks.

Mai FM is one of only two radio stations in the overcrowded Auckland market which targets listeners who are under 30 (the other one is the student radio station BFM). Ross puts the station's success down to the fact that it caters to a niche market.

There was a hole in the Auckland market, there's a heavy dance population in Auckland and there has been for quite a long time. And that's literally it, we found a hole in the market and went after it.

Despite Mai FM's contemporary CHR/urban format some songs from other formats do manage to gain airplay on the station. Ross maintains Alanis Morissette (and to a certain extent Sheryl Crow) is one of the few "rock" artists to gain airplay on Mai FM and this is because Mai FM's audience research has found her songs to be consistently popular. Another song which was played during the sampled period which stood out from Mai's predominant musical text of soul, rap and dance music was the band No

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<sup>3</sup> There are a whole series of *The Rhythm* CDs and the first volumes were promoted by several Auckland radio stations (including Mai). The most recent is Volume 15 and Mai appears to be the only station still involved in the project.

Doubt with the song "Just a Girl". Just as black music has its "crossover hits" (for example Coolio or Bone Thugs 'n' Harmony are playlisted on 2XS), so there is some guitar based music which manages to cross formats and appear on Mai FM's playlist. Songs which cross a range of formats remain the exception however and commercial radio stations generally remain within their format, attracting a segment of listeners with a particular type of music.

Ross claims Mai FM has extended its listener base and that some adults have now adapted to Mai's music format, evidence that radio does not just play the hits, but also makes them. Ross contends:

... people start to grow up with the music, particularly adults ... the only way they were exposed to it was because their kids had it on all the time at home and then they became passive listeners without realising it. Now we do have 35 to 45 year olds listening.

Mai FM's music programming has a very distinct sound. Ross acknowledges that Mai FM divides radio listeners and claims the station does not provide secondary listening in the way that some other radio stations do.

It's a very foreground station, if you don't like it you will switch it off. It's quite like talkback radio in that area, what you do is you listen loudly, where as Billy Joel stations can play in the background as wallpaper.

### **News and information**

Like 2XS, Mai FM receives its news bulletins from the Independent Radio News Network (IRN). The 7 a.m. bulletin on the sampled day contained six items, followed by a sports bulletin with five items. The 7.30 a.m. bulletin was briefer and contained a mixture of news and sports. News and sports bulletins were only a feature of the 7-8 a.m. slot and there were no bulletins from 10-11 a.m. or between 9-10 p.m.

Historically the language used in sports items has been more informal than that in other news with sports journalists able to take greater editorial licence to go beyond reporting "the facts" by making predictions and providing gossip about sporting identities. Hagerman (1993: 200) advises: "At times a sportscaster may find it appropriate to engage in editorializing or

informed discussion. Key skills include ad libbing, interviewing, and reading with a high energy level". Sports items in the sampled 7 a.m. bulletin use phrases such as "crashed and burned" and "a major bummer too" which although they may "add energy", would generally be considered unacceptable within the context of a traditional news bulletin. This type of language indicates the informality which is typically associated with sports reportage. As on 2XS, the Mai FM news and sport were both sponsored, by AIT Commerce and Reebok respectively (although it was unclear from the sample taken whether Reebok always sponsored the sports bulletin or whether it only sponsored the 1996 Atlanta "Olympic news").

The DJ links the 7 a.m. sports bulletin with the rest of the broadcast by commenting on the final story which follows.

And it's just not cricket. Tears have flowed in the London High Court as wives of former cricketing stars Ian Botham and Alan Lamb took the stand in their husbands' libel case against Imran Khan. He's being sued for allegedly calling Botham and Lamb racist, ill-bred and uneducated and calling Botham a cheat. Kathy Botham's told the court she went through hell as Imran's defence team dragged up her husband's past sex and drugs misdemeanours.

The DJ responds: "Come on that's not very nice, Ian Botham, a drug user, maybe he uses a lot of alcohol, but never a cheat, no way!" This item is an ideal news filler on the basis that court trials provide on going stories for the duration of the case, it contains elements of sensationalism (sex and drug misdemeanours, along with insult hurling) and its subjects are world class cricketers with celebrity status.

Sport also exists outside the formal context of the Mai FM sports bulletins to function in the same way as the weather did on the 2XS broadcast, as a primary topic of conversation. Sport sets the agenda in a long conversation between the morning DJ, Robbie Rakete and recently selected All Black, Junior Tinuhu. The interview briefly deals with the topics listed below (see Appendix D, Mai1):

1. the up and coming South African rugby tour
2. the up and coming Bledisloe Cup competition in Australia

3. sports betting
4. the rugby team selection process
5. a news item regarding a fight following a schoolboy rugby game between Christs' College and Christchurch Boys' High School
6. poor organisation at the Olympic Games
7. the possibility of changing the haka before international rugby games
8. the new Auckland rugby jerseys
9. the additional pressures on players with rugby becoming a professional sport

Despite this range of topics the information provided remains quite superficial. Most topics are covered in a couple of sentences with DJ Robbie Rakete introducing the subject and Junior Tinuhu following. This extended conversation will be dealt with more fully in the "DJ Chat" section of this chapter.

Other regular features to inform listeners include a ski report, Maori language vignettes which have the dual purpose of promoting te reo Maori and Mai FM and the occasional weather forecast. The weather reports are informal and read by the DJ. The weather alternately represents either a cause for pessimism or celebration and this forecast shows an underlying assumption that city dwellers will prefer the sun to the rain.<sup>4</sup> There is a more than a note of sarcasm as the DJ says:

Yes, you got it, it's raining again today, ha ha ha. Some will be heavy, oh dear, then the good news is, it clears up in the afternoon with fine periods increasing, south westerly winds, a high of around 16 degrees. It's not going to be bad in the long run.

The length of the weather report after the 7.30 a.m. news bulletin is more than halved and reduced to "... occasional showers, fine periods this afternoon, as they increase south westerlies and a high of 16, wet under tyre at the moment". The only weather information given during the three hours of sampled Mai FM broadcasts was between seven and eight in the

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<sup>4</sup>This is not necessarily the case on radio stations which broadcast to rural areas, where rain may represent a cause for celebration by farmers or others who rely on the land to make a living.

morning. This is because later in the day the weather loses its significance and it is assumed listeners have already left the house, been outside and/or are at work or school and so do not need to know the forecast until the next day.

Unlike 2XS, Mai FM tends to put known personalities on the air, rather than giving airtime to people who simply phone into the station (at least this was the case during the three hour sampled period). Consequently Dino, who gave the ski report from Queenstown, was identified as "one of New Zealand's top twenty snow boarders". The ski report was scheduled at approximately 10.25 a.m. and dealt with South Island, rather than North Island, ski fields. It is likely this was because volcanic ash from the Mount Ruapehu eruption had closed the North Island fields. The ski report is sponsored by Primo and Continental Suzuki and consequently also acts as an advertising slot which must go ahead, even if the ski fields are closed. The solution is to provide Aucklanders with a South Island ski report citing conditions for the Remarkables, Coronet Peak, Cadrona and Treble Cone.

The language used in the ski report is informal and aimed at a young audience. For example, the word "unreal" becomes a term of approval, there is "unreal boarding to be had there", "it's gonna be unreal" and it is "unreal all day". Following information about ski field conditions there is a conversation between Dino and the DJ about Wanaka's snowboard festival. This includes discussion about an event called the "Chinese Downhill" in which "forty competitors stand at the top of the hill and all go at once, the first ones to the bottom win and take the cash". Other events include the freestyle run and an up and coming "night jump" where skiers take a 30 foot jump off a scaffolding structure covered with snow. The first part of the ski report provides listeners with basic information should they wish to go skiing and in many ways this is similar to a straight weather report – there is some interjection and comment but its primary function is to inform listeners of conditions. The discussion about Wanaka's Snowboard Festival which follows provides the report with aural colour, moving it from a piece which is basically informative to one which may prove interesting, even to listeners who are not considering going skiing.

Sociologist Erving Goffman (1981) claims that broadcasters who apologise for their errors run the risk of drawing the listener's attention to them. Dino



however, is forced to recognise his error as he signs off at the end of the report.

OK this is Dino for Primo and Continenty, Continental Suzuki sorry, on Auckland's number one music station Mai FM.

Even though some Mai FM listeners may not have detected this error, an apology proves necessary when a sponsor's name is mispronounced on a station which is funded through advertising.

Two Maori language vignettes were broadcast during the three hour sample period. One played five times, once about eight in the morning, twice between ten and eleven in the morning and twice between nine and ten in the evening. The promo or vignette used a rich sounding male voice over<sup>5</sup>. The voice has a news reader's credibility and sounds more mature than many of the other voices heard on Mai FM.

Koata ki te waru karaka i te ata te wa. Giving you the time of day [clock ticking] with Mai FM 88.6. [See Appendix D, Mai2.]

Mai FM is predominantly a music station which uses what Ross Goodwin calls Maori vignettes to teach and promote Maori language. During her period as station manager Vivien Bridgwater Sutherland rejected criticism that not enough Maori language was spoken on Mai FM.

She cited figures showing 85% of Maori in Auckland are under 35, and 39% don't identify with any iwi. "So if we were trying to get the maximum amount of Maori listeners to Mai we cannot speak purely in Maori because they don't know it".

(Hill 1994: 48)

The other bilingual vignette during the sample period was broadcast shortly after 9.30 p.m. This item used a male and female voice to promote te reo Maori and increase listeners' pride in their cultural identity (see Appendix D, Mai3).

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<sup>5</sup> A voice over is a radio industry term for the voice used on advertisements.



After Mai FM made a profit for the twelve months to July 1995 the station's director Joe Hawke claimed:

the business was an example of how commercial success could be achieved without compromising the kaupapa, or cultural values. Mai FM is all about increasing Maori awareness among Auckland's young people, particularly Maori but also young Pacific Island and European people ... We have developed a format that attracts a very wide audience and allows us to offer basic Maori language for use in everyday speech. I am convinced that Mai FM is largely responsible for a marked increase in the use and understanding of Maori words and expressions among young people, Maori and Pakeha, in Auckland.

*(Te Maori News 1995: 4)*

This goal differs from programme director Ross Goodwin's primary objective of ensuring the station continues to make a profit. There is an on going tension between Mai FM's role as an iwi station and the imperative that it makes a profit, although both factors are in keeping with its original kaupapa "to promote Maori language and culture 'through the discipline of commercial radio'" (Wilson 1994: 110).

As well as the vignettes, there were two advertisements which had a Maori theme and incorporated some Maori language, namely the advertisement for the Auckland University Maori Masquerade Ball and the advertisements taken out by The Retirement Commission and Ministry of Maori Development encouraging people to save for their retirement. The latter (see Appendix D, Mai4) will be categorised as information rather than advertising on the basis that it tries to change peoples' behaviour rather than sell a service or promote an event. Despite the fact these adverts are paid for by a government department they act in a way which is more similar to a public service notice than to an advert.

The "Saving for Retirement" advert (see Appendix D, Mai4) is broadcast three times during the sampled period, once around 7.15 a.m. and twice between nine and ten at night. This item contains some language which could be viewed as Afro-American street slang, for example, "man" and

"bro" are used as terms of address, instead of what is perhaps the New Zealand equivalent "mate". But there is also a distinct Maori flavour to the language. The use of the word "ah" to end the sentence "pumping party ah?" is heard throughout New Zealand, particularly in the North Island, while "koro" is a respectful Maori term for an older male. The advertisement's setting, two young men talking at a party, attempts to convince the listener that saving for retirement is a "hip" or "cool" thing to do, as well as being something which is culturally appropriate and condoned by Maori elders.

### DJ chat

Mai FM has a single morning show DJ, Robbie Rakete, although between seven and eight on the morning of the sampled broadcast he also has conversations with people who visit or phone the studio and other station staff. The two primary sections of dialogue between seven and eight in the morning are with recently selected All Black Junior Tinuhu and someone called Russell whose function it is to advertise Telebingo. The importance of sport and the topics covered in the Junior Tinuhu interview have already been summarised (see pp. 114-115 and Appendix D, Mai1), but there are a number of other factors about this dialogue which warrant further discussion.

The DJ does not always remain in character and sometimes takes on other roles. A change of tone indicates that Robbie Rakete is no longer a DJ, but a rugby player waiting for a phone call to inform him whether he has been selected for a national tour. Robbie goes into character saying: "Oh when they gonna call me? When they gonna call me?". At another point Robbie Rakete becomes one of the Olympic competitors forced to arrange their own transport by "hijacking" a bus, asking: "Can you imagine that? 'Hi, I'm with the hockey team, we're taking over this bus'." One of the advantages of radio's status as an aural medium is that it allows broadcasters to become anyone they want, without the "reality" of visual contradictions. A character who is an "old" man in a radio play or advertisement, does not therefore need to be chronologically old, so long as he *sounds* old. Brand and Scannell (1991) describe how British DJ Tony Blackburn also steps outside his character as a broadcaster to create an identity and become someone else. Blackburn claims:

If I'm talking to a microphone and I want to be a macho, butch Sylvester Stallone type, I can be that person. If I want to be a buffoon talking nonsense, I can be that person. I can be a giant-sized person, or what I want to be.

(Brand and Scannell 1991: 209)<sup>6</sup>

The function of Robbie Rakete's role playing is more modest, he changes character to illustrate a point being made during the conversation. Like Tony Blackburn, Robbie recognises the morning show as a type of "performance" (Goffman 1959). The DJ is the actor in this performance and he or she sometimes uses a range of characters to entertain the listening audience.

Generally Robbie Rakete sets the agenda of this interview, asking the questions while Junior Tinuhu reiterates or extends what has already been said. An exception to this occurs when they discuss the schoolboy rugby game between Christs' College and Christchurch Boys' High School which ends in a brawl. Here, Robbie exhibits moral indignation by referring to a better time in the past.

But we never had that sort of problem, did we? Not in our day mate, not in our day.

Junior destroys Robbie's notion of an idealised past suggesting there may have always been violent clashes between schoolboy rugby teams, but that the events did not become public knowledge because they did not receive the same degree of media attention. Robbie Rakete then changes tack agreeing with and reiterating Junior's basic thesis:

That's true and if there was a TV camera which came down, perhaps they put on a bit of a show too, swing a few punches.

Later in the interview Robbie Rakete returns to the subject and appears torn between the inherent humour of the situation and the need to act as a role model, finally opting for the latter and saying "you don't want that sort of thing in rugby, rugby is where it's at, it's a professional sport now".

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<sup>6</sup> From BBC Radio 1, *The Broadcasters*, 15 November 1985.

Generally, current affairs interviews aim to inform the listener, to challenge the person being interviewed and to put forward a number of differing viewpoints relating to the event in question. In this instance that would entail contextualising the fight and seeking a range of viewpoints from spokespeople such as the school principal, the team coach and the wider sporting body. The primary purpose of this conversation however is to entertain listeners and acquaint them with Junior Tinuhu's views on a range of sporting issues. Consequently Robbie Rakete rephrases and reiterates but does not challenge what is said by the interviewee. Initially Robbie exhibits moral concern regarding the fight, which he claims is "a bit of a worry", but he then follows Junior's lead to place some of the blame with the media. In many ways this exchange has more in common with an informal conversation between two friends having a quiet drink in a pub after work than it does with a current affairs interview. The conversation does not challenge the listeners' perceptions, but reinforces existing values by providing an extended editorialised discussion about a number of newsworthy events.

The other major piece of dialogue between seven and eight in the morning acts as an extended advertisement for the new gambling game called Telebingo which was screening on television for the first time that night (see Appendix D, Mai5). Here is another example of radio not only acknowledging the medium of television, but also promoting it (refer to p. 105 for a description of the way that 2XS uses television segments in their promos). The Telebingo information was not restricted to when the DJ was talking to Russell and the fact the station planned giving away Telebingo tickets was mentioned a number of times between seven and eight. These small segments are known as "teasers" and programming schedules often indicate when and how many times a DJ should "tease" a song, competition or promotion before the actual event. Below are a number of "teasers" for the Telebingo competition/advertisement.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> It is debatable whether the Telebingo promotion should be discussed in DJ Chat or Advertising and Promotion. It is dealt with in DJ Chat because the promotion takes the form of a conversation rather than a prerecorded advertisement.

- ... a chance for you to pick up 50 grand.
- Now there's something starting on TV tonight, you could win \$50,000, it's called Telebingo.
- ... talking to Russell, who's got all the go you need to know on Telebingo, alright?
- ... we'll go to the news first and then we'll tell you all about how it [Telebingo] works.

The high level of interjection by the DJ during this interview indicates that Russell is on the phone rather than in the studio. These interruptions show the DJ is still listening to what is being said, encouraging the interviewee to continue talking. This phatic communion<sup>8</sup> is particularly evident during this passage and although Russell provides most of the information, the sections in square brackets indicate interjections by Robbie Rakete.

Well, what you have to do, is you have to get the four corners marked [OK] but that has to be within the first 27 numbers [oh], after the first 27 numbers [yup] it's no good [OK], you can't win a prize [damn]. Or, [yup] you can get a cross [a big cross right across the middle of it?] yes [OK] from corner to corner [yup] but that has to be in the first 34 numbers [oh OK] otherwise you [you don't win anything] no prize [OK]. Or, you get all of them.

In a studio interview body language (nods, smiles) would, to a large extent, replace these verbal queues. There are far fewer verbal interjections in the Junior Tinuhu interview for example and right at the outset listeners are informed it is not a phone interview because Robbie Rakete has "got a special guest *in the studio*".

Because this conversation has the same function as an advertisement, the DJ must ensure that the listeners are provided with all relevant information on the topic. Robbie Rakete ensures listeners are informed about the who, what, when, where, why and how of Telebingo by asking questions like

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<sup>8</sup> Phatic communion is "a term used by the British-Polish anthropologist Malinowski to refer to communication between people which is not intended to seek or convey information but has the social function of establishing or maintaining social contact" (Richards, Platt & Weber 1985: 214).



"where do we get the tickets?" and "how do we win the money?". He also reminds Russell of information evidently discussed prior to the broadcast saying "Now, you were saying before that there's a winner every time ...".

A couple of questions remain unanswered at the end of the interview. Firstly, exactly who is Russell? Radio (and for that matter television) usually identifies people, according them a certain credibility by labelling them. The label may refer to a person's occupation, where they live or even their radio listening status (for example, a Mai FM listener), but Russell is never identified in this fashion. During one of the interview teasers Robbie Rakete claims "I don't know where he [Russell] got the inside wire from" and listeners never do find out. The second question which is not followed up concerns the half hour length of the Telebingo results which are screened on television each night.

R. And then you go home and you watch the TV show, on Wednesday  
8 o'clock, Channel One.

DJ Right, first one tonight.

R. Yeah, and that actually goes for half an hour.

DJ Does it!?

The surprise registers in Robbie Rakete's voice when he exclaims "does it?", but there is no explanation as to why Telebingo differs from Lotto and Strike, the two other gambling games to have their results published on television and which only last for 10-15 minutes.

Robbie Rakete summarises the information provided during the interview saying "so we head down to the Lotto outlet, we pick up our Telebingo tickets and we get ready for the big game tonight". It is essential to repeat advertising messages on radio to ensure listeners have heard and if they have heard, to reinforce the idea. This is even more important when the advert is included as part of a conversation, without sound effects or a change in voice to highlight the key information. The conversation is reinforced by an advertisement proper which is broadcast following the interview. Radio often uses a number of different strategies to advertise and promote products including casual DJ endorsement, prerecorded advertisements, interviews, tie ins with station promotions and sponsorship.

The DJs in the other two sampled broadcasts were continuity rather than personality DJs (see pp. 100) although the ski report did require the 10-11 a.m. DJ to conduct what appeared to be a partly ad-libbed interview. The primary role of continuity DJs is to announce up and coming songs and promote give aways. A woman with a deep, husky voice, stereotypical of female broadcasters on commercial radio, was on between nine and ten in the evening. Both the 10-11 a.m. and the 9-10 p.m. DJs stress the importance of music to Mai FM listeners:

- forty minutes of non stop music
- brand new music for Gabrielle's up before eleven
- the hits are on the way, forty minutes non stop for you
- I have been hammering this album, mighty fine, well worth winning (the DJ's personal endorsement of this giveaway increases its marketability).

The differing roles of the morning and daytime Mai FM DJs were very similar to those on 2XS. Mai programme director Ross Goodwin maintains that morning DJs are required to talk to a much wider audience than DJs doing shows at other times of the day.

Well they've [ie morning show DJs] got to be able to work the adult audience, because you've got to say with the breakfast time show you are dealing with the whole family and an egg splattered kitchen radio on top of the fridge. So you've got to be able to talk to the parents of our kids as well, so there's a difference in that area. Robbie, obviously through TV and that, has quite an area of expertise and he's a natural.

### **Advertising and promotion**

Most of the advertisements on Mai FM during the three hour broadcast sampled were either for clothing or clothing retailers, with a specific emphasis on sporting gear. There were also a number of adverts for sound and entertainment equipment such as CDs, stereos, video games and tapes. Other advertisers with Mai FM during the sampled broadcast include a florist, a hairdresser, a used car yard and food and beverages such as flavoured milk, takeaways and vitamins. There were also a few adverts promoting specific events such as the DB Warriors Game, a masquerade ball and Telebingo.

Ross Goodwin claims the age group that Mai FM is targeting tends to attract advertisers such as "the Cokes and McDonalds, [and] lots of clothing shops". Former Mai FM station manager Vivien Bridgwater Sutherland "refutes the popular belief that it's no good going after the youth market because they just don't spend that much money" (Hill 1994: 48). She claims children often effect their parents' spending patterns and "there is a lot of information which shows young people's disposable income is much higher than it's perceived to be" (ibid).

"Some [sic] said to me there's no point in advertising a car yard on Mai, and I said, 'C'mon, what was the first thing you wanted to buy when you left home? You bought a car before anything else in your life, the fact you might only be spending \$1000-\$1500 on it is irrelevant'."

(Hill 1994: 48)

This sentiment seems to have proven correct and Mai's current programme director Ross Goodwin claims: "We're starting to have abnormal success in used cars because Auckland's full of Jap imports – plus we're getting older listeners".

The Nintendo Game Boy advert acknowledges the importance of entertainment products to this market, attracting listeners by implying the game contains an element of danger (see Appendix D, Mai6). The advert begins with the word "warning" and users of the product are told to "beware". The game is described as "too hot to handle" and listeners are told "this world action will blow your mind". These sorts of warnings appeal to the traditional image of young people as risk takers and it reinforces the idea that video games are addictive by warning potential game players that "the ultimate challenge is trying to put it back down". The advert is not totally serious however and the reverb sound effect on the trade name "g-g-g-game boy", along with the phrase "more fun than a slap in the face with a wet fish", indicate that the game is not just challenging, but also fun.

Other advertisements broadcast on Mai FM use American street slang, rhyming, alliteration and puns to meld with the style of some of the music played by the station. The clothing store The Shed (see Appendix D, Mai7), for example, sells "Ts" not "t-shirts" and "b-ball singlets" rather than "base

ball singlets". This segment from the advert uses rhyming (wear and gear) and a pun on the trade name of the clothing label, the Game, in a way which is reminiscent of the techniques used in rap music.

The big street *wear* labels are arriving every day, *like the Game*, get the *gear* now with the Shed, where you can get the best in street *wear* labels at the best price. *The game begins at the Shed*, four hot new stores ... You want the look, get down to the Shed.

Another advert for a clothing retailer, this time called Tag, uses a rap style even more directly (see Appendix D, Mai8). The advert for the florist called Daisy Chain uses language to give it both colour and street credibility. The advert maintains the store staff have "a PhD in street strut" and are "the masters of elegant slumming". Potential customers are invited to "become another link in the chain, the daisy chain". This use of language, combined with the music behind the song attempts to give a product which is potentially associated with older consumers (that is cut flowers) a sexy new image.

The Telebingo advert and the advert for the flavoured milk, Primo, both draw on their television counterparts to reinforce the image created by the dominant medium. The radio version of the Telebingo advert alludes to the television version by using the same backing music, Madness and the song "Heavy, Heavy Monster Beat". The Primo advert (see Appendix D, Mai9) not only uses the same musical sting as its television counterpart, but also relies on the same off beat humour. This advert aims to attract consumers by entertaining them, rather than using standard radio techniques such as repetition or word plays. The scenario of a Russian Elvis Presley impersonator has absolutely nothing to do with flavoured milk, but instead helps to create an image of a company that prefers creative rather than pedestrian advertising. The musical sting at the end of the advert evokes the product for those who are already familiar with its television version.

The advert for the Maori Masquerade Ball at Auckland University stands out because of its distinctly New Zealand flavour. Maori language is used and the sound effects include traditional Maori instruments. The advert is primarily in English, but it also includes Maori words and phrases.

Naumai, haeremai, ki tenei hui [Welcome, welcome, come to this meeting] ... The theme is Children of the Mystic and your mask should be inspired by te ao Maori [the Maori world], atua [gods], patupaiarehe [fairies], taniwha [a river monster] and deities.

Although the advert does not translate the Maori, the context of the words and phrases means non-Maori speakers may be able to guess at their meaning.

The Mai FM promos are much shorter than those on either 2XS or Radio Massey and are generally only two or three words long (see Appendix D, Mai10). It appears the promos are recorded without set backing music and the DJ plays them during the instrumental section at the beginning of songs. In this way promos appear to be different, even when they have the same wording, because the music behind them differs. Most often Mai promos are used to help create a generic station identity, rather than to advertise a specific show.

The DJs used a number of “teasers” to inform listeners to stay listening because a giveaway would be coming up within a certain time. Usually callers got the prize simply by being the xth (fifth or whatever) caller. Prizes include Telebingo tickets, CDs, an entertainment centre voucher, a voucher for takeaways, tickets to a rugby league game, a Nike prize pack, a one week gym pass and a pack containing music and clothing. Some of these competitions were to take place a few days hence (eg the league tickets and the gym pass) but the DJ was promoting them during the sampled broadcast.

There appears to be less listener participation on Mai than either Radio Massey or 2XS and paradoxically this may be because Auckland has a much greater population than Palmerston North. When making requests listeners ringing the station could not specify the song they wanted to hear, it was simply seen as a chance to say hi to friends or relatives over the radio. The one request segment during the sampled period appears to be pre-recorded and heavily edited. The birthday calls also represent limited listener



participation but no listeners are put on the air as they are on 2XS.<sup>9</sup> Mai FM's advertisements and promos often used language which was derivative of Afro-American street slang and were backed by music which fit within the station's rhythmic CHR/urban format. The high concentration of advertisements promoting clothing and leisure activities is typical of a radio station targeting a young niche market in a major urban centre. Mai's use of extremely short but frequent promos to advertise the station is part of a strategy to market the station's overall sound, as internally consistent, but differing from other radio products in the Auckland market.

### Conclusion

Mai FM operates in the extremely competitive Auckland radio environment and has successfully established a niche for itself by targeting young listeners using black, predominantly American, dance music. That the station has a Maori identity is evident in a number of short Maori language vignettes, the occasional "kia ora" from a DJ, its excellent record of employing young Maori and the fact it attracts a sizeable number of young Maori listeners. As Wilson (1994: 111) contends "Mai's audience is characterised by its youth as much as its Maoriness". The fact that Mai's playlist draws heavily on the singles charts at the same time as it plays what former *New Zealand Listener* columnist Arthur Baysting described as "funk, hip hop, rap, dance and sweet beat" (Wilson 1994: 111) indicates that radio audiences under 25 are not a group with homogeneous music tastes. Some may prefer guitar music, while others tune into the same "classic hits" stations that their parents listen to, but there also appears to be a sizeable group of young adults who like their music funky.

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<sup>9</sup> Radio Massey listeners are not put on the air in this way because the station does not have the equipment, facilities or legal protection to do so. Massey listeners, however, often ring in with quite specific song requests and Massey DJs regularly solicit requests.

## Conclusion

This research examines how New Zealand radio programmers perceive and target listeners aged 18 to 25. It shows how broadcasters formulate certain ideas about their audience based on market research and historical precedence and then learn by osmosis the rules which govern their work place environment. Since the 1950s recorded popular music has continued to be the central programming element on most radio stations seeking to attract young adult listeners. Factors considered important by the three radio stations studied include whether the music is newly released, how it has fared internationally (particularly in the USA) and, in the case of student radio, whether the music has been produced by artists marginalised because of factors such as ethnicity or gender. This thesis outlines the importance of ownership and work practices, before examining the social, historical and international forces which have shaped broadcasters' ideas about young adults. Unstructured interviews and textual analysis are two methods which then allow a closer focus on three New Zealand radio stations.

Rothenbuhler (1985), Brand and Scannell (1991) and Goffman (1981) all identify important factors for consideration when analysing broadcasts. This thesis builds on their expositions to examine DJ talk, how programme directors decide what to play within the confines of a radio format and the role of news and advertising. Different methodologies are used for differing purposes: textual analysis to examine the speech based components of the broadcasting segments; unstructured interviews with the programme directors primarily to examine their role as gatekeepers and uncover trends within music programming; and a review of published literature relating to each of the stations (although there was far more written about Mai FM than the other two) to contextualise them within the New Zealand broadcasting scenario as either a student, an iwi or a commercial radio station.

Issues of ownership may effect what a radio station broadcasts. For this reason the case studies include three stations which operate under differing levels of government regulation and have differing forms of ownership. As a privately owned commercial station 2XS must sell audiences to advertisers in order to make a profit and ensure its continued existence. To do this it operates within a tight format, although the station still maintains a

community identity, particularly during its morning show. Radio Massey is licensed as one of six student radio stations which operate on a non-profit basis. The programme director controls the sound of the station more loosely than his commercial counterparts, however he still chooses at least half the music played during general shows. Student radio stations use of volunteer broadcasters ensures programming is eclectic and formatting requirements are applied less rigidly than on commercial stations. Mai FM is an iwi station originally aimed at Auckland's young Maori and Polynesian listeners, but it has now widened this brief to include anyone who is under 30, as well as attracting a growing adult audience. Mai attracts the largest audience of any New Zealand iwi station and adheres closely to an urban/rhythmic CHR (contemporary hit radio) format, with DJ chat, music and station promos all working to promote a consistent station identity. While Mai FM's programme director ensures the station continues to make a profit, its management promotes objectives which are more culturally oriented such as making the use of Maori language acceptable to young New Zealanders within an everyday context.

Broadcasting in New Zealand is in a constant state of flux and the country's first Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) election may see another major shake-up in the broadcasting arena. Radio frequencies are bought and sold, companies which own stations go out of business or make a profit, broadcasting regulations change, as does technology. However, even if the political and broadcasting environment does change, and changes dramatically, this thesis captures radio broadcasting at a particular place and time to provide a snap shot of the broadcasts and programming practices of three music based radio stations which are aiming at the younger end of the market. Thus, we have come full circle to again stress the importance of critical political economy theory and the contention that any analysis must be historically specific.

This thesis attempts to correct an academic imbalance by focusing on music programming and advertising, which comprise the bulk of contemporary material broadcast on music oriented radio stations. Within the context of media studies and other social sciences (particularly sociology and political science) radio has been overshadowed by television and film. Those academic studies of radio which do exist tend to concentrate (with a few notable exceptions) on public service broadcasting, the institutional history

of broadcasting, news and current affairs. It is debatable whether this thesis has fully achieved its goal of correcting this imbalance, because using written academic discourse to discuss non-verbal sounds such as music and sound effects is problematic. This, combined with the fact that music is a somewhat ephemeral, constantly changing phenomenon gave an appreciation of why so many academics avoided discussion of music programming strategies or the importance of music in radio broadcasting, in favour of examining the minority (when the overall number of radio stations is considered), public service broadcasters or news and current affairs. Another difficulty was analysing the sampled broadcasts as a whole, on the basis that most listeners do not tune in for one song, one advertisement or even one DJ but because they like the overall sound of a radio station. To a certain extent this problem could not be overcome, and the case studies were considered in four sections – advertising, music programming, news and information and DJ talk. However, it was acknowledged that these sections sometimes overlapped and there was a great degree of commonality and cross referencing when examining each of these topics.

The paucity of research in this area means that there are many potential future directions for this type of study. More specific, in-depth ethnographic case studies of New Zealand radio stations (such as that undertaken by Rothenbuhler (1985)) would provide further information about the practices of programme directors as gatekeepers. The constantly changing nature of broadcasting has already been alluded to and any comments made on the nature of youth broadcasting must be constantly updated if they are to remain valid. A great deal of marketing research is undertaken to discover the nature of radio audiences, but this tends to be quantitative and to only ask about a pre-existing product. Market research participants are asked which radio station they listen to, when they listen and which already playlisted songs they like or dislike. They are not asked whether they like any new songs, not already played by the station undertaking the research, whether they think they are sufficiently catered for by current broadcasters or how radio stations could improve their product. Qualitative audience research may help to establish whether there is sufficient demand for new services. For example, asking young New Zealanders about their listening preferences, would ascertain whether people who are under 25 believe they are being catered for by current broadcasters and indicate whether there is a

need, in this country, for a publicly funded youth radio network, such as the Australian Triple J initiative.

This thesis contributes to existing academic discourse on broadcasting in New Zealand. Initially, the focus is on broad, external factors such as government policy, international trends and media ownership. The work practices at three particular stations are then examined more closely, to gauge the influence of individual programme directors and to investigate how contemporary music oriented radio stations target those aged between 18 and 25. The thesis goes some way to establishing why music is such an important programming element for these stations, how programme directors perceive this audience and how the economic underpinning of a station may affect what it broadcasts.



## Appendices

### Appendix A – INFORMATION SHEET

#### **“New Zealand radio and the 18-25 year old: a comparative study of three stations”.<sup>1</sup>**

Market research and ratings surveys seek to discover who is listening to which radio stations, but there have been fewer studies examining broadcaster's perceptions of their audience, how music is chosen for broadcast or how radio formats operate to target specific groups of listeners. This Massey University masterate thesis aims to contrast three radio stations which use differing formats to target, as part of their listening audience, those aged between 18 and 25. The data will be drawn from interviews with programme directors, analysis of segments of radio broadcasts and extensive reading on the history of youth oriented radio both here in New Zealand and in the UK and USA.

#### **Who is conducting the research?**

I (Stephanie Brennan) will conduct the research for my Master of Arts thesis in Media Studies at Massey University. I have completed a Certificate in Broadcast Journalism at Christchurch Polytechnic and worked as a Radio New Zealand journalist for three years. This year I received a Massey University Masterate Scholarship and this is my second year tutoring undergraduate Media Studies students. Also, I was a volunteer at a student radio station while completing my Bachelor of Arts degree at Canterbury University.

#### **What will you have to do?**

I (Stephanie Brennan) will interview you, in your capacity as programme director for approximately half an hour (the interview will be tape recorded unless there is any objection). Most of the questions will relate to programming issues, namely the criteria determining which music is broadcast, how you go about tailoring your broadcasts to those who are under 25 and how the mix between music, news, DJ chat and news and information is determined. I will also be seeking some basic information on

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<sup>1</sup> This was the thesis' working title at the time the Information Sheet was sent to the three programme directors. The title was subsequently changed to, "Radio Programming for Young Adults: Three New Zealand Case Studies".

the radio station in question, eg number of staff employed, any major changes in format, position in the ratings (if applicable) and information relating to the station's ownership. I hope to analyse three hours of your station's programming, concentrating on factors such as music, competitions, advertising and DJ chat, all of which contribute to the unique sound of radio.

I am also seeking access to three hours of programming schedules (the three hours which I examine using content analysis. This means that I will be aware of all the songs broadcast during this time). I will not require this information until after the schedules have gone to air and this thesis will not be published until the end of the year, several months after the material has been broadcast.

If requested I will ensure the radio station and/or programme director remain anonymous, but it would be preferable if I could name the station on the basis that I can then cite detailed information relating to your specific station and the market within which it operates.

### **Your rights**

- (a) you may refuse to answer any particular question, and to withdraw from the study at any time.
- (b) you may ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation.
- (c) examples of the interview transcript may be included in an appendix to the thesis (unless otherwise requested).
- (d) you will receive a summary of the information which relates to your station and was collected for this study. You are also welcome to peruse the final thesis.
- (e) you and your station *will be identified* in the thesis *unless otherwise requested*. But if you inform me that you wish to remain anonymous you and/or your station will not be identified.

### **How will the results be used?**

The results will be used to supplement other material I have read on radio in writing my thesis which is due to be completed at the end of 1996. The information may also be used in any articles or seminars (which are likely to be targeted at an academic audience) submitted for publication at a later date.

## DRAFT QUESTION GUIDE

**Please Note:** This provides an indication of the types of questions I will ask, but the interview will be informal and also deal with other issues that you may raise.

### Station Background

- Approximately how many staff are employed and in what areas?
- A brief history of the station (ie how long has it been broadcasting, any change in programming formats during this time)?
- What type of advertising does it rely on? (eg predominantly local or national advertising, promotional events, sales forces)

### Music

- How do you know which music is available for possible broadcast (ie trade magazines, audience requests, sales charts, outside consultants)?
- What is the role of record promoters or companies, do they just send the product or do you have direct contact with them?
- How does the playlist work?
- How many CDs would you consider for broadcast each week?
- Does your station have a particular music programming format (or a combination of formats)?
- Does your station conduct surveys to determine listener preference, if so how?

### Others

- Do you decide on any matters which do not relate to music? Eg the duration of news bulletins, competitions, talkback segments etc
- Can you give me an indication of the station's primary listeners, ie demographic (or psychographic) profile?
- What type of people do you look for to act as DJs? Does your station use 'identity DJs' eg during the morning show?
- Are there any specific items (other than music) which target the 18-25 age group (eg birthday calls, horoscopes, entertainment guides)?
- What do you think distinguishes the 18-25 year old audience from other audience segments?

## Appendix B – A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF NEW ZEALAND BROADCASTING

1900-1920	Some conflict between amateur radio operators and the government regarding the use of signals for naval purposes.
May 1921	Otago University Physics professor Robert Jack transmits both voice and music.
1922	"... there were seven stations – three in Dunedin, two in Wellington and one each in Christchurch and Auckland. None were broadcasting for more than a few hours each week" (Day 1994: 48).
1923	Broadcasters prohibited from transmitting advertising.
1925-1931	The Radio Broadcasting Company (RBC) established as a privately owned company and charged with setting up stations in the four main centres. These stations were funded by a licence fee, while the B stations continued to operate outside this government endorsed network.
1925-1932	Only 25 percent of the material for broadcast could be prerecorded, this regulation was abolished in 1932.
1926	APRA formed and began collecting 6 percent of the RBC's licence fee from 1929.
1932	The New Zealand Broadcasting Board (NZBB) established.
1932	The B stations were permitted to sponsor programmes, but this ceased in March 1934 because the government claimed stations were constantly exceeding the regulations.
1933	The issuing of licences to B stations ceased.
1936	The New Zealand Broadcasting Act abolished the NZBB and established the National Broadcasting Service (NBS).
1937	The New Zealand Broadcasting Act amended separating commercial and non-commercial radio stations. Colin Scrimgeour appointed as head of the National Commercial Broadcasting Service (NCBS), while former university professor James Shelley headed the National Broadcasting Service (NBS).

- 1946            The NCBS and NBS are amalgamated to form the New Zealand Broadcasting Service (NZBS). Shelley continues as director until 1949.
- 1961            The Broadcasting Corporation Act permits (in theory) the establishment of privately owned radio stations.
- 1962            The newly elected National Government abolishes the NZBS, replacing it with a corporation, the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation (NZBC).
- 1967            Radio Hauraki goes to air illegally as a pirate station.
- 1970            Radio Bosom at Auckland University is the first student station to gain a temporary broadcasting licence.
- 1972            The Labour Government seeks broadcasting independence, decentralisation and the introduction of SOEs and the NZBC becomes the BCNZ (Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand).
- 1975            The NZBC is abolished, Radio New Zealand, Television One and Television Two are established.
- 1976            The Broadcasting Act allows for FM radio stations. The Independent Broadcasters Association is formed.
- 1989            Radio New Zealand and Television New Zealand becomes State Owned Enterprises, radio frequencies are put out for tender. Some frequencies are reserved for Maori broadcasting and noncommercial broadcasters.
- 1991            A legislative change means New Zealand media can now be 100% foreign owned.
- 1996            Radio New Zealand's commercial network of 41 stations sold to the New Zealand Radio Network consortium.



**Appendix C –A QUANTITATIVE BREAK DOWN OF PROGRAMMING  
ON RADIO MASSEY, MAI FM AND 2XS.**

	<b>2XS</b>	<b>Radio Massey</b>	<b>Mai FM</b>
Number of songs	7-8 a.m., 6 10-11 a.m., 13 9-10 p.m., 13	7-8 a.m., 14 10-11 a.m., 13 9-10 p.m., 13	7-8 a.m., 9 10-11 a.m., 15 9-10 p.m., 16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32 Songs</b>	<b>40 Songs</b>	<b>40 Songs</b>
Number of time checks	7-8 a.m., 14 10-11 a.m., 0 9-10 p.m., 2	7-8 a.m., 6 10-11 a.m., 0 9-10 p.m., 1	7-8 a.m., 3 10-11 a.m., 4 9-10 p.m., 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16 Time Checks</b>	<b>7 Time Checks</b>	<b>8 Time Checks</b>
Advertisements	7-8 a.m., 15 10-11 a.m., 15 9-10 p.m., 9	7-8 a.m., 5 10-11 a.m., 4 9-10 p.m., 4	7-8 a.m., 20 10-11 a.m., 8 9-10 p.m., 12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39 Adverts</b>	<b>13 Adverts</b>	<b>40 Adverts</b>
Number of voice breaks	7-8 a.m., 10 10-11 a.m., 6 9-10 p.m., 8	7-8 a.m., 8 10-11 a.m., 4 9-10 p.m., 4	7-8 a.m., 8 10-11 a.m., 6 9-10 p.m., 3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24 Voice Breaks</b>	<b>16 Voice Breaks</b>	<b>17 Voice Breaks</b>
Promos	7-8 a.m., 12 10-11 a.m., 7 9-10 p.m., 7	7-8 a.m., 6 10-11 a.m., 6 9-10 p.m., 2	7-8 a.m., 14 10-11 a.m., 8 9-10 p.m., 12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26 Promos</b>	<b>14 Promos</b>	<b>34 Promos</b>

Please note that this chart does not represent an attempt to examine broadcasts using content analysis, as it would be impossible to predict general trends on the basis of a three hour sample. However it does give some indication of how often various broadcasting components occur at different times of the day and how the programming mix differs slightly between the stations for the specific period sampled.

The category "voice breaks" lists the number of times the DJ speaks but does not detail the duration of each segment. A voice break was counted each time the DJ spoke after a song, advertisement or other programming element. Advertisements include only set prerecorded items advertising an outside product. Promos include only those prerecorded items used by the station for internal publicity purposes, either to promote the station's generic identity or a particular show. The number of time checks indicates how many times the DJ gave the time during the specified hours of broadcast.

## Appendix D – BROADCAST EXCERPTS

- RM1** Mum I can't find my jandals. Two scoops and a piece of fish thanks. It's the kiwi show three hours of New Zealand music, every Friday, four to seven p.m. Brought to you by Harvesters, the cafe wine bar in Square Edge. There's only one music we play round here mate, and that's kiwi of course.
- RM2** Yeah hi, Jemima's the name [traffic noise in the background] and ah just going to let you know about a place I go to, bloody good right, ah they serve, ah I dunno, most of the time right, espresso about ten, followed by a bagel, maybe a croissant, bloody good word that, masses of caffeine available, foccacias, gourmet pies, salads, hummus, total ?, of course you can get dinner and supper things as well. And on the corner of George and Main Street, it's called George Street Deli, of course if you're not a bloody health freak, you could join me in a bottle of red darling, upstairs, smoker's lounge, just bring your cell phone right, George Street Deli right, ciao.
- RM3** [sound of wild animals] Bob, I'm sick of eating sandy, burnt animals, there must be something better to nosh around here. Bob, what are you doing? Inventing felafel mix Sandy, I just know this could be huge. [Sandy:] But what about that megalithic circle we started last summer? [Bob:] Oh, it can wait, the wheel and 99.4 FM have priority, the pillar of fire said so. [more roars].
- RM4** [male voice:] Rooose, what's that floating thing? [female voice:] Looks like a local music show, but what's all that green stuff? [male voice and punk music:] It's a solid hour of local music to shake the swamp scum out of your ears. [Changes to Flying Nun sounding music:] Endangered water beasts and creeping mutancy surface from the swamp, seven till eight p.m. on Thursday, then they scuttle off leaving little bits of sticky fluff and a high pitched ringing sound.
- RM5** [male:] Tubular records and Active 89 FM proudly present a mid-winter Temple of Boom, Spectrum Two Friday 28th of June.

[woman's voice:] Where sound becomes environment, and a night of loin grinding coolness, check it out. [male:] Live and direct from London the full force drum and bass grooves of Springheel Jack. [woman:] And back from New York to wind up the splifometer and shake your sexy foundations Unitone Hi-Fi. [male:] Taking you into the ultra world the Euro Pacific and techno funk of Lava Lava. [woman:] Alongside Aotearoa's top turntable scientist. [male:] Spectrum Two Friday 28th of June at the Edward Street Precinct Wellington Central. [woman:] Limited advance tickets exclusive from Troubadour Records in Manners Street. [male:] Load up and lush out.

**RM6** "It's not unusual to be loved by anyone" Next. "Everybody's doing a brand new dance now" Next. [music comes in] RDU is busy looking for a new music director, so if you think you've got what it takes to be part of the creative and progressive team at RDU then contact the station manager at Christchurch ... for an application form. "Crackling Rosie get on board" Nooo.

**2XS1**

**MW** OK it's another tuba tune right now, you've got to listen to this, you've got to tell us what the tune is ... [An excerpt of a tuba playing the Beegees song "Staying Alive" is played].

**B<sup>2</sup>** Cool!

**MW** Yeah that's absolutely fantastic, hey you'd be the life and soul of any party if you walked in with a big, old tuba ah ... [laugh from Baldrick]. People'd go look at that guy, he's got a tuba.

**B** Yeah ... make way, make way for the tuba player [as if through a loud hailer] clear out the kitchen!

**MW** OK so if you know ah

**B** Cause it's so big

**MW** It is, it's huuuge

**B** Takes up, it would, say if a tuba player was standing in a kitchen, it would take up the whole kitchen more or less

**MW** There wouldn't be a lot of cooking going on

**B** No way

---

<sup>2</sup> B stands for Baldrick, MW for Mike West, C for caller.

MW And um, you also have to be you know, you have to have a big strong set of lungs to be able to blow the tuba, to be able to play the thing. Anyway, if you know what that tune was, then call us right now ...

## 2XS2

MW And um, a guy in southern California, an inventor by the name of Neil Camus, has just applied for a patent for a battery that is powered by ... [clears throat] urine.

B Oh yuck!

MW Sounds disgusting ah

B It does

MW And imagine what you'd have to do if you couldn't start your car cause of a flat battery in the morning, you'd have to open up the bonnet and then [zipping sound, then laugh]

B Oh just imagine

MW OK listen carefully to this [tuba tune] a lot of people seem to have figured it out.

## 2XS3

MW 2XS FM Morning good, you are how?

C I am how fine [woman caller]

MW Great, I'm very pleased to that hear

C Yes

MW And name your what

C Oh don't start this easy speak rubbish [laugh]. Yes, Leanne from Apiti here again.

MW Any snow this morning Leanne?

C No there's been a bit overnight out Table Flat but it's not quite down here yet.

MW OK

C But you know this competition you ran last week, the don't say hello game?

MW Yeeah

C All your competitions that you run for big prizes like you know clothing, and this and that and this and that

MW Yeah

- C Have you ever thought of running a competition exclusively for us cockies, where we could win a thousand dollars worth of u m
- MW Hunting, hunting equipment
- C No, well yeah
- B Yeah, we could have a rifle up for grabs
- C No, I've got a couple of good ones anyway
- MW Oooh
- C But um no for cockies, since we're in a slump at the moment, we're not rich anymore, we can't afford to buy Volvos and stuff and
- MW Where do you keep your guns?
- C Locked up
- MW Oh well that's good, that's good
- C Yeah locked up, yup
- MW We just wanted to check
- C Don't worry they're very handy and I'm very quick with the locks so anybody who breaks in
- MW No, that's OK. You'll never see Mike and Baldrick peeping in your bedroom window late at night I can promise you.
- C [snickers] Might be a bit of a thrill
- MW/B Yeah [laugh]
- C Um but anyway, a thousand bucks of farming clothing from say you know Wrightsons, Bog Barn or Wilson and Kettle or something.
- B Alright, we'll keep that in mind Leanne.
- C [Sounds slightly put out]. Just thought it might be a change cause Barkers and places like that are all pretty flash clothes.
- B We'll start having negotiations with the bulk barn.
- C You do that. Cause I need a new swandri.
- MW You have a day good
- C OK, day good to you to.
- MW Thank-you very much
- B Calling thank-you us.
- MW As a matter of fact that has started me thinking bald man
- B What the idea of giving away what
- MW A shot gun or something
- B You reckon



MW Yeah argh. We could give away a pump action shot gun and a life time supply of ammo [yeah]

B I'm sure the daisy ammunition company would come to the party.

MW Oh absolutely. I mean it would be quite interesting, we could say when you hear the gun shot be caller nine [gun shot sound]. Ah

B Yeah

MW We'll have to give some serious thought to that.

B Take this one to the drawing board, take this one to the think tank meeting today.

2XS4

MW 2XS, Good morning

C Good morning is that you Mr West?

MW Sir, good morning

C [Muldoon type laugh, pretends to be Sir Robert Muldoon] My goodness me I guarantee it's a lot warmer up here [a possible reference to the fact that Sir Robert is in heaven?] than it is down there at the moment, it's looking very cold.

MW As a matter of fact I was going to ask you if you get goose bumps up there!

C Well you get all sorts of bumps, you get bumps that make noises in the night, and [laugh] bumps that you go over that can give you a bit of a thrill,

MW Yeah, good on ya

C A lot of things happening down there of course

MW What about the David Caygill thing?

C Well I think it was a bit of a shock from what I can see up here, but ah you know I don't know what's happening with this Labour Party. Just wondering what old Caygill's going to do now, now that he's announced his retirement from politics, although George Burns [the deceased comedian] saw him, he was watching the whole thing and he's up here with us now and he said he could always get a job at a chemist shop as a giant size roll on deodorant.

MW [laugh] Yeah very good. So do you think Helen Clark is going to strengthen as a leader now.

C No I don't think so. They should have kept that other, ah Beagle boy type bloke, the lamb burger gentleman with the ah connections with Christchurch and whatnot. But ah I don't think

Helen's got what it takes, ah she hasn't got that X factor. But you know women in politics and women in general leading things, I mean if you look back into history, Helen of Troy was the face that launched a thousand ships, well this one's the one that sunk a pack of twits [laugh].

M W You keep warm up there

C Yes I will, thank-you.

## 2XS5

The sun glistens off the crisp powder, your breath steamy against the icy till of the morning as you hit the slope and carve a graceful arc through the virgin snow [sound of snow swishing]. This is it, the buzz, the rush, the big run you've always wanted, just you and the mountain, your mind racing, adrenalin pumping as you swathe a trail down the mountain. Could there possibly be a better thrill? That night [sound of a tab opening and fizz] you share the dream run with a coldie, a Carlton Cold.

## 2XS6

Winter, short days, wet roads, grey skies, fog, large puddles, cold toes, I see rain, bored children and the Sussan this goes with that winter sale, what a glorious time of year. "This goes with that at Sussan" [musical ditty].

## 2XS7

Hello, this is Arnold [presumably Schwarzenegger] and this is the World's West Breakfast Show, ha ha ha. It's very funny. [A classical music ditty follows, then a voice in the style of a news broadcaster says:] We interrupt this pleasant, friendly, relaxing radio station to bring you [thunder clap] the World's West<sup>3</sup> [The sting has driving guitar chords driving guitar chords] Breakfast Show on 92.2XS FM.

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<sup>3</sup> This refers to the morning show DJ Mike West, but it is also a pun on the word "worst". Programme director Darren Wallace claims that despite the station's current ratings success DJs still often take the position of an underdog.

2XS8

'I shall say dis only once' [this phrase is from the television programme *Allo, Allo*] 2XS FM reminds you not to try any of this at home. Mike West and Baldrick are professionally trained disc jockeys [hog sound]. NOT!!!

MAI1

DJ Steph will be heading out fairly soon, she'll have a special guest in the car. And it's a pleasure to welcome into the studio, Junior Tinuhu [clap]. Thanks, we're a bit short on people here mate, sorry about that [only a few claps]

JUNIOR Everybody's still asleep I think.

DJ Yeah, well it's early days yet. So, getting ready to head off to South Africa?

JUNIOR Yeah, yeah, we're sort of going to Australia first to watch the Bledisloe on Saturday.

DJ Hey, just a question seen as you're actually not going to be playing in the Bledisloe, are you guys allowed to bet on it?

JUNIOR Well, that's a good question.

DJ Cause could make some money. I was given a tip once, they said if you're going to Australia bet against Australia because the home team, the home crowd will be for Australia, so the odds will be better on New Zealand, so you might get ...

JUNIOR Well yeah, but I have a feeling that we probably won't be able to [laugh].

DJ That's a shame, you could get some holiday money then.

JUNIOR Could get into trouble [DJ laughs]

DJ And then off to South Africa, what five week tour round there?

JUNIOR Yeah, it's gonna be hard, but it's gonna be a good one.

DJ You looking forward to it?

JUNIOR Yeah absolutely.

DJ It's good to see you back in the squad too I mean, I don't know, I mean we were talking about before when you're waiting to get selected and you're sitting around at home sort of waiting for the call, what sort of things go through your mind?

JUNIOR Like I said to you before, it's real nerve racking and you certainly can't sit in one place for too long. And I sort of like, woke up, I

think the team was announced at ten past four, and I woke up at ten past six in the morning and couldn't sit still.

DJ [stamps his feet, at the same time you can hear him cough, so perhaps it's to mask the noise] Oh when they gonna call me when they gonna call me? So do you ever look at it and think, oh man if I didn't get called, what would I do next. I mean have you ever thought about what would you do if you didn't get the call up?

JUNIOR I dunno, I'd probably be sitting in a bar somewhere. No I dunno.

DJ Hey moving right along, did you see the thing on the news last night about the Christ College, Christchurch Boys?

JUNIOR Yeah, that was a bit disappointing for our game.

DJ Isn't it a bit of a worry?

JUNIOR We all know that going through boys' colleges and the big rivalry against the local derby's.

DJ But we never had that sort of problem did we? Not in our day mate, not in our day.

JUNIOR We didn't have TV cameras making a big deal of it I spose.

DJ That's true and if there was a TV camera came down, perhaps they put on a bit of a show too, swing a few punches. You been following the Olympics?

JUNIOR Yeah, it's been excellent.

DJ Oh, apart from some of the results. I mean I don't know what the computer system is over there but seems like everybody's getting a record. Hey congratulations, you came last but you got a world record, hey well done [mock announcer voice]

JUNIOR Apparently the organisers haven't been too flash hot, and the transport to and from, they have to go and hijack their own buses.

DJ Wasn't that great, that guy hijacked a bus?! Can you imagine that? "Hi I'm with the hockey team, we're taking over this bus".

JUNIOR I say that's a good manager [laugh].

DJ Are you expecting this sort of thing in South Africa, a couple of guys jumping on the bus, hijacking, maybe taking you to a local school derby?

JUNIOR I s'pose they try and make it as difficult as possible, but normally when we go to games there's a police escort to and from the games, so yeah we normally get looked after quite well.

DJ Oh very nice, very nice. So any quick thoughts on the call to change the haka for the All Blacks?

- JUNIOR Well, I'm just looking forward to doing my first one, but I have to go and learn it.
- DJ Yeah you have to go and learn it and then they get a new one for you, that'd would be pretty great wouldn't it? So no tips, nothing you'd like to see in there? Maybe some spears this time, that'd scare the hell out of the Springboks wouldn't it?
- JUNIOR Oh, I actually like the way it is now.
- DJ It's been a tradition ah, it's been a tradition.
- JUNIOR I'm not a man of change, although I like the new Auckland rugby jersey.
- DJ Yeah it's not bad that is it?
- JUNIOR Yeah, I think that's good for the new professional era, I think it looks good.
- DJ Hey first year in as a professional rugby player any extra pressures on you?
- JUNIOR No, probably just accountability for performance. I think if you don't play well then you have to be, to look forward to sitting on the bench [laugh].
- DJ I was gonna say you're playing well and you got picked for the All Blacks and about damn time too. Looking forward to seeing you in South Africa, and I was just wondering Steph's got the cruiser and she's be going out a little bit later, you want to maybe join her in the truck?
- JUNIOR That'd be good. Be good to get around.
- DJ S'tory, so when Steph goes out this morning, watch out Junior Tinuhu, take your pen, he might be able to autograph something for you because we've got a rising star on our hands. And off to South Africa, and you never know, could give you a few tips about staying away from Christs' College in Christchurch [Junior laughs]. And the other one, no ignore that sort of thing, cause you don't want that sort of thing in rugby, rugby is where it's at, it's a professional sport now, and Junior Tinuhu one of the best examples of it, our new All Black [shouts, Junior laughs]
- SONG [rappish at the beginning but goes into soul, still basically sexual].  
Montell Jordan, I like
- DJ Auckland's hottest music, Mai FM 88.6 Montell Jordan and Oh I like it. Just coming down to 7.21, we have a special guest in the

studio, Junior Tinuhu and ah Manukau, heading out to Manukau today.

JUNIOR Yeah that'll be good.

DJ That'll be quite good heading out to Georgie Pie Manukau, so you might want to make your position in the car park now already.

STEPH? Well actually, I actually asked, can I say [yup] I actually, I actually asked Junior where he'd like to go, he said back to bed. I said I don't have a problem with that [laugh]. But yeah Manukau.

DJ So if we can just stretch out the back seat so Junior can have a snooze on the way, that'd be no worries. So that's where you head out this morning if you want to catch Junior Tinuhu and of course Steph will be out there with the Coke Crater, all that great stuff you need to get your day started. Now there's something starting on TV tonight, you could win \$50,000, it's called Telebingo. Have you seen the adverts for it Junior?

JUNIOR No, can't say I have [laugh]

DJ Well, I've seen some stuff on TV, I'm not hell of a sure I understand how it works but I ...

JUNIOR \$50,000, I think we'll have to start watching TV

DJ Well I've got the phone number of someone who knows how to do it, so I'm going to be talking to Russell in just a sec, he's going to explain how Telebingo works, and after that between 7.30 and 8.30 here at Mai FM we're going to give you your chance to have a free shot at 50 grand tonight on TV, so stand by your phones.

MAI2

Ko te waru karaka i te atata wa. Giving you the time of day [clock ticking] with Mai FM 88.6.

MAI3

It's cool to korero. [woman] Kia ora, ko Viti ahau. One of the most important things is to have pride in who you are. Kia tu whakahi mo ake tonu, stand proud forever. [male] It's cool to korero. Mai [scream]



## MAI4

Hey bro', pumping party ah?

[There's a few lines here I can't distinguish, a party noise is in the background.]

What's up bro, you got touch or what?

No man, I'm just trying to save up my cash flow, thinking ahead, that's what my koro said.

Savings, agro.

Just trying to save up man, I'm putting some cash away for the rainy day.

Damn, you a poet and you know it, ahaa.

Kia mahara, save today for the future of your whanau. [several voices]

Yeah man, you've got to save it up.

## MAI5

DJ Auckland's hottest music, Mai FM 88.6, stand by we're gonna learn you how to get \$50,000. [sound effects including a bird whistling]. Giddy there Russell how are you mate? Hello Russell? Oops, I've pushed the wrong button again. Hello Russell, mate.

R. Hi

DJ The tips on winning \$50,000 tonight with Telebingo, how does it go?

R. Well after you've bought a ticket and you're watching the game show at home.

DJ OK, where do we get the tickets from? That's the first tip.

R. OK the normal place where you'd get Lotto tickets.

DJ Oh right, so you'd go to the Lotto place.

R. Yeah

DJ OK cool, no worries.

R. You'd buy the tickets and you can, and each ticket costs two dollars but you have to buy a minimum of two to start with, which costs two for four dollars and then two for each additional ticket after that.

DJ Excellent OK

R. And then you go home and you watch the TV show, on Wednesday 8 o'clock, Channel One.

DJ Right, first one tonight.

- R. Yeah, and that actually goes for half an hour.
- DJ Does it???
- R. Yeah, a few people, well they think, I don't really have time to sit down and watch that, but you can actually find out the results from the paper [oh cool] either later on that night or from any Lotto outlet.
- DJ OK Russell but how do we win the money?
- R. Well, what you have to do, is you have to get the four corners marked [OK] but that has to be within the first 27 numbers [oh], after the first 27 numbers [yup] it's no good [OK], you can't win a prize [damn]. Or, [yup] you can get a cross [a big cross right across the middle of it?] yes [OK] from corner to corner [yup] but that has to be in the first 34 numbers [oh OK] otherwise you [you don't win anything] no prize [OK]. Or, you get all of them.
- DJ Now there's no time limit on this is there?
- R. No
- DJ Excellent, so if we get the full banana there then we'll win the cash, right?
- R. Yeah
- DJ [Billy T laugh] Now you were saying before that there's a winner every time, they guarantee ...
- R. Every time because the computer keeps on going until ...
- DJ Til someone wins [yeah]. Excellent so that sounds pretty good, so we head down to the Lotto outlet, we pick up our two Telebingo tickets and we get ready for the big game tonight [yeah]. Excellent, thanks for that Russell, now you've straightened us all out, you've given us all the rules and details, we'll be asking some questions. Like first of all [ha ha], how many numbers have to come out before, to get the four corners OK, the four corners are in a set number, how many numbers have to come out? Russell just told you, if you call me now – you're caller number 8 and you get it right, I'll give you a free entry to Telebingo tonight on the proviso that if you get the 50 grand you split it with us here at Mai FM.

## MAI6

Warning Nintendo Game Boys newest challenge can be too hot to handle. G-g-g-game boy. No doubt this world action will blow your mind. G-g-g-game boy. Beware cause once you've picked up

Game Boy the ultimate challenge is trying to put it back down. G-g-g-game Boy. *Game Boy* [reverb or echo]. With Donkey Kong lads, more fun than a slap in the face with a wet fish, get your Game Boy right now at Dick Smiths, Farmers, K-Mart, Dekka or a Toy World outlet near you. [Uses Game Boy sound effects throughout the advert].

#### MAI7

The Shed's got the look in street wear and these school holidays you don't want to be anywhere else. Starter Ts are just 19.95 and Starter B-ball singlets are rocketing out the door at the awesome one off price of just 29.95. The big street wear labels are arriving every day, like the Game, get the gear now with the Shed, where you can get the best in street wear labels at the best price. The Game begins at the Shed four hot stores, Manukau, Takanini, Pakaranga and the new store in Dominion Road. You want the look, get down to the Shed.

#### MAI8

Tag is the mark of identification, and you'll be facing the best brands in the land, the hottest store of clothing on the Shore, ever to uprise with clothes from Moontide, Multz, Split and Yo Mossy Mo, Riot, no fear they've got the best gear you know, Everlast Global Standard, the Game are just some of those funky fresh names that Tag has.

Tag, 100 Hirsemere Road Takapuna. [sung: It's the mark of identification, Tag]

#### MAI9

[The Primo sting runs behind the advert, the dots indicate lines of (pseudo?) Russian ... My name is Vladimir ... I am number one Elvis impersonator in all of Russia ... I like all Elvis but I do mainly seventies ... I perform six night a week ... on Sunday I stay at home ... fix my costume and listen to Elvis record ... Go through the floor, go with the flow, Primo, thank-you maam.

**MAI10**

Mai, Auckland's hottest music, Mai [scream].

The beat of the street, Mai FM, 88.6.

The vibe is Mai FM, 88.6.

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