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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES WITH HIGH SCHOOL RADIO STATIONS

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The future leaders of the media are concerned about the opportunities and challenges facing them in an industry that is constantly changing. Civic Engagement offers students the incentives to become engaged citizens with values, motivation and commitment for using audio broadcasting in service to society. This presentation will also present insights on how civic engagement has a positive impact on student professional, creative and critical thinking skills.

Abstract/Proposal:

With the recognition of the State Farm Award through the Illinois Campus Compact this pilot project was designed to research the various ways to develop community using new audio technologies and then examine the use and sustained viability of terrestrial high school radio station licensed by the Federal Communications Commission to operate in the public interest and necessity. Project goals focused on the existing programming on the high school radio station, the impact on student learning and the potential of using this programming for civic engagement and service-learning opportunities. This project was focused on training high school teachers on how to engage high school students in service learning and civic engagement and connecting with community stakeholders.

A few high school radio stations have become important training grounds for students who go on to successful careers in broadcasting. However, the widely held perception is that most high school radio stations are poorly programmed and of little use to the community, high school curriculum or for future of broadcast professionals. The time to instill curiosity in students in the field of broadcasting is when they are in high school and this project would influence ways to engage these high schools on the benefits and uses for these broadcast signals. This project has provided valuable insight into the high school student learning process regarding the broadcast media, the outreach to their communities and its possible effects on student matriculation while studying the broadcast industry.

The research would identify significant questions in these crucial areas of professional development for the student in the broadcast discipline and the possible benefits to the community. The level of preparedness students have when entering college is a huge factor in their academic success and this project would inform me and the College on this issue. The FCC and the research I've been able to do to date, indicates that high school radio stations can be expensive to maintain and because the station's license is valuable, high school administrators are tempted to sell the license (to college, community or religious organizations). The FCC requires that high school radio stations must be on the air at least 12 hours a day or they are subject to a third party petition for a timeshare on the frequency – several cases are currently pending FCC review. Taking these issues into consideration, this research will influence my professional work, including my teaching with a greater understanding of the challenges faced by high school radio stations and the impact their success would have on their communities and the academic careers of the students who are exposed to these opportunities. The assessment of this project will go beyond just the reporting of positive, neutral, or negative outcomes, but will strive to explicitly state what knowledge is created or applied and what impact it may likely have in the future.

This creative process also presents positive effects for society including: facilitating cultural and racial understanding and encouraging a life long commitment of service to ones community using broadcast technologies. Our program is an innovative way to look at creating inspiring public service programming.

Finally, research also denotes that The Federal Communications Commission, the federal agency which regulates radio and television in America, introduced the Fairness Doctrine in 1949, and required all holders of broadcast licenses to present both sides of controversial issues of public importance in an honest, equitable and balanced manner - in 1987, during the Reagan Administration, the FCC abolished the Fairness Doctrine. The survey and research supports the importance of the Fairness Doctrine and why it needs to be reinstated.

As a result of these findings, this presentation will demonstrate evidence that civic engagement through service learning has a positive impact on such academic outcomes as enhanced student radio production skills student creative and critical thinking and cognitive development, and has positive effects for society such as (but not limited to): reducing stereotypes and facilitating cultural and racial understanding; encouraging a sense of social responsibility and a life long commitment of service to ones community;

including the importance of changing the current government position on the Fairness Doctrine.

Conducted qualitative research with in-depth interviews of administrators and faculty involved with engaging youth with service learning and civic engagement projects to review and ascertain the possible outcomes on faculty pedagogy, community awareness and encouraging a sense of social responsibility and a life-long commitment of service to one's community.

The high school community partners are the faculty who agreed to be interviewed for this project and they included: Chris Thomas, General Manager & Faculty Advisor, WLTl Radio, Timothy Spitsberg, Faculty for Cross Cultural Media, Benjamin LaFontaine, Faculty Advisor, WLTl Radio and William A. Allan, Supervisor of Television Projects, in addition, Alejandro Romero, Teaching Faculty with the Pilsen After School Community Center, Susan Kroll, Service Learning Coach for Curie High School, Roger Badesch, former Radio-TV teacher, Chicago Vocational Career Academy, and Jason Bujak and Liz Robbins from Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy. Each partner allowed time for in-depth interviews and a review of data currently used for audio service learning and civic engagement training. Lyons Township High School, unlike the Chicago Public School system, does not require high school seniors to complete 40 hours of service learning for graduation. However, Lyons Township has a cohort of faculty who are excited about embedding service learning and civic engagement opportunities into their curriculum.

The project objectives are to examine the existing programming for two high school radio stations and to evaluate their impact for student engagement in service learning (civic engagement) with audio broadcasting.

The reciprocal and mutual project goals of the high school partnership focused on data exchange. After completing a service-learning and civic engagement information session with the academic administration (Ms. Michele Albano, Division Chair The Language Arts Division) of Lyons Township High School, two sessions were conducted with their media faculty. During all of these sessions the presentations focused on service-learning curriculum development, the community outreach potential of the broadcast medium for service-learning and civic engagement and resource reference material. The high school faculties were expected to share the faculty and student experience of embedding service-learning and civic engagement pedagogy into their curriculum and submit their revised syllabi for review.

The partnership with Lyons Township (located about 30 miles west of Chicago in suburban LaGrange, Illinois) had been established from previous projects with their faculty members and students. Chris Thomas, General Manager of WLTl Radio for Lyons Township High School had attended and participated, with his students, in several conferences and other activities sponsored by the Radio Department at Columbia College Chicago. Chris along with his colleagues proved to be innovative and creative teachers and excellent partners for this project.

From the follow up discussion with the faculty partners at Lyons Township High School, the programs they developed had full support and participation of the high school and the community.

WLTl, a fully student operated radio station with about thirty students, is located at 88.1 on the FM dial and has an eclectic music format that allows for creative programming, students produce and broadcast their own shows. Students learn radio production including, planning, producing, performing, and reviewing their own shows.

First it must be noted that Lyons Township has an extensive history of civic engagement. WLTl received their license from the Federal Communications Commission in 1978, and with that beginning the Lyons Township administration supported a curriculum for radio broadcasting and production. With the beginning of WLTl's live programming all the past station managers and faculty advisors developed creative ways to engage and partner with their neighboring community.

WLTl, a fully student operated radio station, is located at 88.1 on the FM dial and has a basic music format that allows for creative programming.

Ms. Michele Albano, Division Chair or The Language Arts Division believes that in order to become

responsible and humane citizens who can intelligently contribute to society, students must understand the roles of language and media in the human experience and develop skills in communicating clearly, effectively, and honestly.

Other high school faculty interviewed for this research includes:

Roger Badesch, an instructor at Chicago Vocational Career Academy also participated in several of the Columbia College Chicago Radio Conferences and for several years. Also invited to as a Senior Exhibition Judge for his radio and television-graduating seniors. Prior to his release and termination of the broadcast program at Chicago Vocational, we had discussed his desire to explore ways to incorporate service-learning and civic engagement programming into his broadcast curriculum.

After Mr. Badesch and the terrestrial radio station at Chicago Vocational High School were both terminated, Jon Schmidt, administrator in the Office of Social Sciences and Service-Learning with the Chicago Public Schools suggested interviewing faculty at Marie Sklodowska Curie Metropolitan High School and/or Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory.

Susan Kroll, the Service-Learning Coach for Marie Sklodowska Curie Metropolitan High School located on the southwest side of Chicago. Curie offers a rigorous academic curriculum with an emphasis on technology and the arts and they promote a climate in which students develop respect for all persons as they prepare to become leaders and citizens in a multicultural democratic society. It is the vision of Curie Metropolitan High School that all students graduate with rigorous college preparation, become life long learners, as well as compassionate, creative, and responsible participants and leaders.

Designated as a magnet high school, and located at 4959 South Archer (west, central and south of Chicago) Curie attracts students from throughout the City. Magnet schools specialize in a specific subject area, such as math and science, fine arts, world language, or humanities. These schools accept students from throughout the city and reflect diverse racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. In most magnet schools, students are selected by a computerized lottery and in 2010 Curie had an enrollment of 3,587 students. This project would have involved about 100 Curie students. The Chicago Public School system requires high school seniors to complete 40 hours of service learning participation for graduation. When reviewing the Curie guidelines for student service-learning its clear to see that they focus on "action in the community," without a connection to the curriculum or classroom learning. Their programs are the classic definition of civic engagement.

The school has identified over 200 nonprofit agencies in their community for students to volunteer to work with and they are assigned duties as needed. Or students can volunteer to work on school-based activities such as: volunteering in the library, voter registration, and the Senior Citizen Prom program or holiday celebrations. Students are provided a form to complete for their personal reflections on their civic or school engagement experiences. Unfortunately, I was not provided a syllabus to review to support these activities.

Jason Bujak and Liz Robbins, faculty at Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy reported that their school is a student-centered learning community composed of faculty, staff, parents, and community members that cultivates the social, ethical, intellectual, and technological capacities of young men and women so that they thrive and prosper in today's global society. Through a rigorous college preparatory curriculum and a diverse extracurricular program, they encourage and empower all students to reach the height of their academic potential and take an active role in understanding and influencing global change.

Located at 250 East 111 Street on the far south side of Chicago, Brooks High School has a selective enrollment policy. Students are acceptance based on their enrollment application and entrance exam. Eligibility to take the entrance examination is based on the student's 7th grade standardized test scores in reading and mathematics.

As of 2009-2010, there were 749 students enrolled at Brooks High School. 85.6% were low income Students. The largest demographic (86.2 %) at Brooks High School was Black and the second greatest demographic was Hispanic at 12.0%.

In an interview with Brooks faculty member, Liz Robbins, who teaches Community Leadership/Social Justice (with about twenty students), shared her philosophy of education saying, “All students can learn, although not always the same way or at the same pace. Gwendolyn Brooks College Preparatory Academy faculty members tailor their instruction around strategic teaching practices including, but not limited to, cooperative learning, alternative assessments, high expectations, clear explanations and demonstrations, questions requiring higher order thinking skills, relevant homework, prior knowledge, sharing of ideas, rigorous curriculum, and extended learning.” The Service-Learning programs at Books has been limited to The Spanish Honor Society sponsoring the "recycling paper" project, collecting paper from each classroom every Friday. Brooks faculty provided no other material for this project.

Alejandro Romero, Teaching Faculty with the Pilsen After School Community Center, on the near west side of Chicago, is still in the early stages of building civic engagement programs and needed assistance with purchasing a computer – his participation was eliminated from the research.

The project objectives were to examine and compare the existing programming for two high school radio stations and to evaluate their impact for student engagement in service learning (civic engagement) with audio broadcasting. The purpose was to have faculty articulate in their syllabi and in our interviews their aspirations for their students and to communicate how their classroom work could reach a larger demo and service their community of license.

The project focused on qualitative research with in-depth interviews of faculty responsible for engaging students with service learning and civic engagement projects. Project also included a review and ascertainment of the possible outcomes on faculty pedagogy, community awareness.

Several syllabi were reviewed for pedagogies for utilizing service learning approaches for varying audiences and as a tool for reflection, creative expression, and discovery of personal voice using a variety of strategies. The aesthetics would have faculty explore community issues and to build an understanding of self and culture for translation into media programs.

This project was also focused on training high school teachers how to engage high school students in service learning and civic engagement with media outreach. College students were not involved in this project.

The faculty at Curie and Brooks High Schools were overwhelmed by this experience. Each interviewee was excited about the prospect of using audio broadcasting to support their service learning civic engagement projects, however the limitations at their respective educational institutions made total involvement with the project prohibitive. The Lyons Township High School faculty members embraced all the pedagogy support for their curriculum review.

On Saturday, October 23, 2010, The Radio Department of Columbia College with the Intercollegiate Broadcast System held their annual Midwest Regional High School and College Radio Conference. Faculty and students from Lyons Township and Brooks High Schools were in invited to attend to hear presentations from leading professionals and consultants in the audio broadcasting industry. The faculty and students from Lyons High School were engaged and excited about their attendance and participation and utilized the materials in their audio programming.

Unfortunately, the faculty and students from Brooks High School had a different experience attending the same conference. Liz Robbins from Brooks High School said, “I should start by saying thank you for inviting me and a few of my students to the conference... I teach and do other programs at Brooks, I am the coach for the Academic Decathlon team and (most importantly) have two young kids. When I read the proposal and met with you it seemed that the biggest and most time consuming part of it would be the service learning programming. That is why I made sure that I created a partnership with the journalism

teacher and we discussed some initial themes/topic/public service ideas. The technology, legal hoops/fees, and support staff needed to make this successful seemed like it was taken care of and of minimal focus.

Having attended the conference, and hearing from both teachers, engineers, and board members, I have an entirely different view of what it will take to make this successful. The time and financial resources needed to go out and drum up support to reach out to get the staff we need as well as learning how to work the machinery, and create service learning lessons that will correspond to not just "doing" radio service learning but fit into my Community Leadership/Social Justice class is prohibitive. This is the effort for someone who has minimal personal and extracurricular commitments who can really devote themselves to this project and can make it the focal point of their non-instructional time. I saw very few teachers at the conference who are not members of the A/V or radio/television departments, which speaks to the time that it takes to make this work as a part of their curriculum and in the classroom."

Liz Robbins comments were perfectly understandable and regrettable; she and her students were no longer able to participate in this research.

The Lyons Township High School faculty members were urged to utilize their critical thinking skills to develop an awareness of civic engagement and the importance of community building by participating in service learning and civic engagement projects utilizing audio broadcasting. Faculty understood the value the work of non-profit organizations and during our discussions, actively participated in developing creative ways to share the student's involvement with the public via the media. The faculty was willing to develop new pedagogy to help students understand and appreciate cultural diversity as a way of expanding their views of their own and other cultures. The Lyons Township High School faculty continue to work from the following texts, periodicals and websites: *The Radio Station*, 7th Edition, by Michael Keith (Focal Press) *Radio: The Book*, 4th Edition, by Steve Warren (Focal Press) *Creating Powerful Radio*, by Valerie Geller (Focal Press) *Billboard*, and *Radio Ink*, AllAccess.com and Radio-Online.com Following our sessions, they also incorporate information from the International Partnership for Service Learning and Leadership, the Journal for Civic Commitment, The Illinois Campus Compact website and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

The greatest challenge of this research was accepting the financial and academic situation in the Chicago Public School system. The following is the email I shared with the CPS participants (Badesch, Kroll, Bujak and Robbins).

RE: Summary Memo on the High School Service-Learning Project & other Topics

Thank you so much for the opportunity to meet and hear about your diverse civic engagement projects. It was clear that both of your schools are intent on transforming society by reaching out to make a change within your schools and in the community. The school-based activities offered to the students are varied and inspiring. Truly impressed by the CPS website and your list of over 200 approved nonprofit agencies willing to engage with high school students.

In following the mission of Columbia College this Service-Learning project was focused on ways to engage students who will "communicate creatively and shape the public's perceptions of issues and events and who will author the culture of their times." Following the pedagogy of Edgar Dale, I sought to actively engage faculty in discussing and sharing their activities with a larger demographic via audio broadcasting.

An audio campaign would have provided an opportunity to share your student Service-Learning projects with a larger audience and empowered the listeners to act with a call to action. This training would provide high school faculty with an academic challenge, enriched their educational experience, and provided active & collaborative learning with a deliverable product. This project would also have provided faculty with intentional community collaboration plus enhanced pedagogical methodologies, and advanced the Service-Learning curricula. As you know, at Vaughn Occupational High School, another CPS institution, over two-dozen students wrote and produced original music advocating respect for each other after interviewing different various people about the meaning of stereotypes. Vocalo, the Chicago Public Media audio outlet distributed by WBEZ, interviewed Vaughn students about the stories behind their music and played tracks of their projects on the radio. Getting your message to a wider audience is an important aspect of service-

learning projects.

Several things have had an impact on during this grant period. This project started out as a straightforward concept and became a complex process. All the high school faculty interviewed were interested in how to better understand ways service-learning could impact their broadcasting curriculum. The difficult issue became creating usable teaching modules and influencing their pedagogical base. Success was achieved with the faculty from Lyons Township High School in both syllabus revision and community engagement.

This was a very valuable experience providing an opportunity to become engaged in the scholarship of service learning and will impact my teaching for years to come. Is clear that school support and advancement of service learning modalities is crucial to the success of these community outreach ventures.

Research from this project was presented at various stages at various conferences. Presented preliminary material at the International Technology, Education and Development Conference, March 8 – 10, 2010 in Valencia, Spain and at the American Association of University Professors Annual Conference on the State of Higher Education June 9-12, 2010 in Washington, DC

Audio Broadcasting Research

Since its strong beginning, radio has shaped the American mind and its imagination. In the early years of broadcasting many of the radio receivers were like a piece of large furniture - by today's high-tech standards - though they got the job done. Broadcast advances improved with the development of the transistor and digital technologies so that entire audio broadcast systems can be held in one hand and with that the radio industry has experienced a seismic change. Now it's possible for audio broadcasts to be heard anytime, anywhere with significant frequency and reach and equally significant impact on community engagement.

Researching and analyzing the early history of radio civic engagement yields an appreciation and understanding of how public service programming has always been driven and generated by audience participation. New audio platforms including social media, web casting, HD radio, cable, satellite and PDA's are largely an untapped source of public service programming and civic engagement activities. We know that these new radio and audio technologies can be used as a constructive instrument for social good not just hyperbole or sensationalism. This project examines past and potential opportunities for building community by learning how to add community voices on new broadcast technologies. The implication of this research could also be essential learning goals for utilization of public service programming and civic engagement opportunities as learning tools for preparing today's students to become effective global and local citizens.

Public Good Through Public Affairs

From its creation radio was used for the public good – remember the efforts of a young David Sarnoff when he started his career as a wireless operator and was credited with relaying the message to the ships at sea to rescue the sinking Titanic. These days, most programming on commercial radio that reaches a substantial audience falls short of programming in the public interest. Examples of early radio program for the public good abound, the question that begs an answer is why – why have radio station owners opted for nearly identical commercial playlists that cater to the common denominator of listener's habits? Is money the reason not to do civic journalism on the radio? Why not take on the controversial issues in radio prime time giving equal time to all sides and help citizens understand and care about the local or international issues of our day? The Federal Communications Commission introduced the Fairness Doctrine in 1949, and required all holders of broadcast licenses to present both sides of controversial issues of public importance in an honest, equitable and balanced manner. In 1987, during the Reagan Administration, the FCC abolished the Fairness Doctrines saying that because of the many media voices in the marketplace, the doctrine was deemed unconstitutional. Currently, several members of Congress have expressed an interest in reinstating the Fairness Doctrine. In *Rebels on the Air*, Jesse Walker's research concludes that "... most radio today is boring and homogeneous, chains of clones controlled by an ever-dwindling handful of focus-group-driven, money motivated corporations." (Walker 2001) Congress and the FCC need to pay more attention to opening up the airwaves to as many diverse viewpoints as possible.

One short decade after radio surfaced in America as a communications medium of significance, the tenure of President Franklin D. Roosevelt created an independent government agency that would be responsible for regulating the industry, and they did so with amazing insight for the foreseeable future. The Communications Act of 1934 resulted in the establishment of the previously mentioned, Federal Communications Commission (updated with the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to reflect guidelines for old and new broadcast technologies) and they continue through today to dispense and enforce the rules and regulations for broadcast media across the country.

The long arm of the FCC deals with many aspects of terrestrial (commercial and noncommercial), micro/pirate, satellite, Internet/digital audio broadcasting and all of these technologies will continue to change the face of communications in America. With the various formats and programming offered by audio broadcasters, the opportunity for civic journalism is more evident than ever and could have a beneficial impact on our society as we enter the 21st century. An inspection of any major market newspaper clearly provides information about the continuing problems faced by our society (health care, race relations, public education, international conflicts and crime just to name a few topics) and a continued discussion to inform and educate the public might help us find new solutions to these problems – a think tank on the air.

Broadcasting on ‘public airwaves’ and in the ‘public interest’ was clearly an early principle in radio regulations that many station corporate owners have largely ignored in the past fifty years. Most radio stations across the country have opted for the early morning or late night syndicated talk shows or the 10-second public service announcement during day parts that would not take away from viable commercial placement. In the beginning radio was designed to be the voice of the people - local and live, but since that first 10-minute spot in 1922, on AT&T owned WEAJ in New York, advertising and the search for the advertising dollar began to determine radio stations’ demos and formats.

AUDIO BROADCAST TECHNOLOGIES

Terrestrial Commercial Broadcasting

The Federal Communications Commission initially regulated terrestrial radio as a broadcast service to offer a variety of program formats, to reach and serve a local and diverse audience. In fact, “The Commission has a long standing policy of commitment to fostering and preserving a ‘local voice’ for each community. Throughout the course of its history, the Commission has emphasized the public-interest benefits of community-based broadcast services and the preeminence of localism in radio broadcasting as a principal objective of government regulatory policy. It has frequently and consciously sacrificed the economies of scale associated with national/regional operations to preserve localism in broadcasting.” (Haring and Shooshan 1995)

It’s hard to believe that the FCC had this civic journalism or public affairs standard for radio in America because in a few short years broadcasters advocated for radio stations to increase their spot load to from seven to ten minutes of commercials in each spot set break – which could result in up to twenty minutes of commercial time for each hour of programming. “The basic idea, of course, is to air the type of format that will attract a sizable enough piece of the audience demographic to satisfy the advertiser.” (Keith 2000) This became a license to make money – but terrestrial radio did not start out that way.

In 1949 Lewis Hill with Pacifica Foundation money, put the San Francisco station, KPFA FM on the air offering cultural commentary and discussions on the issues of the day. During the next decade free-form radio programming offered some music, or news, talk shows, debates, exploring formats that provided a place for the public to hear and respond to local, national and international topics. This pioneering approach to radio also gave birth to the innovative and clever Fireside Theatre - theatre of the mind at its funniest. However, by the early 80’s corporate acquisitions began to take over much of the free form radio stations across the country and the early formats began to disappear in favor of music formats for creating revenue - the Clear Channel Contemporary Hit Radio format is one outstanding financially successful example.

A report in Radio & Records explained, “A well-oiled machine like KIIS FM in Los Angeles has proven year after year that CHR can bill huge amounts of dollars. The Clear Channel flagship did it again this year, once again becoming the top-billing radio station in America by bringing in more revenue than powerhouse News and Sports stations...” (Radio & Records March 2002)

Now, more than ever, audiences interested in hearing in-depth news reports, commentaries or even interviews with local, national or international leaders are left with the public supported National Public Radio.

To their credit, many commercial radio stations do step up to connect with their communities during the end of the year holidays with food, clothing and toy drives to benefit non-profit organizations that help the poor. But, somehow these efforts seem more like promotional or publicity campaigns to improve a station's image than sincere civic philanthropic programs.

Terrestrial Noncommercial Broadcasting

Nearly 1,500-radio stations, such as KPFA AM, broadcast without direct advertiser support and are operated by high schools, colleges, religious institutions or community organizations. All of these stations are low power, 10 to 1,000 watts, and most serve as training facilities for students or community activities with a very limited audience and formats that consist of underground hard-core rock (heard in way too many college dorms) talk show, religious focused programs or classical music – more often, programming that does not pose serious competition to the commercial stations. Operating funds for these noncommercial outlets are provided by sponsor organizations or by listener/membership contributions. National Public Radio, which was created by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in 1969, broadcast their fundraisers several times during the year as they urge their audience to contribute and support the station – and each time it seems to be a struggle to get listeners to donate. The NPR format really focuses on a conservative approach to news and talk shows with a little humor and music thrown in for good measure. The past few months, in an effort to respond to our ever changing society, NPR finally added real diversity to its format line up with the addition of African American talk show personality Tavis Smiley and Michele Norris, the first black woman to co-host their national programming.

Micro or “Pirate” Broadcasting

In the late 70's, the birth of low-powered micro radio stations (also known as underground pirate radio which are usually broadcast out of garages, basements or spare rooms) dotted the country with local and live formats focused on social issues and offered music programming that was not heard on commercial stations. These 1 to 1,000 watt stations provided new opportunities for people and programs to find ways to reach their communities. For example, “WTRA in Springfield, Illinois focused on finding solutions for the problems of race relations; free radio Berkeley and San Francisco Liberation Radio did the same thing for the Oakland Bay area. Hispanic stations like radio Zapata and radio Watson operated for the interests of working-class Hispanic Americans.” (Walker 2001) By 1997 there were an estimated 1,000 micro station on air. Unfortunately, commercial radio stations did not want the competition and they lobbied the FCC to step in and use their legal power to successfully reduce or eliminate the transmission of micro stations. And, again opportunities for broadcasting solely in the public interest were diminished.

Satellite Broadcasting

During the early 1990's competing satellite radio services named Sirius and XM each began to deliver an amazing 100 channels of programming including music, news and talk and transmit the programs digitally to two satellites (aptly named Rock & Roll). The satellites then send the signals, which are picked up by antennas to digital receivers that have been especially purchased for homes or use in vehicles. In cars, the signals can be picked up anywhere in the country. This remarkable feat is accomplished with the aid of ground repeaters that switch the signal back and forth to the satellite and receiver without static, background noise or audio interruption. “The crystal-clear quality of satellite radio sound, the many choices in music and talk that aren't otherwise available on the AM and FM bands and the national

coverage – you’ll hear XM and Sirius channels no matter how far you travel from home-are selling points too strong not to make this new concept a huge success.” (Langberg 2001)

But of course there is a major draw back: installation of the special antenna and digital radio can be pricey – up to \$600; then there is the activation fee between \$9.99 (via the web) or \$14.99 (by phone); and of course, the \$9.99 monthly subscription fee – a wonderful but expensive way to listen to the radio in your car. This is an interesting alternative to the sometimes boring terrestrial radio, but with all of this technology, the public still has no access to influence the programming on the hundreds of channels that they’re paying to hear in their homes and cars. Satellite radio was just another ingenious way for audio broadcast outlets to try to make money. This media paradigm failed. On July 29, 2008, XM and former competitor Sirius Satellite Radio formally completed a merger combining the two radio services to create a single satellite radio network now called Sirius XM Radio. Not one of their exclusive channels is currently dedicated to public affairs and the Federal Communications Commission does not regulate their programming.

Internet Broadcasting

The Internet (radio broadcasts or streaming, also not regulated by the Federal Communications Commission) provides another means for possibly creative interactive non-commercial communications and providing a forum for civic journalism on the grass roots level – but even this medium presents its own unique problems. It is an ideal medium for utilizing podcasting. “New technologies such as the Internet ... may soon reach everyone on a daily basis, but for now no town or city could deliberate on the Internet. The information superhighway is designed to let people select conversations tailored to their own interest, just as they select churches, magazines and types of bread – the very thing that drove Americans apart in the first place. Computers link fly fishermen in Buffalo and Los Angeles, but don’t link Baptists and Rastafarians in Buffalo itself. And while it would be possible to get everyone in a town or city hooked up to a common bulletin board, and to arrange a time for them all to log on, and to set up ground rules for a conversation that would be deliberative ... it would be a monumental job in reinventing the wheel.” (Charity 1995)

Arbitron and Edison Media Research recently released their latest report asking Arbitron diary keepers how they use digital and other media, and they found that those who use streaming media most often want the web casts back. It’s estimated that over 40 million Americans have Internet access in their homes or at work and that listening to Internet broadcast stations are steadily increasing. “Internet 9, surveyed over 2,000 people 12 and older and found that two-thirds of the respondents who use streaming media at least once a month are upset about losing a web cast that has gone off-line during the ongoing legal battles over digital rights and royalties. The same number of monthly streamers would like Congress to intervene to help web casters stay online.” (Connolly 2002)

The text-messaging and data-delivery technology digital system is now in place on millions of car radios. Nearly 1,000 major radio stations are using digital radio systems where they can display virtually anything: text information about the artist, upcoming concerts, radio greeting cards or station promotions/contests – Spam in your car. The data-delivery system has become yet another way for radio stations to increase their nontraditional revenue. “For the radio and record industries, not only does the digital delivery platform offer the potential to generate up to 10% in new advertising dollars – in addition to ancillary revenue streams to stations – it provides cool and profitable listener interactivity and valuable public service features.” (Green 2002) The money can be generated via the text messaging system, and as of now, directory assistance from the Yellow pages is considered the public service contribution. Using the Internet for civic good is a work in progress.

Broadcast technology could be a solution to correcting our social ills and technology doesn’t completely solve our social problems or relations, but broadcasters must become accountable to the fact that the broadcast medium is a part of our social fabric and could provide positive influences to the issues we face. The First Amendment and federal laws generally prohibit censoring broadcast material or the interfering with the freedom of expression in broadcasting, however we must demand accountability of all broadcasters and the programming they provide. Broadcasting in the community interest is a win-win for

both the audience and the radio station. “Excellent radio stations consider involvement in their communities a fundamental operating principle that has concrete, practical rewards in audience satisfaction and advertising revenue.” (Eastman 1985)

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