Is Community Radio an Effective Tool for Grassroots Development?
A Case Study of two Honduran NGOs

by Philip Tamminga

B.A., Simon Fraser University, 1989

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF ARTS

in the

School of Communications

APPROVAL

NAME: Philip Tamminga

DEGREE: **MA**

TITLE: IS COMMUNITY RADIO AN EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR GRASSROOTS
DEVELOPMENT? A CASE STUDY OF TWO HONDURAN NGOs

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

CHAIR: Prof. William Richards

Prof. Robert Anderson
Senior Supervisor
School of Communication, SFU

Prof. Pat Howard
Supervisor
School of Communication, SFU

Prof. Peter Anderson
Supervisor
School of Communication, SFU

Prof. John Brohman
Examiner
Department of Geography, SFU

Date: 31 July 1997

ii

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant to Simon Fraser University the right to lend my
thesis, project or extended essay (the title of which is shown below)
to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make
partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a
request from the library of any other university, or other
educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.
I further agree that permission for multiple copying of this work
for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or the Dean of Graduate
Studies. It is understood that copying or publication of this work
for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written
permission.

Title of Thesis/Project/Extended Essay

IS COMMUNITY RADIO AN EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR GRASSROOTS

DEVELOPMENT? A CASE STUDY OF TWO HONDURAN NGOs

Author:
(Signature)

Philip Tamminga
(name)

July 31, 1997
(date)

Abstract

Is radio an effective medium for development? For years development theorists believed that mass media, particularly radio, were ideal instruments to bring 'development' to rural societies. Scores of projects in Latin America attempted to use radio for educational purposes, but for the most part, these experiments did not fully meet their development objectives.

This study assesses the potential of radio from a different perspective by examining the effectiveness of community-based radio as a component of 'grassroots' development processes. Radio programming by two non-governmental organisations in Honduras is examined in detail: Radio San Miguel (RSM) in Marcala, and the Honduran Ecumenical Community Services Institute (INEHSCO) in Santa Rosa de Copán. RSM and INEHSCO are representative of a movement in Latin America towards community radio. The theoretical framework adopted here suggests that community radio challenges the monopoly of knowledge held by the dominant media and development model in Latin America, and under certain conditions it can be used successfully to support grassroots development initiatives. But the ongoing challenge faced by community radio is to transform social relations in society without internally replicating the hierarchies and inequities of that dominant model.

The study situates RSM and INEHSCO in Honduran society and assesses the effectiveness of their programming according to three main criteria: use of local language, culture and indigenous knowledge; participation of community members in programming; and impact of programming on audiences. Internal and external constraints that limit the effectiveness of RSM and INEHSCO are discussed as well. Research tools included interviews and focus group sessions and workshops with staff and community members of both organisations between 1992 and 1993. The research concludes that both organisations have been strikingly successful at utilising indigenous knowledge and culture to produce radio programming that is sensitive to the development needs of their audiences. But in practice, contradictions of power and participation limited the effectiveness of RSM and INEHSCO in contributing to social change. Increased participation in planning and decision-making, well-organised and consistent programming content and better use of indigenous knowledge are required if RSM and INEHSCO are to effectively support grassroots development processes.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

MAP OF HONDURAS
WITH PROJECT COMMUNITIES
AND APPROXIMATE RANGE
OF RADIO PROGRAMMING

BELIZE

Atlantic Ocean

GUATEMALA

La Ceiba

San Pedro Sula

HONDURAS

Santa Rosa de Copán

Juticalpa

Marcala

TEGUCIGALPA

EL SALVADOR

NICARAGUA

Pacific Ocean

approximate broadcast
ranges of project
radio stations

100 km

N
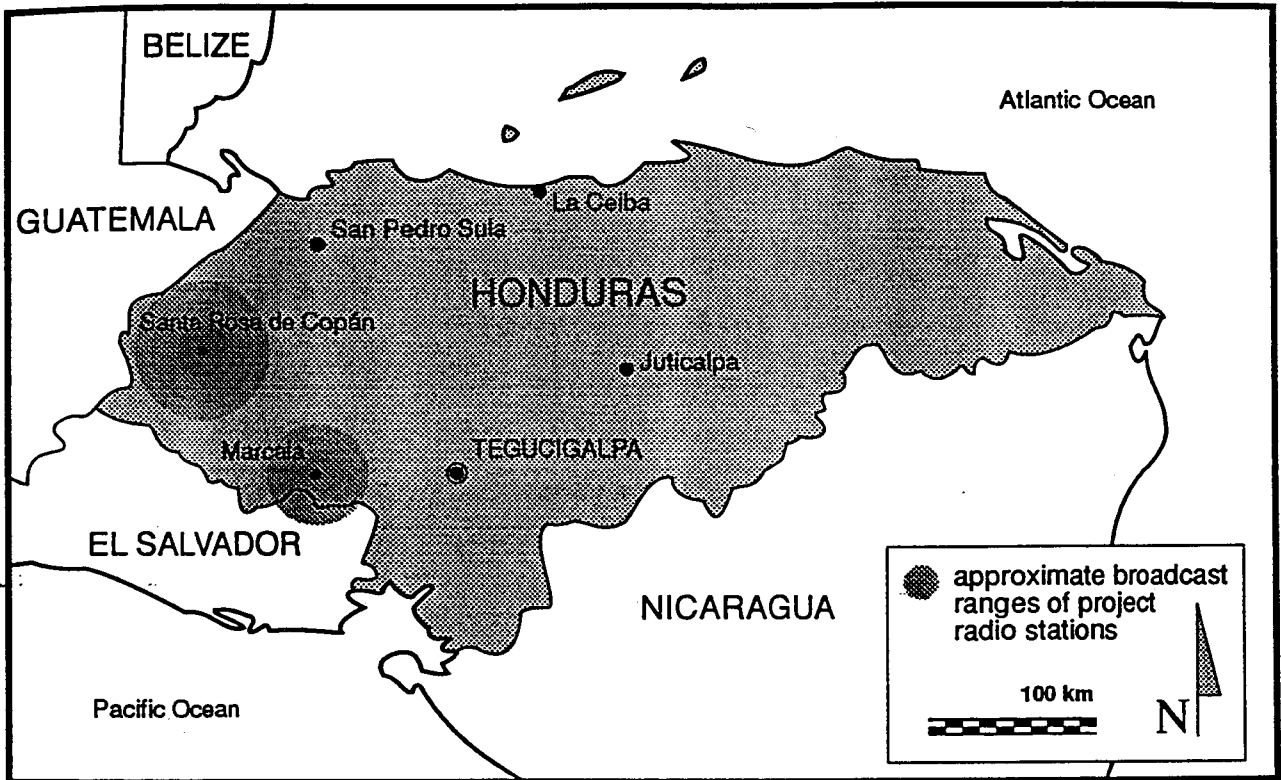
Introduction

Into the Ethers

June 7, 1992. It's five am, and outside my room I can hear Josefina, the parish priest's cook, slapping her hands together to make the flat corn tortillas that we will eat for breakfast. Next door, Fredy turns on the transmitter of Radio San Miguel, and over the hum of ancient vacuum tubes, the strains of *Las Mañanitas* fills the air. "Good morning Marcala! Radio San Miguel, the Voice of Friendship, would like to wish a very happy birthday to one of our faithful listeners in Santa Elena, Doña Mercedes!" After reminding listeners to tune in later that day to hear the *La familia Lenca* (The Lenca Family), the program produced by the parish health project, Fredy cues up more ranchera music to accompany Radio San Miguel's rural campesino audience as they prepare for work in the fields. Radio San Miguel has begun its broadcasting day.

Five hundred kilometres north-northwest in Santa Rosa de Copán, Rosa Isabel Ochoa - Chabelita to her friends - signals the deejay in the broadcasting booth to turn on the microphone. INEHSCO's radio program, *La Salud al Alcance de Todos* (Health for Everyone), is about to go on the air. She begins the program with a short prayer of thanks for all the miraculous healing plants and natural medicines available to campesinos, followed by a short musical interlude. "Later in the program, we have an interview with Doña Dorila, a member of the INEHSCO health committee in La Florida, who tells us about her success at treating coughs and diarrhoea using herbal remedies" she continues, "But first, an important reminder for INEHSCO promoters in the Ocotepeque region. Padre Fausto and I will arrive in San Sebastian tomorrow at 9 am for our monthly meeting. Please! don't forget!"[1]

Why radio?

In a media environment characterised by unrestrained commercialism, intense competition, and open hostility from the country's military and elites, Radio San Miguel

---

[1] The above observations and others found throughout the thesis are compiled from personal observations, interviews field notes and a personal diary kept during field research.

(RSM), a Church-sponsored radio station in Marcala, and INEHSCO (Honduran Ecumenical Community Services Institute) in Santa Rosa de Copán each managed to carve out loyal and dedicated audiences among campesinos in their rural communities in Honduras (see map) by producing radio programming that made a positive impact on the lives of their listeners. This thesis attempts to explain how and why. The underlying question that informs this work is whether or not the community radio model is an effective manner to support grassroots community development initiatives as compared to traditional development communications approaches. On a broader level, it also seeks to answer questions regarding the role community radio can play in social transformation.

The use of radio for educational and development purposes in Latin America is by no means new. Development planners, government agencies and NGOs (non-governmental organizations) have long considered radio an ideal medium for reaching populations with development messages. Among the advantages of radio are its technological simplicity and adaptability, its cost-effectiveness in reaching a large, geographically dispersed audience, its wide acceptance and credibility among rural audiences, its ability to mobilise and motivate audiences to a particular goal or task and the fact that listeners can be engaged in other activities while listening to programs. As an instantaneous medium radio's disadvantages are its fleeting, transitory nature, its difficulty in presenting complex ideas or instructions without losing the interest of the listener, and the predominance of commercial radio, which has accustomed listeners to an entertainment culture that competes with educational radio for the attention of audiences.

Scores of radio education projects have been attempted in Honduras over the past thirty years. Most have faded away, but RSM and INEHSCO have successfully sustained their radio efforts for nearly a decade. Part of the answer for their longevity, I believe, is the fact that both organisations produce radio programming that emerges out of the specific informational, developmental and cultural needs of the local communities they serve. Most past efforts at using radio for development have followed a top-down, one-way communication flow, where development 'experts' tell audiences exactly what to do to

obtain the benefits of modern society. RSM and INEHSCO are different, emphasising a bottom-up, two-way communication flow where the answers to development problems are found within the community. In this they join a growing number of grassroots organisations that are challenging traditional approaches to development which place more emphasis on development objectives based on externally-defined (i.e. national or global) needs than the needs of the local community. As part of this grassroots development movement, community-based radio seeks to democratise access to communications media by encouraging the expression and participation of community members in radio production and programming. Community radio distances itself from the traditional format of 'professional' broadcasters and commercial entertainment programming in favour of locally-based programming generated by and for the community using indigenous knowledge. Community radio also challenges the efficacy of radio programming designed by development technicians and experts far removed from the daily realities of marginalised classes.

At its best, community radio addresses the fundamental imbalance between elites and marginalised sectors of the population like women, indigenous peoples and the poor by allowing listeners an opportunity to shape the medium to meet their own specific needs and break down the monopolies of knowledge and power that marginalise them politically, economically and socially. But community radio also has many shortcomings, and its greatest challenge is to confront the inequalities and injustices of the dominant order without replicating them internally. I want to highlight the strengths of community radio, without romanticising community radio as some kind of ideal instrument for social change. To do this I describe the day-to-day challenges faced by RSM and INEHSCO in their attempts to produce radio programming from a grassroots perspective.

But why radio? In this day of multi-media, the Internet and computer-mediated communications, a study of radio as an educational medium seems anachronistic. Radio seems dated, even obsolete. Yet, as the two above examples illustrate, for millions of people around the world, radio remains a vital source of information and entertainment. And there

is still a certain magic around radio. As Armand Balsebre puts it, we are "seduced by the evocative capacity and imaginative effects contained by ... the 'magic world' of audio communication" (Balsebre 1994:8).[2] Our fascination (at least in the Northern hemisphere) with the potential of new technologies to mediate social change echo the enthusiasm expressed over half a century ago, when the then nascent technology of radio was held up as the tool that would help develop and transform the world. Then, radio was considered a technological marvel, a tool that could be harnessed to eradicate poverty and suffering. This study reexamines the potential of radio, and argues that, out-dated as it may seem today, radio has much to offer as a tool for social change. At the same time, it is my hope that this work may illuminate some of the issues and challenges that we face today when attempting to shape newer technologies to resolve persistent social problems.

Methodology

The study is based on a one-year project (funded by the Canadian International Development Agency) to provide technical assistance to both NGOs in order to improve the effectiveness of their educational radio programming. Another objective, one that was much more difficult to execute, was evaluating whether the participatory, community-based radio model as a component of grassroots development, represented an effective approach to development that could overcome the paternalistic and technocratic biases seen in most earlier experiments with radio and development. The project was conceived as a collaborative, participatory research effort that would allow RSM and INEHSCO to determine the goals, design and methodology of the project, in accordance with their needs, while gaining valuable insights that might be applied to community radio in a global context. While this philosophy may not have been reflected at all times in practise, for the most part the project was able to meet these goals.

I want to state from the outset that I was not a dispassionate, neutral observer during this project. My background as a sometime activist around Latin American social justice issues and my long involvement as a volunteer programmer at Simon Fraser University's

---

[2]   I have translated all Spanish quotations into English.

campus/community radio station reflects my belief that grassroots movements and participatory communications can be powerful tools for social transformation. During fieldwork I was an active participant in the daily operations of both NGOs. For example, I organized and facilitated training workshops, accompanied health promoters on field trips and provided technical assistance in programming. At times, this intimacy made it difficult to distance myself as a participant-observer from the internal and external struggles faced by staff and volunteers. At the same time, I was always keenly aware of my position within RSM and INEHSCO. As a white, educated, foreign male, and a representative, albeit indirectly, of the development 'establishment', I was afforded a degree of authority that ran contrary to the collaborative nature of the project. Nevertheless, I made every effort to ensure that my own privileges and biases did not intrude on decisions or events within these organisations or in my description of those events as outlined in this thesis.

The methodology chosen for this project was influenced by the practices and principles of community radio and by participatory research methods. Both community radio and the participatory research approach attempt to break down the sterile divisions and hierarchy between expert/non-expert, professional/non-professional, researcher/subject demanded by some disciplines. Both attempt to address issues of power and control by letting research participants collaboratively determine the goals, design and methods of the research, in accordance with their own needs. The goal then was to approach the fieldwork as an opportunity to share experiences and jointly collaborate on mutual problems faced by community radio activists around the world. Accordingly, great emphasis was placed on ensuring that the specific needs of each sponsoring organisation (namely, RSM and INEHSCO) were addressed in this project and that the results of project activities benefited the maximum number of community members possible. As I discovered, however, how those needs were defined differed significantly within each organization, and intersected lines of power, control and organizational hierarchies. My challenge was to try to organize the research around the needs expressed by grassroots members of the organizations and all the while maintain the approval of the organizational hierarchies.

Of the many research tools used during fieldwork, direct observation and participation in the operations of the participating organisations were the most useful. My day-to-day involvement in these organisations' activities gave me important insights into their operations and organisational cultures. Extensive conversations and interviews with former and present staff members supplemented and corroborated my observations. Training workshops were held as part of the fieldwork, and input from participants was collected. Over sixty informal, unstructured interviews were conducted with rural audience members, including campesinos in several remote communities, in order to gauge audience responses to the organisations' radio programs and other development activities. Field trips also served to establish the geographical and technical limits of radio signals. A survey to ascertain listener habits was attempted but proved to be unwieldy and unreliable given the difficulties of generating a random representative sample, logistics and the lack of resources to train interviewers. Instead, focus group sessions were used with some initial success to evaluate radio programs and discuss the effectiveness of any changes initiated as a result of the workshops. Program content and production were analysed and compared to educational radio programs produced in Latin America by grassroots development NGOs and by state and large development agencies, including the several government-sponsored programs in Honduras.

The data collected during fieldwork was put into context by reviewing some of the major contributions to communications research by Latin American academics and researchers. Although there is much overlap between critical communication researchers in Latin America and North America, particularly Canada, I focussed on Latin American research in part for reasons of space. I also wanted to facilitate greater access for Honduran readers to the many common concerns that other Latin American researchers and activists have grappled with. By way of explanation, I have purposely avoided using direct quotes from my sources. The NGOs and the communities they serve are small, and I would not want to violate the confidentiality of my sources or jeopardise the livelihoods or reputations of the staff or campesinos I interviewed. Instead, I have attempted to synthesise the sentiments of

the majority of the people I spoke with over the course of one year.[3]

In order to make this work as accessible as possible to a wider audience, particularly to those working in community radio, I have avoided technical jargon and overly complex theoretical discussions. After all, community radio is more than just a philosophical exercise in alternative media. It is an active intervention to create a space in the dominant media environment for marginalised voices.

Chapter Outline :

Chapter One begins with a brief outline of the dominant development model and its shortcomings and the alternative development vision offered by the grassroots development model. A clearer definition of community radio and its role in acheiving grassroots development processes is provided here. Several concepts from the Canadian communications scholar Harold Innis are introduced along with a discussion of how they can be applied to radio and development. Innis' work, though incomplete and at times ambiguous, offers a theoretical perspective from which to situate community radio and development in Latin America. His ideas on the bias of communication, monopolies of knowledge and empire, and centre/periphery are examined as a framework for understanding the media environment and the political and social context of development efforts in Latin America and the emergence of popular movements and alternative media in the region. Diffusion of innovations, the dominant development model's approach to development communications, is introduced along with Latin American critiques of the approach. Finally, critical communication research and historical social processes in Latin America are presented as a the backdrop for community radio emerging in the region.

---

[3]   Clientelism is prolific in Honduras. Complex webs of dependency and loyalty can affect everything from obtaining credit during planting season to getting a small job in the community. To illustrate, there were occasions when staff within RSM and INEHSCO were abruptly fired from their positions. I also heard individuals denounced in Sunday masses or on the radio for subverting the authority of the parish priest or worse, using development projects for their own personal gain. This was a unremovable stain on a persons reputation which discredited them among their peers. Other subtle ways were employed to express displeasure with someone such as gossip and innuendo. There were no opportunties to clear ones name or explain a situation from a different perspective. It was a very effective way to silence opposition. At the same time, there was equally a danger of being linked too closely with either RSM or INEHSCO, which later could lead to repression from military or business elite.

Chapter Two provides a broad description of the geographic, economic, social and political conditions in Honduras that have contributed to the emergence of grassroots movements and popular organisations like Radio San Miguel and INEHSCO.[4] A short outline of international development assistance to Honduras, including Canadian aid, is provided as an example of how development assistance has become a monopoly of knowledge and how popular organisations have grappled with the issue of grassroots development.

Readers who are most interested in the outcomes of the project may wish to proceed directly to chapters three to five, which deal directly with the fieldwork in Honduras with RSM and INEHSCO. Chapter three provides a profile of the organisational structure and activities of RSM and INEHSCO. This chapter identifies many of the externally- based obstacles to providing effective programming faced by RSM and INEHSCO, including technical, financial and organizational constraints, and outlines some of the efforts of the project to address these constraints.

The impact of RSM and INEHSCO's radio programming on its audiences and its effectiveness at meeting their development objectives is analysed in Chapter Four. Audience research results from surveys, interviews and focus group sessions are included here, along with a comparison of the impact of similar programming from government development and educational agencies audiences. Issues around the potential of the community radio model to confront the dominant social order and bring about social change are discussed here as well. By examining how successfully RSM and INEHSCO deal with issues of power and participation, the community radio model is evaluated in terms of its emancipatory potential. The constraints that impede community radio from achieving its full potential are identified and discussed.

Chapter Five weaves together the various strands in a conclusion, offering some

---

[4] In Latin America, the term 'popular organizations' refer to social movements dedicated to transforming social reality in favor of the most marginalized sectors of society. While the specific focus may be different between organizations the committment to political action and social change is shared.

observations on the strengths and weaknesses of the community radio model with implications for community radio in general and some suggestions for further research. Here some general comments on possible ways to improve the effectiveness of community radio are offered, along with suggestions for further research.

Chapter One
Community Radio and Grassroots Development in Latin America:
Historical and Theoretical Antecedents

The failure of development?

What is development? For the past fifty years, the dominant definition of development has been based on the assumption that development was equivalent to economic growth and that through astute use of science and technology the world could be remodelled along modern lines. Development implied deliberate strategies and carefully managed interventions in the social, political and economic spheres of the so-called "underdeveloped" nations of the world to assist them in the journey towards modernity. On the surface, the general goals of development seem to be quite benevolent: the more fortunate nations of the world extending a helping hand to help their global neighbours. But the mainstream development paradigm is in crisis. And with good reason. The top-down approach of the dominant development paradigm has meant that development objectives are often far-removed from the needs and aspirations of the supposed beneficiaries of projects. Instead, the billions of dollars funnelled into development projects have best served the interests of the development establishment - planners, bureaucrats and technicians - and elite groups, and not the most marginalised of society. After fifty years of programs designed to transform the social, economic and political conditions of the 'poorer' nations of the planet, development efforts have little to show. Poverty and hunger plague millions of people. Environmental destruction continues at an alarming pace. And daily a rich diversity in culture succumbs to the behemoth pressures of a globalising economy. Traditional approaches to development have failed to address these serious, persistent problems. The benefits of development seem hard to find.

Among those engaged in development work there is a growing understanding that traditional approaches to development simply have not worked. For instance, internal documents from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) show a slow transformation from the predominant attitude of the 1960s, where development was

synonymous with straightforward technology transfer, to today, where consideration is given to the impact of potential projects on women, the environment, and other neglected development "factors" (see Tamminga 1989). But to critics, such responses are symptomatic of a pattern of denial within the dominant development establishment in which any criticism that 'development' is not beneficial is either rejected or superficially incorporated into the establishment's vocabulary without critically examining the underlying values and assumptions of the dominant development paradigm itself (Banuri 1990). In contrast, radical critiques of the dominant development model challenge the very concept of 'development', arguing that it negates the value of indigenous knowledge and culture. Development reduces the relationship between North and South to one of superior/inferior, developed/underdeveloped, by holding the North up as a template for the South to aspire toward (Sachs 1992).

For a growing number of activists and radical scholars, particularly in the so-called "Third World," there has been a growing sense of frustration with the dominant development paradigm. Rather than seeing development as benevolent intervention in the economies and societies of "Third World" nations, these critics see development as violence, as political practise designed to sustain the hegemony of the powerful interests of the North (Alvares 1992, Banuri 1990, Shiva 1992). The violence of development takes many forms: land hunger and urbanisation due to policies promoting large-scale industrial agriculture oriented to the global market; the exploitation of women forced into working in labour-intensive export industries; the destruction of the natural environment and the forced displacement of millions of people due to the construction of dams; and the loss of indigenous cultures due to wholesale deforestation of rainforests or government-enforced policies of cultural assimilation. Beyond the physical violence accentuated by development, the dominant development model, with its foundation in the supposedly 'universal' values of Western science and economics, promotes an even deeper epistemological violence by negating the validity and diversity of other knowledge systems while imposing its own value-systems as the sole legitimate way of knowing and understanding the world. In the words of Indian

11

scholar and activist Vandana Shiva, development thinking has become a "monoculture of the mind" (Shiva 1993), an attempt to replace the rich diversity of culture and knowledge of the world with a global culture based on the language of modern science and economics.

The ability of the dominant development model to co-opt, contain, suppress or destroy local knowledge systems in order to impose an external knowledge system is viewed with alarm by this emerging group of critical thinkers. The dominant model has been likened to a virus which insidiously penetrates a culture to progressively break down values and beliefs that are not concordant with the values of development (Rahnema 1988). Accordingly, the current emphasis within the development establishment for participation of the local population in development projects or the use of non-governmental agencies to deliver aid programs is criticised as window-dressing that obscures the fact that the goals and objectives of development are still determined according to the criteria of external agencies and not the local population. In the words of Gustavo Esteva, "popular participation, people empowerment, decentralisation and local control and the new concept of eco-development" become empty rhetoric in the hands of the development establishment, a "new wrapping that gives the old myth a more poisonous effect."(in Schneider 1989:221. See also Esteva 1987)

What is needed, according to some critical thinkers, is to "rethink" development, to create new, non-violent alternative development models based on the preservation and autonomy of local and traditional knowledge systems (Fals-Borda 1985). This requires grassroots democratic participation in setting development objectives based on local needs, indigenous cultural and ecological values - rather than purely economic perspectives to growth. This new development approach, often referred to as grassroots, popular or people-centred development, offers creative, empowering solutions to many of the problems that mainstream development models have been unable to tackle (Esteva 1987, Sheth 1987). The grassroots paradigm is not without its own inconsistencies and contradictions, including the replication of the values and inequities of the dominant model (Rahnema 1985,

1990). But, as John Brohman suggests, this approach represents perhaps the best alternative for "creating development appropriate to the needs and interests of the popular majority in Third World countries" (1996:324).

Community Radio: a Definition

Riaño (1994) suggests that participation and empowerment are fundamental to the grassroots development model. What makes the grassroots development model unique compared to the dominant model of development is that these elements are present - to a greater or lesser degree - in development initiatives not as a strategy or tool for meeting development objectives but rather as part of a process to empower marginalised communities to collectively confront their socioeconomic conditions and define and shape their own development agendas. That said, Ruíz warns of the dangers in uncritically adopting participation as a goal:

> Participation is a part of the myths and utopias much beloved by projects of communication and popular education in Latin America. In its mythological dimension it has been seen as a panacea, an infallible remedy, and as a unquestioned necessity. In its utopian dimension it is an evasive dream...(1994:175)

Within the grassroots movement there are many unresolved issues around participation and power. Providing opportunities for participation may privilege some social actors but silence others. Marginalisation and oppression runs across lines of class, gender, race and others, and attempts at promoting grassroots communication processes must recognise and confront these multiple layers of marginalisation and oppression if they are to achieve social change (Alfaro 1994, Muñoz 1994, Protz 1994).[5]

The grassroots development model calls for participatory communication processes as a key component of working toward social change. Participatory communication has been defined as the active participation of social groups to produce their own media messages

---

[5] Riaño (1994) rightly charges most literature on development communications as devoid of any analysis on how gender influences participation, production and comsumption of media. Unfortunately, this thesis does little to remedy the situation. In retrospect, more analysis on the nature and role of women's participation in RSM and INEHSCO would have illuminated the relationship between power and subordination, participation and gender that clearly underscored all of RSM and INEHSCO's activities.

(Riaño 1994) Community radio - radio produced by and for the community it serves - is one example of such participatory communication. In the words of Michel Delorme (1990):

> Community radio implies a democratic dimension, popular participation
> in the management of the station as well as in production of its programs.
> For us, community radio is accessible. Community radio is neither the
> expression of political power nor the expression of capital. It is the
> expression of the population.

The term "community radio" is itself somewhat amorphous, reflecting the diversity of experiences of different community-based radios around the world. At a very basic level, community radio seeks to allow access and participation to communities that have traditionally been marginalised and/or under-represented in media and society. Such communities may be defined not only in spatial terms, but also in terms of the shared interests, shared identities or shared oppressions of social groups such as indigenous peoples, women, the poor, etc. In terms of programming, community radio around the world shares a common conviction that broadcasting should be done in the vernacular language of the community, using indigenous knowledge and creative talents to meet the specific informational and cultural needs of the community (see Girard 1992).

But within the community radio movement there are diverse perspectives on what the social function of community radio is. In Latin America, community-based radio is most often referred to as "popular radio". The difference is not just semantic. The term "community radio" (especially as it has been applied by regulatory bodies in North America) suggests a social function limited to democratising communication - a kind of liberal notion of providing access to the public sphere (Savage 1987, Thomas 1992, Crabtree 1993). Such a conception fails to capture the essential role that participatory media can and should play in radically transforming society. In contrast, 'popular radio' sees alternative media as part of a larger struggle to refashion society (Roncagliolo 1992, Lopez Vigil 1992). Popular radio implies a project of social emancipation, incorporating all social groups "that are marginalised or excluded from power at a global level" (Mata 1994:59). So it is not simply a question of access to communications, but a question of confronting and

dismantling a global economic and political system that denies the right to communicate to the majorities. Community radio can be, to borrow a phrase from Gustavo Esteva (1987), a place for "regenerating people's space", a site of resistance to nationalism and globalism, a site to recreate, renegotiate and express a diversity of cultural identities. Although the term community radio is used throughout this study, it is this radical Latin American definition of popular radio which is intended.

Empires, Biases and Communications on the Margins

Very little theoretical work has been done on the role and function of community radio. However, the work of Canadian communications theorist Harold Innis offers an analytical framework to critically assess the impact of the dominant development model and the potential of community radio to achieve grassroots development and social change. Innis died in 1952, just as the word 'development' was gaining currency and numerous radio development projects were being launched around the world. Nevertheless, his work clearly anticipates the current crisis of development and the emergence of community radio as a force for social change.

Of particular interest to Innis was the role of communications in creating and sustaining empires. Communication technology allowed an empire to consolidate control over space (i.e. geographic territory) or time (continuity of hegemony). Innis called the tendency of a medium toward spatial or temporal control its "bias" (Innis 1950, 1951). The availability and use of certain media, each with its own inherent bias tended to accentuate the political characteristics of the empire. Oral cultures emphasised religion, tradition and continuity, and thus were reflexive and time-binding. On the other hand, writing facilitated the political state and bureaucracy and emphasised the "here-and-now", serving to bind a geographic space to a political entity. Media that could not easily be moved over great distances or that required a complex language emphasised a centralised bureaucracy (such as a priesthood) that functioned on the basis of history and traditions. Lightweight media and

simplified language allowed rapid communications over great distances, allowing more efficient control of space. The success of an empire depended on achieving a balance between the demands of controlling peripheral territories and sustaining the legitimacy of the centre over time (Innis 1950, 1951).

Innis' historical analysis of empires suggested that there is a constant dialectic between centre and periphery that takes place over access to communication media and technology. Media that required specialised training to use, such as writing , effectively limited participation within an empire to an information elite. This elite held a monopoly of knowledge, which allowed them to limit competition from other social groups and sustain the hegemony of an empire. But an empire could never completely suppress competition because as new technologies developed or as media were adapted and simplified it provided new opportunities to destroy that empire's monopoly of knowledge. Increased accessibility and participation in a communication technology challenged an empire's monopoly of knowledge. Those challenges most often came from the margins of the empire, where existing technologies could be adapted and simplified or new technologies could be created to compete with the dominance of the centre. But each new use of an existing technology carried with it a bias. So even though competition from the margin might eventually contribute to the downfall of an empire, it could also lead to the creation of a new empire, with the same inherent struggle between centre and periphery. At the same time, Innis was keenly aware of the power of the centre to contain, suppress or adapt such competing uses of media in order to consolidate social control.

Even though Innis wrote about history from a millennial perspective, his ultimate concern was with the decay of contemporary Western society that he observed around him. Modern mass media's ability to instantaneously transmit information over vast geographic distances served to sever all links to time and consolidate control over space. A new modern space-binding empire was being created, one based on 'mechanised knowledge' and the penetration of capitalism and commodification in every aspect of life. By reducing the

world to the supposedly universal language of science and economics new monopolies of knowledge were being formed, controlled by technocrats and economists. Such an empire could never sustain itself in the long term, Innis felt, precisely because it lacked the anchor of a time-binding medium like an oral tradition, which emphasised the search for truth and wisdom through critical thinking and reflection and not the mere transmittal of information over space in order to integrate the world into one vast marketplace (Innis 1951). In the short term, however, this global economic empire was so powerful precisely because of its uncanny ability to recreate itself by containing or suppressing competition, in part by integrating new communication technologies into the sphere of the centre

Innis' concerns about the breakdown of Western society and the emergence of a global empire based on science and economics foreshadowed the full articulation of the dominant development model. That model's preoccupation with stimulating economic growth and 'modernising' societies was ultimately concerned with the consolidation and expansion of a global economic empire. In effect, the dominant development model served to bind more and more of the world to the political and economic centres of the new empire. The specialised knowledge of economists and development planners and technicians acted both as a monopoly of knowledge that limited participation of marginal groups as well as a universal language to hold together that empire.

Innis and Radio

Where, then, did radio fit into Innis' general schema of empire and communication? For many of his contemporaries, radio represented a marvellous and powerful technology that could be applied to benevolent social purposes, such as the dissemination of information and culture. Innis was pessimistic about the validity of such optimistic claims. His historical studies of communication media made him deeply aware of the technological, political and economic forces that constantly conspired against using communication media democratically.

Radio's ability to send messages instantaneously over vast geography meant that it was ideally suited for the space-binding needs of an empire. Government and commercial control of the medium was inevitable, Innis thought,because of the need to distribute frequencies and invest capital into broadcasting equipment. Radio was especially susceptible to centralised control by an elite 'expert' class, who wielded a monopoly of knowledge over access, content and use creating a new monopoly of knowledge in conflict with the monopoly of the press (Innis 1950). The competition between the radio and the press tended to accentuate the dependence of both media on private enterprise for advertising revenues, as the increase in available media outlets could drive down advertising rates (Innis 1956). This force toward centralisation was revealed in programming. The demand of state or commercial broadcasters for a mass audience required programming that catered to the "lowest common denominator"of audience tastes. The end result was that the "enormous increase in the output of mechanised knowledge with the newspaper, the book, the radio and the cinema, has produced a state of numbness, pleasure, and self-complacency perhaps only equalled by laughing-gas" (Innis 1956:383).

For Innis the oral tradition of Ancient Greece was vital to counterbalance the space bias of modern society. Radio suggested a return to this oral tradition and its emphasis on time, tradition and continuity to the democratic tradition. In reality though, this time-dimension was illusory. The inherent centralising and space-binding characteristics of radio as it emerged in the political context of Western society could not foster, for Innis, the critical debate needed to achieve a balance between space and time that Western society needed if it were to survive. The immediacy of radio assured that complex issues would be discarded long before they could achieve the longevity required for a truly time-binding medium. Radio, he said, "accentuated the importance of the ephemeral and the superficial"(1951:80). Its tendency towards sensationalism and oversimplification of the complex factors faced by society meant radio provides "even less opportunity for the exercise of the individual's critical faculty than the newspaper does" (1949:1).

How then, can the positive role for radio envisioned by advocates of community radio be reconciled with Innis' bleak view of the medium ? Christian correctly points out that "In no case does Innis ever suggest that the bias of a medium of communication is in any sense absolute" (1977:11). Innis' views on radio are only a subtext in a rich tapestry that wove together diverse elements such as politics, religion, culture, technology and economics and, as Pal notes, "It is precisely this broader context and spectrum of relationships that we miss if we focus too narrowly on the simple biases of media and their presumed results" (1977:32). Though Innis was wary of the power of commercial and political interests to dominate the medium, he was by no means a technological deterministic. The key to Innis' argument about communication and empires is that while a communication technology might be developed to meet the particular need of a society (i.e. time or space-binding characteristics), that medium itself is subject to simplification and adaptation. Such alterations typically occurred at the margins of the empire, where social control was less rigid. The resulting adaptations could radically alter the nature and characteristics of the medium. He believed that radio or any other media could be used to successfully undermine an empire. He equally believed that new empires could be created using media as a tool for maintaining power and control.

This is not to suggest, as others have incorrectly claimed (Salter 1981), that Innis advocated community radio or other alternative forms/practises of communication media. He remained deeply pessimistic of radio's potential for social change, recognising the enormous utility of radio to sustain political and economic empire. The dialectic between centre and periphery implied that while alternative media uses could destabilise an empire, the centre would reformulate itself by containing, suppressing or adapting such new media uses. This dialectical process is revealed in the evolution of radio in Latin America. Radio in Latin America has tended to accentuate centralised control of media and acted as a force for binding peripheral spaces to the centre. At the same time, the experience of community radio in Latin America also serves to confirm Innis's observation that adapting the media to

different uses usually occurred on the periphery of an empire, and that such adaptations could lead to social transformations. In the words of Bruce Girard, "This alternative form of radio is becoming increasingly important for those at the margins of society, those who seek political and cultural change... alternative and community radio stations fulfil an essential role for the outcasts of commercial and large-scale State media" (1992:2).

Latin American Media Environment

Mass media in Latin America, especially radio broadcasting, historically evolved under the American model of private ownership, popular entertainment programming and commercial advertising (Schwoch 1990; UNESCO 1980). This early American presence profoundly influenced the character of media ownership and broadcasting in Latin America. At the same time a rich tradition of critical theory and radical social movements in the region have had an enormous impact in shaping a vibrant movement towards alternative media. In terms of the overall impact of mass media in Latin American society, radio still dominates, although more generally literate populations in certain countries, rapid urbanisation in the region as a whole and expanded use of newer media technologies have increased the importance of print media and television. For the most part, however, radio is still the preferred communications media in rural areas, and it has been used extensively for educational and development purposes. Accordingly, this discussion will be limited to the media environment as it pertains to radio.

Early History

Radio was first introduced to Latin America on a large scale at the turn of the century by US-based transnational companies such as the United Fruit Company and US Rubber Company who hoped to exploit the space-binding properties of the new technology to efficiently communicate with their field operations in the region. It was only after World War I and improvements in broadcasting and receiving equipment that a Latin American market for radio developed. Astute political manoeuvring by American radio equipment manufacturers such as RCA, GE and ITT on both the domestic front and at international

regulatory bodies ensured that radio communications would be pursued largely by private sector interests and that the United States would become the dominant centre for radio broadcasting equipment and programming content (Schwoch 1990, Janus 1986). Private stations from the United States soon began broadcasting music and entertainment on short and medium wave to Latin America. The enthusiastic response from listeners throughout the Americas (at that time, airwaves were uncrowded and reception was often good as far south as Argentina) demonstrated the commercial potential of radio, and local stations soon sprung up in virtually all of the countries of the region (Schwoch 1990). The introduction of cheap transistor radios by the 1960s cemented radio's position as the medium of greatest outreach (Katz and Wedell 1977, UNESCO 1980).

Ownership:

The emergence of the commercial radio industry's privileged position in Latin America was, however, neither so uniform nor effortless as the above narrative might suggest. Latin America is not a homogeneous region; it is fragmented by political boundaries, a diversity of cultures and uneven economic growth. Accordingly, radio had to adapt to a variety of specific social contexts. However, with few notable exceptions (e.g. Cuba), however, the radio industry has seen a steadily increasing concentration of commercial ownership since its introduction to the region. While local entrepreneurs were initially able to successfully introduce radio to their regions, as radio's audience steadily increased (due in part to improvements in radio technology and rapid population growth), independent broadcasters were muscled out more and more by monopoly interests and transnational cultural industries. These companies consolidated their position through horizontal and vertical integration in the Latin American economy (Janus 1986). Concentration of power and ownership over media resources was at times confounded and resisted by the local market economy, where spontaneous exchange and the frequent disregard for patents, copyrights and other regulations resisted the "logic of international capitalism: speculation, monopoly, anti-market and power (Schwoch 1990:140). In the short term, market economies on the margins resisted and adapted to the media empire of the centre. In the long term, however, that local market economy became subsumed in the centralised control of media (Janus

1986).

A 1990 inventory of mass media in Latin America reveals the dominance of the commercial model. There are nearly six thousand radio stations in the region. Of these stations, 85% follow the American model of private-sector ownership and entertainment programming supported by advertising revenue. Currently, state-owned stations represent only seven percent of the total number of stations in the region. The private non-commercial sector represents about seven percent of station ownership in the region. Stations falling into this category can be nearly equally divided into those owned and operated by religious organisations (primarily Catholic) and those owned by other private organisations such as universities, labour unions or campesino groups (Arjona 1993). It is in this sector that some of the most dynamic and creative uses of radio as a participatory communications medium has emerged. It should also be noted that many NGOs and community groups cannot afford to purchase and operate a radio station and must buy airtime on commercial stations in order to provide programming specific to their organisational needs. There are no figures available, but preliminary investigations in Honduras suggests that the numbers of such organisations that buy airtime is quite high.

Government Regulation and Intervention

For the most part, governments in Latin America have not interfered with the evolution of the commercial radio industry except to regulate frequencies and access to airwaves, as established under international conventions (Katz and Wedell 1977). There has been little visible concern in government circles to address the structure or ownership of media industries or their role in society, and government policies tend to accentuate concentration of media resources in the hands of the economic and political elite (Fox 1988). It is important to note, however, that many governments have used state radio as a means of promoting national integration or in order to legitimise and disseminate government ideology. During the 1950's and '60s, for example, populist regimes and reformist governments established state radio stations as a means to consolidate state political agendas, coinciding with an overall trend of centralisation and bureaucratisation of

government powers. For such regimes, radio was perceived as the ideal instrument for "creating a sense of nation that would ... legitimise the populist state", through presentations of "common national heritage" and reformist ideas (Riaño 1991:26).[6] Radio continues to be used by governments as a means to consolidate social control (Truglia 1996).

At the same time, the military has proven to be one of the most powerful forces in determining government media policies and has been preoccupied with media in Latin America, especially since the emergence of reformist political regimes and revolutionary movements in the region beginning in the 1950's. The telecommunications industry in many countries is regulated directly or indirectly by the military, and media are closely monitored (Truglia 1996). Wary of media's potential as a rallying point for opposition and mobilisation of the 'masses' and concerned with issues of 'national security', the military has often responded to the media with outright repression, censorship and surveillance. While the overall trend in the region is towards the consolidation of electoral democracies, the military continue to play an influential role in determining access to broadcast licences and subtly censoring programming content (Roncagliolo 1996).

The regulatory framework in most Latin American countries is antithetical to democratic access to the airwaves. Community radio is a sector of the broadcasting arena that is largely overlooked and ignored by legislation, making it difficult, if not impossible in some cases to obtain licenses. Even where some provisions do exist for community-based radio stations, the technical standards required by government are beyond the financial means of most non-profit stations, further impeding efforts to use media outside of the commercial/state model (Roncagliolo 1996). Furthermore, the state apparatus in many countries is more than willing to employ whatever means required to silence community radio whenever it appears to pose a threat to elite interests.. In El Salvador, Brazil and Columbia, for example, community radio stations have been shut down despite having legal

---

[6] The preference of the State for using radio parallels Innis's description of how U.S. President Roosevelt employed radio a way to directly reach the American public with his populist message, subverting the potential of the press for mobilising critical public opinion.

rights to broadcast (Truglia 1996).[7]

Media Content:

Given the overwhelming dominance of commercial entertainment broadcasting, and the antipathy of government, military and elite sectors to community radio, it is not surprising that media content is "fundamentally supportive of the status quo (Atwood 1986:17). Media content is largely determined by its ability to capture an audience segment and encourage consumption (Schwarz and Jaramillo 1986). Radio became the vehicle for imparting the "same kinds of consumer habits and consumption patterns associated with consumer ideology in the United States" (Schwoch 1990:107). Other commentators have suggested that the high degree of penetration of U.S. cultural products in Latin America is an indication of the pervasiveness of the market model and the ideological dominance of the U.S. in Latin American society (Dorfman and Mattelart 1970, Gutiérrez and Schement 1979, UNESCO 1980). In terms of addressing social needs, Díaz Bordenave charges that most media content is "frivolous, irrelevant, and even negative for rural development" (1976:50). Media rarely addresses the needs and concerns of the poor majority that makes up the population of the Latin American continent. It is against this backdrop of predominantly private-sector control, commercially-driven entertainment content, government indifference and military distrust that efforts to harness the potential of mass media to promote development processes emerged.

Media and Development: The Diffusion of Innovations Model

Beginning in the 1950s, Latin America saw many energetic challenges to the institutions that had sustained social, political and economic inequalities in Latin American society for centuries. Revolutions in Bolivia (1952) and Cuba (1959) and strong reform movements highlighted the need for urgent changes in Latin American society. For local and international elites there was great concern for restoring political stability and increasing economic growth, to "develop" Latin America and other "underdeveloped" regions. Efforts

---

[7] The situation in Canada, the United States and European countries is no different. Regulatory agencies like the CRTC in Canada and the FCC in the United States are quick to mobilize the power of the state, including force, to shut down community-based broadcasting that does not conform to regulatory policies (Girard 1992).

like the United States "Alliance for Progress" were designed to replicate the successful rebuilding of post-war Europe through the Marshall Plan, all the while containing the "revolutionary option" in Latin America (Bradford Burns 1984). Communication was to be a major component of development strategies. But, much as Innis predicted, these development efforts often led to increased centralised control of economic processes while reinforcing the monopoly of knowledge held by planners and technicians.

Modernisation was the dominant theoretical paradigm that shaped the application of communication to development programs. Modernisation was predicated on the assumption that the type of development that had occurred in North America and Europe could be replicated in other regions of the world. Modernisation theory, in very schematic terms, assumed that development was a linear, evolutionary process that brought traditional society, based on subsistence production methods and "backward" cultural practices forward into a modern, industrialised and technological society through economic growth (Banuri 1990; Shore 1980).

The consolidation of the modernisation development model in the 1950s and 1960s coincided with the emergence of communications studies. Borrowing heavily from the fields of sociology, behavioural psychology and marketing, early communications researchers attempted to measure the impact and effects of mass media on individuals and concluded that the deliberate and planned use of the mass media could be an effective means of bringing about social change by influencing key individuals' attitudes and behaviour (Carey 1981, Czitrom 1987). These various ideas about the nature of media and social change coalesced in the "diffusion of innovations" development model. Rogers (1962) explained diffusion of innovations as a deliberate campaign where professional "change agents" targeted key community members of traditional societies, the "opinion leaders," and influenced them into adopting a technique or innovation and then subsequently passing that innovation on throughout the community. Larry Shore sums up the modernisation/diffusion approach to development:

> What was needed was to change the attitudes, values, and aspirations of
> the individuals in the population; from that would result the benefits of

25

modernisation....The problem with development, then, lay in the individual who was ignorant and traditional. Exposure to new ways of thinking, through mass media could remedy the problem (1980: 20).

Diffusion of innovations quickly became the dominant paradigm for linking communication with rural development (Rogers 1976; Röling et al 1976). In Latin America, radio was seen as the most cost-effective way of achieving these goals (Ashby et al. 1980, McAnany 1980, UNESCO 1979). Lack of transportation infrastructure and geographic barriers along with low literacy rates and per capita incomes made radio the obvious choice for planners. Radio, it was felt, was a cost-effective way to "rapidly reach large audiences with informative and persuasive messages about the details of development" (Rogers 1976:134)). By using mass media,"change agents" would be able to introduce innovations to opinion leaders over a widespread geographic area, while cultivating a general level of acceptance for such innovations among the rest of the population.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, international agencies and national governments applied the diffusion model to a variety of development projects, most often, but not exclusively, directed to rural populations. For example, agronomists and economic planners were interested in transforming agricultural production to a more 'efficient' model - one that would generate more wealth and free individuals from the agricultural workforce to pursue employment in industrial occupations. Other examples were literacy and mathematics programs in Nicaragua, Colombia and the Dominican Republic (Theroux 1978, Bordenave 1977, White 1976). These programs were designed to reach people in the remotest areas in order to provide them with the information that could prepare them to "take advantage of new opportunities in an expanding economy" (White 1976:5). Hundreds of case studies and manuals promoting the use of radio were published during this time, directed exclusively towards diffusion 'change agents' - planners, technicians and radio producers (Aspinall 1971, Hawkridge and Robinson 1982, Peigh 1979). The conceptual framework for these projects and manuals was clearly aligned with the concerns of the centre to consolidate social, political and economic control over the margins, while at the same time reinforcing the monopoly of knowledge of the development establishment. There was no

room, it seemed, for marginalised communities to set their own development agendas or participate in the development process except as passive and pliant recipients of development messages.

Paralleling the radio experiments by government and international aid agencies were the efforts of private organisations to use the radio and other media for educational and social purposes. In radio, these organisations saw the opportunity to step in and provide leadership and much-needed services that national governments were unwilling or unable to provide for the marginalised sectors of the population. In Latin America, Catholic Church-sponsored radio stations were especially important in providing an alternative forum for discussion of many social issues related to development that official agencies would not or could not discuss, such as the rights of marginalised groups or distribution of wealth. Radio Sutatenza in Columbia was one of the first to experiment with radio as a tool for literacy (Bordenave 1977). Similarly, Radio Santa Maria in the Dominican Republic and Radio Suyapa in Honduras were early advocates of using radio for non-formal education (White 1976, 1977). On the whole, however, the early use of media for development purposes by private organisations, including the Church, tended to uncritically adopt the goals of the development establishment; that is, to serve "national interests" (in fact, elite interests) by attempting to integrate marginalised populations into the 'modern' market economy. These efforts are, however, an indication of how radio was beginning to be adapted by groups on the margins to meet their needs.

Criticisms of the Dominant Model

Challenges to the underlying assumptions of the Western-based diffusion model of development gained momentum by the mid-1970s, as researchers dissected the impact of a decade of development projects. As Rogers points out, "despite ... considerable research, the relative power of the mass media in leading to development was mainly assumed rather than proven" (Rogers 1976:65). Beltrán (1976) and Contreras (1980) reported that mass media content in Latin America, far from contributing to modernisation, was largely irrelevant and inappropriate to the development needs of the rural and urban poor. The

diffusion paradigm was further challenged by studies that indicated that the adoption of innovations was closely related to the socioeconomic position of the individual. These studies showed that dissemination of information through media or 'change-agents' clearly benefited those individuals already in a privileged position in society at the expense of those in a lower strata. Adopting a new technology implied a risk that many simply could not afford to take. Instead of creating a more equitable distribution of wealth and resources, the diffusion/modernisation model perpetuated and even accentuated the gap between rich and poor (Rogers 1976; Beltrán 1976; Díaz Bordenave 1976; McAnany 1980).

In response to these sobering assessments of development's impact, development specialists attempted to adjust and refine the modernisation/diffusion model to 'fit' the conditions of the developing world. Several important processes in the late 1970's, including UNESCO's "MacBride Commission," concluded that increased participation of development's 'beneficiaries' in media projects was needed for successful development projects. For the MacBride Commission, participation should not be limited to simple audience feedback, but include active local involvement in the planning and production of media programming. Additionally, the Commission expressed its concerns about the concentration of media ownership and the control of information by the developed world (MacBride 1980). Despite the new-found conviction that increased participation was needed in development projects, there were surprisingly few attempts (at least from within the dominant model) to incorporate audience members into the process of implementing and managing communications projects and even fewer attempts at allowing the audience to actually plan project outcomes and objectives. For the development establishment, 'participation' seemed to be limited to a sort of public relations strategy designed to convince communities of the benefits of development projects (Bordenave 1976).

By the 1980's, the development establishment generally had abandoned the view that deliberate and wide-scale use of mass media would result in 'development'. Radio diffusion projects still exist (some Honduran government-funded radio programs are profiled as recent examples in Chapter 4), though they are nowhere near as common as during the radio

development heyday of the 1960s and 70s. Instead, attention has focussed on finding new technological 'fixes' to the problems of development. New communications technologies and computer-mediated communications and research methodologies like network analysis are being used to disseminate information and determine the flow of innovations within a community.

While the focus may have changed, the underlying beliefs and value system that built and sustained the modernisation/diffusion paradigm have not, despite the use of catchwords like "participation". Development communications as a discipline and as a practice still tends to assume that communication processes in the 'underdeveloped' world can be dissected, understood and manipulated in order to bring about the presumed benefits of development and that development planners and technicians are the best qualified to introduce and manage such transformations. But the benefits for the centre clearly outweigh the benefits for communities on the margins. In recent years, for example, there has been increasing attention to the application of indigenous knowledge in areas such as medicinal plants or the use of germplasms from traditional crops to solve the problems of the industrialised world. One author even goes so far as to state that indigenous knowledge should be "captured", as if indigenous knowledge is some kind of natural resource to be harvested, without concern for its social or cultural context (Johnson 1992).

Community Radio and Social Change at the Margins

The above analysis suggests that mainstream development practices do not contribute to equitable development or increased autonomy and self-reliance for the people of the Third World. Instead, entirely consistent with Innis' analysis of empires and communication, mainstream development practices serve to sustain and expand a global empire based on the development agenda of the centre imposed on the margins. Development has created a new priesthood, development 'experts' and technicians, whose arcane language and arbitrary powers give them a monopoly of knowledge over the supposed beneficiaries of development.[8] But the imposition of that monopoly of knowledge has not gone

---

[8] CIDA for example uses terms like "absorbtive capacity"to describe how "efficiently" a government agency or organization integrates funding and technical assistance with their operations.

unchallenged. On the margins of the development empire - in the slums and shantytowns of cities, in the countryside, among disenfranchised social groups - new impulses to adapt and subvert the tools of the development empire have occurred. Grassroots development processes challenge the legitimacy of dominant knowledge systems of the centre such as neoliberal economics, modern agronomy and allopathic medicines by favouring indigenous knowledge systems and democratic, popular participation in development. Community radio in Latin America draws upon this tradition of opposition.

Dependency and Critical Theory

In Latin America, much of the intellectual impulse behind calls for alternative communications practises like community radio came from communications researchers who had been trained in North American research methodologies but were increasingly frustrated with the inadequacies of the North American model when applied to the Latin American context (Beltrán 1976). The elaboration of dependency theory in the 1970s was perhaps the first coherent body of thought to emerge in radical opposition to the dominant development paradigm. Critical appraisals of the modernisation/diffusion development paradigm led some analysts to conclude that there were deep-rooted structural causes to underdevelopment. Utilising Marxist terminology (though not always orthodox Marxist analysis), dependency theory asserted that the root cause of the social and economic disparities in Latin America and other 'underdeveloped' regions was the result of the historic function of colonialism, systematically sustained under the logic of international capitalism. Modernisation to the dependency theorists was simply another strategy to maintain the status quo by disguising the fundamental imbalance of power between the dominant countries to the North and the dependent countries to the South. Meanwhile, the 'cultural imperialism' thesis claimed that heavy foreign involvement (mostly US) in Latin American cultural industries and media became the mechanism to sustain the dominance of the North by disseminating the ideological values of local elites and international capitalism in media content (Riaño 1990, Atwood and McAnany 1986).

The development model advocated by dependency/cultural imperialism theorists most

often included a call for the socialisation of lands and industries, especially cultural industries, and a dismantling of the institutional structures that contributed to underdevelopment. Radical education of the 'masses' to 'demystify' the ideological content of mass media programming was seen as a vital part of the process of creating 'popular classes' that would foster an oppositional political consciousness against the dominant institutions in society (Riaño 1991, Reyes Matta 1986; Simpson Grinberg 1986). Riaño explains the idealised vision held by adherents of the dependency model of the 'popular ' classes as opposed to the 'masses':

> ... The "popular" evoked a revolutionary essence defining any social actor, practice or process which demonstrated political awareness. "Cultura popular" became a revolutionary ideal, an abstract reality, that would be materialised through an educative process of consciousness raising and the establishment of a new society" (1991:32)

In terms of communication practice, this idealisation of the "popular" as revolutionary effectively denied the marginalised sectors of the population the capability of generating their own cultural meanings. The position of the critical researcher as guide and teacher in the revolutionary mission of liberating the masses (ironically paralleling that of the change agent in modernisation theory) situates supporters of dependency and cultural imperialism theory within what Simpson Grinberg (1976) has termed the "Political-Intellectual Vanguard Theory." Its proponents would "create communication channels *with* the masses, but not promote communication *of* and *for* the masses, independent of any political apparatus and the political control of the vanguard" (Simpson Grinberg 1976: 173).

The critical theorists offered bold (if simplistic) remedies to resolve the challenges of dependency and cultural imperialism. However, the active and aggressive intervention of local elites and other powerful interests (namely US) coupled with the difficulties of trying to reshape society along more socialist lines have meant that experiments at radical structural change in Latin America have been short-lived. Decisive military interventions like the coup in Chile or less obvious but equally devastating counter moves such as economic sabotage and mercenary counter-revolutionary armies in the case of Nicaragua effectively meant that no country (with the exception of Cuba) has had the opportunity to

realise the massive structural changes in society called for by dependency theorists (Bradford Burns 1984).

Within the radical camp, there was a growing awareness that problems of marginalisation should not be intellectualised, that marginalised social groups should not be treated as passive subjects instead of active actors constructing their reality. What was required was a process of 'popular' or 'alternative' communication, motivated by "the desire to foster substantially different structures and processes of communication that make possible egalitarian, interactive, and emancipatory discourse" (Atwood 1986:19). At a theoretical level, alternative communication was the "logical outcome of the extensive work done on transnationalisation and cultural imperialism and dependency in the 1970s" (McAnany 1986:38). But while alternative communication adopted the structuralist analysis of the dependency/ cultural imperialism thesis, it went beyond denunciation and rejection of the dominant political and media structures in society to include social praxis, the "actualisation of theory in conduct" (Atwood 1986:18). As Reyes Matta states, "The alternative takes in the oppositional" (1986:201).

Social Praxis: Freire and Liberation Theology

The idea of praxis was influenced by two very important bodies of thoughts in Latin America; the radical educational methodology of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970) and from the Theology of Liberation. Freire argued that literacy and education, especially for the 'oppressed' classes, must be based on the lived experience of the learners. Through a process of 'conscientisation' the learner begins to understand that the conditions of poverty faced daily are part of the structural and cultural conditions created by the dominant classes to maintain the status quo. But by uniting with others, the poor could find strategies to resolve their problems, at the very least at a local level. Unlike the revolutionary vanguard role of most leftist organizations, Freire advocated that the process of conscientisation should be directed by the community itself (Riaño 1990, Puntel 1992). Literacy then, was conceived as a tool for political organisation in order to challenge the objective realities faced by the marginalised classes. This contrasted sharply with

diffusionist literacy efforts, which saw literacy training as a way to integrate marginalised groups into the market economy (White 1976).

The Theology of Liberation was similar in its political outlook. Liberation Theology grew out of the conviction of Latin American clergy and theologians that the Catholic Church as an institution had aligned itself consistently over the span of five centuries with the elite classes and was indifferent towards the poverty and social injustices committed against Latin America's poor. Liberation Theology called for a radical reorientation of the Church to practice the Biblical teachings of the 'preferential option for the poor' - in other words to support actively the most disenfranchised elements of society much as Jesus taught. Liberation Theology encouraged social and economic justice through the organisation of Christian base communities where collective social actions were tempered with critical awareness of oppression (Balke 1986, Berryman 1984, Puntel 1992).

Understandably, 'conscientisation" and Liberation Theology represented a threat to many vested interests, which launched aggressive campaigns against efforts advocated by followers of both movements. In Honduras, for example, paramilitary forces massacred two priests and seven campesinos at El Astillero in 1972. It was a powerful warning for Hondurans committed to Liberation Theology. By the early 1980s, a conservative backlash from within the Catholic Church hierarchy spearheaded by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger effectively silenced many advocates of Liberation Theology in Latin America (Puntel 1992). Nevertheless, both movements have had a profound impact on the movement toward grassroots development and community radio in the region. As a result, community radio took on the idea that liberation from the oppression of poverty was a community process, both in terms of identifying the conditions of poverty faced by all the poor and seeking local collective action to address those conditions. Economic and social equity was a key issue, and local control of media resources was seen to be a vital step in achieving that objective.

Community Radio and Grassroots Development

Community radio in Latin American predates diffusionist approaches. To illustrate,

33

miners in Bolivia established radio stations in the early 1940s providing programming responsive to their class and ethnic identity (Whittingdon 1985, Balke 1986). The control of media resources by local elites and later, in conjunction with transnational corporations was easily discernible to members of marginalised sectors of Latin American society. No studies were needed to confirm that the media environment actively denied access to programming content relevant to their needs, such as broadcasting in indigenous languages. Neither was any theoretical model needed to suggest that greater participation in the production of radio programming would benefit marginalised audiences. Historically, community radio always demonstrated that action, rather than theory, was the first priority.

Still, there has been an evolutionary process occurring amongst community radio broadcasters to define what community radio is and situate it against the dominant model of mass media in Latin American society. That process draws upon the diffusionist radio projects as well as critical theory and other radical experiments like Liberation Theology to create a unique adaptation of radio from the perspective of the margins. For example, many diffusionist educational radio projects, particularly those implemented by private organisations like the Church, played an important role in setting the stage for community radio as a social movement. Literacy and education programs helped to identify and train many of the future leaders of the popular organisations. Many of these leaders went on to challenge the top-down, paternalistic style of these projects and push for full participation of the community in planning and implementing development projects. At the same time, the successes - and failures - of revolutionary movements in the region, many operating clandestine guerrilla radio stations, and of leftist political parties provided examples of alternatives to the status quo.

Another important catalyst for the growth of community radio as a coherent social movement came out of organisations like the Latin American Radio Education Association (ALER) and the World Community Radio Association (AMARC). ALER began as an umbrella organisation of chiefly Catholic-sponsored radio stations engaged in literacy and distance education projects. Over the years, the organisation has moved from a diffusionist

position that advocated the use of educational radio to integrate marginalised listeners into national economies to supporting efforts to provide non-formal educational and cultural programming relevant to the needs of the community. This change is largely due to discussions amongst member stations on the effectiveness of the modernisation/diffusion development model as well as practical concerns regarding community involvement in educational programming and the paternalism inherent in many of these projects (Lopez Vigil 1992, Puntel 1992). AMARC too has been an important forum for radio stations and programming groups from around the world to discuss and shape the goals and values of community radio. In searching for commonalities in the experiences of community-based radio, AMARC has stressed inclusiveness and acceptance of different and diverse approaches taken by groups in response to specific contexts and circumstances. What remains clear, however, is a firm committment to the principles that community radio should be non-commercial, community owned and operated and focussed on providing access to perspectives and points of views that are marginalized or underrepresented in society(Girard 1992).

ALER and AMARC provided meeting places for the reformist approach of diffusionists and those espousing a more radical view to discuss the inadequacies of both perspectives and develop a consensus on where community radio might be situated. Increasingly, that consensus is being built around the concepts of democratisation of media resources and content and full access and participation of marginalised communities in communications processes. AMARC has consciously avoided an exclusionary definition of community radio, preferring instead to recognise that different social contexts have dictated different approaches to participatory communications. As basic criteria, AMARC insists that community radio be non-commercial and "serve the community in which it is located or to whom it is addressed, all the while encouraging the expression and participation of the community in the station" (AMARC 1991). At a philosophical level it is becoming increasingly evident that community radio as a global movement is moving towards a definition of community radio that makes active and democratic participation of the audience in all aspects of planning, production and management of radio programming as a

key element to distinguish community radio as unique from other uses of radio. It is not enough to produce radio for a marginalised audience: community radio must have faith in the wisdom, knowledge, skills and experience of the local community and actively incorporate the community into the functions of the radio station.

Innis and the Community Radio Model

There are many parallels between Innis' thoughts and the practices of community radio. Innis suggested that adaptations of media at the margins, such as the use of vernacular, lead to competition with the monopoly of knowledge of the centre. Community radio seeks to democratise the medium by decentralising control over access, content and expression. Programming by non-professionals in the vernacular, using indigenous knowledge and local culture is a powerful challenge to the space-binding characteristics of radio used by the centre to impose its own monopolies of knowledge on the margins. Additionally, by preserving local culture and indigenous knowledge, community radio can help to re-emphasize the importance of time, tradition and continuity that concerned Innis so much. Similarly, community radio's focus on local issues is suggestive of Innis' views on regional and local development as opposed to development defined by the centre - whether that centre is manifested as a national government or an international financial agency like the World Bank or IMF or a transnational corporation. The emphasis on community is reflected in the belief that local solutions are required for local problems. Community radio sees itself as part of a grassroots political process that empowers community members to make decisions on issues that affect them directly. Finally, community radio's emphasis on providing a forum for all the voices silenced by the imposition of monopolies of knowledge recalls the role envisioned by Innis for the university as a place for critical debate of the problems faced by society. Seen from this perspective, it is clear that community radio embodies many of the elements that Innis felt were essential to engage the monopolies of knowledge of the modern global empire.

This is not to suggest that the grassroots/community radio model is not without its inconsistencies and contradictions. Innis recognised that any alternative use of media could

easily be subverted and coopted from its democratic origins to become another monopoly of knowledge. In embracing local cultures and indigenous knowledge systems, there is a danger that community radio can perpetuate hidden forms of violence such as the continued exploitation of women or the destruction of the natural environment in the guise of being inherently good because it is an alternative to the dominant model. Likewise, in defending a local knowledge system against the dominant knowledge system, the reductionist arguments used by western science to claim moral superiority and the universality of western values can equally be used to advance similar claims for the local knowledge system. The skills and knowledge acquired to use communication technologies like radio can be monopolised by a few, contrary to spirit of democratisation. Access to resources can also act as a barrier to participatory practices. There is a danger that in the struggle to create new forms of participatory communications, the same pattern of inequalities and injustices of the dominant model are replicated.

The difficulty in reconciling the promise of community radio with the reality of trying to confront the power of the centre are illustrated in the following chapters by examining the specific practices of RSM and INEHSCO within the social and political context of marginalisation in Honduras.

Chapter Two
Honduras: Development on the Margins

Honduras' location in the centre of Central America has influenced its history and development. Since colonial times the country has been on the periphery, highly dependent on regional centres like Guatemala and larger centres like the United States. Honduras gained its independence in the early 1800s, but it brought little in the way of self-sufficiency and self-determination. While Honduras avoided most of the devastating violence that gripped Central America in the 1970s and 1980s, the country was by no means an "oasis of peace" (to use the words of the US State Department). Selective repression against popular organisations and a massive militarisation of the country served to accentuate the gap between rich and poor. Despite massive international aid dollars funnelled to Honduras, the situation remains bleak for most of the population. Honduras is listed by most development agencies as one of the poorest countries in the hemisphere. Social problems have been aggravated in the 1990s by continued pressures from international monetary agencies to impose structural adjustment programs on Honduras and dismantle any state agencies that might compensate in some way for the economic and social dislocation caused by such programs.

Geography

The rugged mountain ranges that make up two-thirds of Honduras' area have been a major obstacle for the development of transportation routes. Population tends to concentrate on the coastal plains and around the capital city of Tegucigalpa, while many areas of the country are effectively isolated from national life. About 65% of the land in Honduras can be considered as mountainous, ranging from 500 to 3000 metres above sea level. The most fertile lands are the plains found along the north and south coasts, followed by some valleys with good alluvial soils, but the country lacks the rich volcanic soil or mineral resources that have fuelled economic activities in its Central American neighbours. Extensive forests are another resource of the country. Pine and other conifers at the higher altitudes and broad leaf woods such as mahogany in the coastal selva areas and mangrove

along the western coast comprise about 45% of the total area of Honduras. Inefficient agricultural practices, indiscriminate logging and a rising population have all contributed to a growing ecological crisis in Honduras. A CIDA study suggests the loss of up to 2% of the forest reserves of the country every year. (CIDA 1991)

Economy

Spanish colonisation of the Americas imposed a mercantile extractive economic system that demanded a complete orientation towards the metropole with little development of inter-regional or internal markets in the periphery. Honduras was left with a "poor" colonial heritage: "undeveloped productive forces, sparse population, rudimentary class formation, few and inadequate communications, marked localism, deficient administration, etc...." (Arancibia 1988:23). Independence did little to change Honduras' status on the periphery. Beginning in the 1860s, enterprising Americans - like Sam "The Banana Man" Zemurray - created a North American market for the banana, a crop that grew particularly well on the Honduran north coast. Bananas became a staple resource. The banana plantations founded by these foreign investors operated as an 'enclave', nearly completely isolated from the rest of the national economy. The enclave did not stimulate an internal market, nor did the millions of dollars invested by these foreign companies lead to the development of a national communications infrastructure - despite numerous land concessions granted in agreements to do just that. In fact, by the 1920s, foreign capital consolidation reduced the banana industry from several small and medium sized enterprises involving some local elites to an effective monopoly exercised by a small number of giant multinationals, among them United Brands, Standard Fruits, and Castle and Cook. Quite appropriately, Hondurans referred to these multinationals as *el pulpo* , the octopus, for their creeping expansion into all aspects of national life. In such a manner, the banana republic was created (Acker 1987).

Roughly sixty-percent of the population is rural, though increasing urbanization is changing that figure daily. The bulk of the rural population is engaged mainly in subsistence and local market farming, producing corn, beans and rice as the principle staples. But with the best lands controlled by multinational corporations or local elites engaged in export crop

production or cattle ranching, campesinos are forced onto increasingly marginal lands such as mountain slopes. According to campesino groups, 27.4 percent of arable land is controlled by a mere 0.3 percent of the population. A land reform process to allocate idle lands to campesinos was initiated in 1962 and again in 1973, but the process has been immobilised by bureaucratic inefficiencies and the active opposition of the land-owning oligarchy and the United States (Salomon 1982, Shephard 1985). There are over to 150 000 campesino families without land in Honduras, a factor that undoubtedly contributes to rural to urban migration (Benjamin 1988).

The United States has been eager to stimulate "non-traditional export crops" like melons and shrimp, but such efforts have tended to accentuate concentration of land and power - while at the same time providing the United States market with cheap food commodities. Another consequence has been the inability of Honduras to meet its own internal food needs. In recent years the Honduran government has pinned its hopes on the creation of Free Trade Zones as a means to stimulate economic growth. Such free trade zones offer foreign companies exemptions from taxes and environmental and labour regulations. But, as in other countries, Free Trade Zones have had well-documented human rights abuses, especially of women.[9] The overall effect of export agriculture and industrialism has been increased dependence upon foreign capital and technology and an export sector which operates independently of the social needs of Honduras.

State Politics and the Military

Politics in Honduras is dominated by two traditional parties, the Liberals and the Nationals. Both represent elite interests and are easily manipulated by internal pressure groups and foreign interests (Bográn 1986). Political allegiance is most often determined by siding with a faction within a party in the hopes obtaining future favours or benefits. The result has been civil governments which stumble from crisis to crisis with little vision or continuity, severely limited by the compromises needed for their political survival (Morris

---

[9] Recently television personality and fashion designer Kathy Lee Gifford faced a public outcry when horrific working conditions in a Honduran sweatshop that manufactured her line of clothing were exposed. Unfortunately, exploitative working conditions are the norm in Honduran FTZs.

1984). Active state intervention in the economy did not begin until the 1970s, when a somewhat progressive military government looked towards massive infrastructure programs like the Cajón hydroelectric project in an attempt to stimulate economic growth. But without internal capital to finance such projects, the country had to rely on loans from international institutions to underwrite the costs of such projects. As a result, from 1980 to 1990 the country's foreign debt doubled to over three billion dollars, partly to service such loans (Arrivillaga 1986). State bureaucracy expanded at an enormous rate in the form of state institutions such as the state forestry corporation, COHDEFOR. Edmond L. Bográn asserts that autonomous and semi-autonomous organisations created by the state were not the result of a natural process of institutional development, but rather emerged out of the conditions and procedures imposed by international financial organisations. As a result, "the creation of decentralised public service agencies... is divorced from general needs , producing at the same time the sociopolitical phenomena of a separate technical-bureacratic class" (Bográn 1986:215). During the 1980s there were at least thirty-one such institutions, all run inefficiently. Few if any of these institutions have met the development needs of the Honduran population. Recent structural adjustment programs imposed by the IMF have caused many of these agencies to be dismantled.

The military has been the chief beneficiary of the elite's inability to consolidate power. The disorder of the political system inspired the military to carry out their first coup in 1957, marking the "first time that the military could be identified as an independent, professional unit, capable of controlling full government powers" (Peckinham 1985:274). From that moment on, the military as an institution became a key player in the political arena, seizing power a number of times. Military rule ended in 1982, when under pressure from the United States a transition to civilian authority took place. But US geopolitical interests were the real reason behind the move. The United States needed Honduras to demonstrate that 'democracy' was possible in Central America. More importantly, the US required a launching pad for any number of strategic operations - including covert operations and military invasion against revolutionary movements in Honduras' neighbours - in order to reassert American dominance over the region (Oseguera de Ochoa 1987). In the

first two years of the Reagan Administration alone military assistance to Honduras more than doubled the amount of military aid given in the preceding thirty-five years, creating what Philip Shepard has called 'U.S.S. Honduras' (1988). The Honduran military has operated with impunity and been identified in a number of cases of torture, forced 'disappearances' and massacres (Custodio 1986).

Along with the military assistance came economic support and political interventions designed to shape Honduran society in a manner more amenable to US interests. The offer was impossible to refuse. The US threatened to cut off all foreign aid and loans from international lending agencies that the US dominates, like the World Bank and the IMF. For example, the US Embassy sent a letter to the new civilian president in 1981, Suazo Cordoba, outlining a suggested plan of "Reaganomics for Honduras", and withheld 70 million dollars of approved USAID money in 1989 until Honduras conformed to IMF required changes in the economy (Oseguera de Ochoa 1987). For the economic and political elite and military, the millions of dollars from the US was a cash-cow, a get-rich-quick scheme where everyone benefited but the marginalised sectors of the population.

International Development Assistance

United States' interventions in Honduran politics and economy are a flagrant example of how funding for development projects is used to impose political priorities of the centre rather than meet the needs of the people on the margins. What is less obvious is the manner in which official development assistance from other countries tends to support the perpetuation of centre-periphery relations and the privileged monopolies of knowledge of the development technicians and planners. An overview of Canadian development aid to Honduras demonstrates how this process works. Canada is generally well-regarded internationally for its development work because the Canadian government practices 'quiet diplomacy' and rarely attempts to intervene with the internal affairs of other countries. Nevertheless, in practice, Canadian official development assistance (ODA) is intimately connected to maintaining the dominance of the economic and political centres of the North.

Canadian ODA for Honduras increased dramatically during the 1980s, though it remained minuscule in comparison to amounts spent by the United States and other donor countries. As one of the poorest countries in the Americas, Honduras was targeted for special development assistance. While the choice of Honduras was obvious for humanitarian reasons, at the same time, the absence of an armed insurgency and/or gross human rights abuses by the military made Honduras a safe and uncontroversial choice for a large-scale aid program. And it must be remembered that Canadian ODA was funnelled into projects that might benefit and stimulate trade with corresponding sectors of the Canadian economy. Development assistance is, after all, a lucrative business where much of the money designated for development work overseas is actually spent in Canada. The Latin American Working Group, a Canadian non-profit research organisation, has charged Canadian ODA as "paved with good intentions" but sadly lacking in substantive efforts to address the fundamental needs of the poor majority in Honduras . Instead, that assistance has tended to consolidate centralised control of the development process by an elite class of planners and technicians (LAWG 1989).

Most of Canada's aid to Honduras comes in the form of bilateral aid. Bilateral programs are determined by priorities established by the Honduran government and by Canada's ability to assist in meeting those priorities. Between 1971 and 1991, Canadian bilateral aid totalled more than $100 million (CIDA 1991). Projects have focussed primarily on the forestry, agriculture, energy and health sectors. During that period, development objectives included renewable resources development and conservation, promoting the creation of jobs in the countryside, and improving rural health and nutrition. One of the largest bilateral projects involved upgrading the national electricity system in order to better distribute the electricity produced from hydroelectric facilities like El Cajón, the huge dam financed by Canada and other international agencies. The project is almost entirely a technical one, with the installation of transformers and voltage regulators at existing substations. There were no provisions for rural electrification. With its emphasis on highly specialised electrical equipment, this project is an excellent example of "tied" aid, aid that requires the purchase of equipment from the donor country.

Other projects had more social components to them but were similarly flawed with a technical/bureaucratic bias. For example, the Guayape Valley project began in 1978 and went through several years of feasibility and planning studies before implementation. The project was directed toward small and medium producers and had the goal of increasing employment and thereby improving quality of life in the area by "introducing new crops, irrigation systems, improved management and marketing services"(CIDA 1991:46) According to CIDA documents and staff, consultation and participation with the target community was an integral part of the project. André Gosselin, former CIDA Field Representative in Honduras, summed up the process: "On the one hand, you try to go meet the local population and find out their needs, while on the other hand, you try to convince them not to cut down the forests"(personal interview). But the technocratic bias is revealed by the fact that the project design was decided between technically-trained Canadian professionals and their Honduran counterparts, while the communities in question were left out. In fact, consultation with the community had not even begun, despite the project moving on to its second five-year phase! Clearly there was a privileged position given to the knowledge of technicians and planners at the expense of the knowledge of the marginalised population.

To its credit, CIDA has been engaged in a process of self-evaluation and evolution. The institution has tried to be more flexible and responsive in meeting the needs of the target community by decentralising some of CIDA's operations and giving the Honduran office more autonomy in project administration. Another way it has tried to do this is by using NGOs to deliver bilateral development projects where there is a strong social component. It is a tacit acknowledgment that the 'technocratic' and business philosophy of CIDA and Canadian companies subcontracted to deliver programs may be ill-suited to addressing the social component of many projects. But the system is not without its flaws. NGOs are expected to conform to CIDA's bureaucratic administrative processes and stringent auditing, reporting and monitoring procedures, while simultaneously developing flexible and creative approaches to effectively deliver aid projects to communities. The added burdens

of meeting these bureaucratic demands can stretch an NGO to its limits. And, when a project does not perform as expected, the NGO shoulders much of the blame, even though CIDA is heavily involved in project design and approval (see Tamminga, 1989)

It should be noted that CIDA does fund a number of other development proposals from both Canadian and Honduran NGOs through its Partnership program and the locally-administered Canada Fund. These projects are generally small-scale, but very closely tied to addressing the material and social needs of the marginalised sectors of the Honduran population. Many of these projects are examples of grassroots initiatives, with full community participation in project design. In particular, the Canada Fund has been an effective way for Honduran groups to obtain funding for grassroots initiatives. In the words of Andre Gosselin, the Canada Fund provides the most "bang for the buck"(personal interview). It cannot be overstated, however, that CIDA funding for NGO projects, valued at less than three percent of the total Canadian development aid, is absurdly insignificant compared to bilateral aid (CIDA 1991). Again, it suggests that there is a monopoly of knowledge at work here. Development projects tend to accentuate the technical and economic concerns of the centre rather than the concerns of the periphery.

This is not to suggest that all development projects are necessarily adverse for the needs of the popular majority. Moreover, even the most well-intentioned development project runs the risk of perpetuating a monopoly of knowledge among a technical elite. There may be a role for state and international agencies to play in supporting development, but that role should be to "facilitate popular participation, not manipulate it" in order to fit predetermined development models (Werther and Argumedo 1986:17). And development objectives and priorities should be established by the communities involved, not by agencies representing other interests. One Honduran campesino woman, in response to the massive militarisation of Honduran society in the 1980s, gave these words of wisdom.:

> ..the millions and millions of dollars that the gringos send don't help the
> poor campesinos. The money isn't used to create jobs so that everyone
> can work. Instead, the money is for arms, for airplanes, for tanks. But
> we don't eat airplanes, we don't eat tanks, we don't eat bullets. The only
> things we campesinos eat is corn and beans. So what good are all those

Her words might just as easily be applied to development projects that do not respond to the material and social needs of the people.

Social Movements:

At its most fundamental level, Honduran political and economic structures are shaped and defined by foreign interests and local elites. The consequences of this elitism are felt by the poor majority of the country. Organising to confront the basic injustices in Honduran society is a dangerous affair. During the 1970's and 1980's, the military actively suppressed progressive organisations and popular movements and was responsible for gross human rights violations, including several 'disappearances' and massacres of campesino leaders. Yet despite the repression, the Honduran people have tenaciously challenged the status quo that denies them participation in the decisions that affect their lives, and the violence that they face everyday in the form of hunger and poverty or repression. The clearest examples of this struggle for a voice in the governing of the country can be seen in the various popular organisations that have sprung up in the last few decades (White 1977, Benjamin 1988).

The roots of many of these organisations lie in the strong workers and peasants movements and Church-based mutual aid organisations of the 1950s and 1960s. In 1954 a huge strike by banana workers won Honduran workers the right to organise legally. Campesino groups too represent the leading edge in the struggle to win justice in Honduras. The campesino movement has its origins in the truncated land reform of 1962. Since that time campesino groups have ingeniously utilised the bureaucratised system of the land reform to carry out radical actions like land takeovers (Benjamin 1988). The progressive wing of the Catholic Church, inspired by the teachings of Liberation Theology, set up a number of training and education programs for the marginalised classes. Such programs were instrumental in developing leadership for the nascent popular movements. Popular organisations have taken a proactive stance in challenging their own marginalisation in Honduran society by organising literacy and health campaigns for themselves (White 1977).

Many other NGO groups have formed since the late 1980s to address specific development issues such as environmental and health concerns. More recently, Honduras' indigenous peoples, particularly the Lenca, Chortis and Garifuna, have begun to organize around issues of access to traditional lands, government services and self-determination.

This is not to suggest that popular organisations represent a cohesive, well-defined social movement in Honduras. The climate of hostility to social change by the military and other elites in Honduras has hampered the emergence of an effective popular movement for social change. While the improving political situation in the region has lessened tensions between the military and popular organisations, many commentators have noted that many organisations are subject to surveillance and infiltration. Among many popular organisations, particularly those with a development focus, there is a growing sense that collective, collaborative solutions, and not simply political opposition, are required in order to achieve positive change. For example, a federation of Honduran development NGOs, FOPRIDEH, has been formed to collectively negotiate with government and international development agencies to fund projects that meet Honduras' development needs. This nascent cooperation is a positive sign that Hondurans have begun to actively confront those forces which have historically denied them access to economic and political power. They are making strategic alliances in an attempt to create a more egalitarian society.

Honduran Media Environment

The rugged terrain of Honduras heavily influences access to media. There are four daily newspapers, but their distribution is limited to the major cities and towns along major transportation corridors. The country has five television stations, located in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. Again, the terrain limits the range of signals, so that no television station can legitimately claim to have national coverage. While hampered by the same geographic factors, radio has been able to adapt and thrive. There are more than 260 radio stations distributed throughout the country, mostly of a local or regional character, and 363 radio receivers for every 1000 inhabitants (Arjona 1993:170). There are two networks that could be considered national services. Radio America, a network of commercial radio

stations focussing on news and public affairs programming, claims to have a national audience. Radio Honduras, a state radio service, was revived in 1990, but budgetary constraints and the election of a new government in 1993 raised doubts that the service can meet its goal of setting a national agenda in terms of culture and education.

The majority of radio stations rely on commercial revenues to cover operating costs. Programming, therefore, is oriented predominantly towards entertainment and music, as opposed to more costly and labour-intensive public affairs programming, and is susceptible to sensationalism and a low level of professionalism. Apart from a healthy local music industry based on the music on Honduras' Caribbean coast, very few examples of local or national culture were found in Honduran media. Indeed most programming was foreign in nature, with some stations simply purchasing prerecorded programming from U.S. stations. The primary concern is profit, and the intense competition between stations, coupled with the paucity of advertising revenue, has led to increasing concentration of ownership and horizontal and vertical integration in the industry. At the same time, audiences are fragmented by geography and have limited purchasing power. Given these difficulties, many stations operate at a loss and are cross-subsidised by other business interests.

HONDUTEL, the state telephone company, regulates the radio and telecommunications industry, and issues broadcasting licenses and frequencies. HONDUTEL is directly controlled by the military, presumably for reasons of 'state security', and the military have been loathe to authorise stations with a social or educational agenda. Progressive radio stations, mostly linked to the Catholic Church, have been targeted for intimidation and attacks. One radio station, Radio Paz of Choluteca, was forced to shut down, reopening in 1992, seventeen years later. Other stations, like Radio Suyapa, faced enormous pressures and eventually closed down or turned to more conventional programming.

This, coupled with the overwhelming competition from the commercial media, has made it enormously difficult to utilise radio effectively for educational and development purposes, whether by development planners or by community radio advocates with a more radical

definition of development. As mentioned above, the Catholic Church has been the key player in promoting radio for development. The *Escuelas Radiofónicas Suyapa* was the first attempt in Honduras to utilise radio for literacy programs. The program began in 1961 and was modelled on the success of *Radio Sutatenza* in Columbia. Basic literacy and mathematics lessons were prepared by school staff and broadcast from the capital city of Tegucigalpa on the Catholic station *La Voz de Suyapa*. Listening groups were organised in rural communities, and a monitor was selected to help participants link course material with the radio lessons. Technical and organisational difficulties, along with a sterile pedagogical plan, limited the educational effectiveness of the radio schools, and by the late 1960s the program had faded in importance (White 1977). Nevertheless, a 1965 UNESCO assessment of the *Escuelas Radiofónicas* concluded, as have other commentators, that "for many villages the schools have provided the means of organising and channelling the peasant's energies into co-operative efforts to improve their community" (1965:110). Indeed, the greatest legacy of the program was the formation of a core group of campesino leaders who later went on to organise around other social issues (Benjamin 1988).

There are currently five Catholic radio stations in the country, including Radio San Miguel, that have a community orientation and provide educational programming. But despite the long history of educational radio in Honduras there has been little continuity and longevity in these experiences. Catholic-based radio stations have been hampered by antipathy from military and other elites and from conservative members of the Church hierarchy, who can order new members of the clergy to take over the administration of a radio station at any time. Lack of funding from donations or commercial revenue also constrain the stations. In addition, because the radio stations are normally under the supervision and direction of the parish priest, the station often becomes closely identified with that priest in terms of its programming policies, religious orientation and relations with the community. Aside from the Church, there are currently more than twenty different NGOs utilising the radio to broadcast educational or development-related programming. Lacking budgets, technical skills and knowledge of the characteristics of radio, these programs generally lack focus and are of poor technical quality. The intended audience does

not play a significant role in determining programming. There is surprisingly little contact between grassroots organisations using radio and even less with community-based programmers in other countries.

In many respects, educational radio in Honduras has evolved in isolation from the experiences of community radio in other Latin American countries, who have effectively used organisations like ALER and AMARC to network on common problems. Most of the Catholic stations are affiliated with ALER but do not make adequate use of the many resources available through the association. In fact, Radio San Miguel was even omitted from an inventory of Latin American media, despite being a member of ALER (Arjona 1990). AMARC did not have any members from Honduras until 1992, when through this project funding was provided for two representatives of INEHSCO and two from RSM to attend the 5th AMARC conference in Mexico.

Finally, several state agencies use commercial radio stations and the national public radio service to broadcast specific diffusionist development programs. These programs deserve to be profiled in some detail as they reveal the extent to which changes within the mainstream development model have been translated in practice. *Cuidemos el bosque* (Caring for the forests) was a half-hour radio program produced by the Honduran Forestry Corporation, COHDEFOR, with financial assistance from USAID. The program is aired weekly on Radio America. The objectives of the program were to raise awareness among campesinos about the need to preserve Honduras' forests from deforestation and erosion, either through fires, indiscriminate logging, or migratory agricultural practices. Program content was determined entirely by COHDEFOR's professional foresters, who typically viewed deforestation as a technical issue rather than a complex cultural and socioeconomic one. For example, one program was dedicated to discussing reforestation in terms of seedling propagation, optimal photosynthesis conditions and other technical concerns, without once mentioning the tree species in question by its common name (pine!), instead of its Latin scientific name. The knowledge and opinions of the intended audience were never taken into consideration. The COHDEFOR technicians clearly had carved out a monopoly

of knowledge on forestry issues.

Another example of the centre demonstrating its distorted view of the margin is in a literacy program called *Nuevo Amanecer* (A New Dawn). The program illustrates how the call for participation in development efforts has been implemented in practise. *Nuevo Amanecer* is produced by a private company for the Honduran Ministry of Education. The program takes the form of a female teacher giving a class to adult campesinos, with listeners at home following lessons in a workbook. The company employs at least a dozen people to produce the daily thirty-minute program. A team of five writers prepares scripts. Each line is carefully chosen from a stock of phrases to ensure that there is consistency in program content. Professional actors then record the lines of the different characters - the smooth, cultivated voice of the teacher and the slurred slang of illiterate campesinos. Every fifteen seconds listeners are given verbal cues to 'interact' with the program by responding to questions or referring to their workbooks. This is considered "audience participation" according to the producers. While a model of 'scientific' planning and production, the program reinforces stereotypes of the ignorant campesino and the superiority of the urban educated elite. The end result is a demeaning caricature of rural Honduras. Unlike earlier efforts like the *Escuelas Radiofónicas*, the philosophy of encouraging a community collectively to address its own development needs is notably absent. Once again, the view from the centre is reflected in how the margins are characterised.

Chapter Three
Confronting Marginalisation: Radio San Miguel and INEHSCO

The preceding chapters outline some of the manners in which the political climate, along with commercially-driven media environment and development projects, can act in conjunction to consolidate control from the centre and stifle popular participation in Latin American society. In response, grassroots organisations like RSM and INEHSCO have emerged to confront this marginalisation. Both RSM and INEHSCO described themselves as radical organisations committed to social change through grassroots activism and claimed to adhere to the philosophy and principles of the community radio movement. But there are many obstacles along the path to achieving the ideal of participatory, grassroots development. This chapter demonstrate just how difficult it can be to live up to those convictions.

Both RSM and INEHSCO were representative of the manner in which radio is commonly used by grassroots organisations for development purposes. RSM is a Catholic-sponsored radio station that carries a number of educational radio programs that are linked to preexisting grassroots development projects administered either by the parish or by other grassroots groups. INEHSCO is an NGO which purchases airtime on a commercial radio station to broadcast a health program as part of its community outreach activities. Although INEHSCO was run by a Catholic priest, religious proselytising was not a priority for the organisation. RSM and INEHSCO were unique in Honduras in that they have been involved in radio for nearly ten years. They were also distinctive in that their activities are focussed in the marginalised north-western sector of the country and served a largely rural population with little or no access to television or newspapers. The region also has a large number indigenous peoples mainly of Lenca, Chortis and Maya decent.

While both RSM and INEHSCO were involved in a range of development activities, for ease of comparison this discussion will centre on INEHSCO's health and nutrition radio program in Santa Rosa and the health radio program produced at Radio San Miguel by the

parish-based health project in Marcala. Other groups participated in this project, but the two health programs had the most clearly-defined development objectives for their radio programs and best represented the potential of the grassroots development model. The source of the information here comes from both 'official' histories and internal documents, along with interviews with former and present staff and volunteers and direct observation/participation in the daily activities of each organisation.

Profile of INEHSCO

INEHSCO is an NGO based in Santa Rosa de Copán, a sizable town midway between the industrial centre of San Pedro Sula and the border between Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. Tobacco and coffee are the principal cash crops of the region though most of the population relies on subsistence agriculture. INEHSCO was formed in the early eighties as a loose coalition of several Honduran activists concerned with the systematic neglect of the region by government agencies. Since its formation, INEHSCO has been dominated by the figure of Father Fausto Milla. An outspoken critic of the military, Milla was exiled for a time during the 1980s in Mexico. There he became interested in natural medicines and diets. Upon his return to Honduras in 1985, INEHSCO focussed its energies on improving the levels of health and nutrition of the rural population by promoting natural and herbal remedies that were available at little or no cost to campesinos. INEHSCO had organised up to 400 health committees in the villages scattered across the region, a formidable task considering their geographic isolation and the general lack of medical services in the region. These committees were provided with training by INEHSCO promoters on the medicinal properties of common plants as well as information on organic farming techniques and other areas of interest. These outreach activities were complemented by a half-hour radio program broadcast daily on a commercial radio station in Santa Rosa and a separate program broadcast three times a week on a station in Santa Barbara.

When INEHSCO was formed, the organisation had a clear mission: to provide alternative health care to campesinos in the Copán region. The political situation at the time, characterised by a sharp rise in repressive activities by military and paramilitary

forces, helped to create a strong sense of purpose and solidarity among staff and volunteers. The organisation was (and still is to a certain extent) considered as radical, and was under surveillance.[10] Since that time, the political climate has changed, as have the organisational goals of INEHSCO. There has been a shift from promoting natural health methods at the community level to include a number of revenue-generating activities such as a health food store and naturopath clinic. As well, the organisation owns a number of properties which are used to produce cash-crops for sale in the store and in markets. The organisation also has been aggressively pursuing external funding from whatever source available to finance a number of development projects.

Along the way, this transition created divisions in the organisation. Many of the original founders of INEHSCO have left due to differences with its coordinator, Fausto Milla, leaving him virtually unopposed in shaping the direction and structure of the NGO. Father Milla continued to dominate the organisation despite mounting pressure from within the Catholic Church to leave the administration of the organisation in the hands of lay members. The climate within INEHSCO was one of rumour and innuendo and there was little evidence of the focus and drive which allowed the NGO to organise in rural communities so successfully in the early years. Several key staff members left INEHSCO in the last few years, severely limited the organisation's potential for growth. Indeed, it seemed very likely that INEHSCO would continue to face more organisational crises unless problems with the structure and organisational culture of the NGO were resolved.

Organisational Structure

Father Milla likens INEHSCO to a 'popular movement' rather than a structured organization. In many ways this definition has become a convenient way to mask a quite rigid organizational hierarchy with Father Milla clearly at the top. INEHSCO is not a legally-constituted body, and therefore all assets of the organization are in the name of top

---

[10] Shortly after I arrived in Santa Rosa I accompanied Father Milla to several remote villages to view INEHSCO projects. The next day police and immigration officials detained me for several hours to review my documents and question me about my involvement with INEHSCO. A similar incident occurred on my first visit to RSM in Marcala. Because the project was sponsored by CIDA, it afforded me - and RSM and INEHSCO - a certain degree of protection from harassment by security forces. Similarly, both organisations utilised their connection with the Catholic Church to shield them to a certain degree from repression.

INEHSCO staff. Membership in community health committees is voluntary and there is yearly general meeting where delegates from local health committees meet to discuss a carefully selected range of issues facing INEHSCO. An elected board of directors seemed to be little more than window-dressing, as most decision-making was done by Fausto Milla.

INEHSCO's paid staff numbers at least fifteen, but most are engaged in INEHSCO's revenue-generating activities. Besides Father Milla there were two other staff members involved in coordinating INEHSCO's health program, including visits to health committees, coordinating training workshops and administrative duties. In addition to these duties, each member of the coordinating staff was responsible for hosting the half-hour daily radio program. This program was carried on a commercial radio station for a fee. About fifty community health promoters were responsible for community outreach activities and training new members of local health committees. The promoters come from the communities that they work in, and despite the key role they play in sustaining INEHSCO, they were paid a minimal honorarium for their work.

Radio Programming

INEHSCO's radio program was broadcast in the five-thirty a.m. timeslot five days a week on a commercial radio station in Santa Rosa. The target audience was rural campesinos families, particularly women. INEHSCO believed that as the issue of health was primarily a concern of women, but hoped at the same time to reach adult males and children with their message before they left the home for work in the fields.[11] The radio program was magazine format, with spoken word by the host interspersed with short musical selections. Program content ranged from descriptions of medicinal plants to messages that attempted to motivate listeners to join INEHSCO's health committees or more general messages to change unhealthy lifestyles. Interviews, testimonials of successes with natural medicines or other forms of audience participation were used infrequently.

INEHSCO did not have a clearly-defined role or purpose for their radio programming in

[11] Curiously though, nearly 95% of all the health promoters who worked in the rural communities were male, while office staff and the program coordinators, with the exception of Father Fausto, were women.

55

the overall scope of organisational activities. This was reflected in the focus and content of the programming. Day to day coordination between the three hosts was virtually nonexistent and there was little or no continuity in program content. Long-term program planning was also weak. At times, the radio program seemed to be targeted toward INEHSCO's fifty or so community health promoters, with an emphasis on duties to be performed or upcoming activities. At other times it was targeted toward the various health committees formed by INEHSCO in rural communities or to a general audience. A notable exception to the above were the efforts of one of INEHSCO coordinators, Isabel Ochoa, who made a concerted effort to include participatory techniques and her own innovative programming ideas into the program she hosted three times a week.

Competition

With at least seven more radio stations in the Santa Rosa region, INEHSCO's radio program faced indirect competition from programs broadcast during the same timeslot. For the most part these programs were music-based and directed toward the urban audience of Santa Rosa. INEHSCO's radio program faced direct competition from a similar program (carried on the same station) by another naturopath who operated a clinic in the nearby town of La Entrada. INEHSCO staff were quick to dismiss him as a quack interested only in personal gain at the expense of poor campesinos. There was little concern about the possible impact his program might have on listeners, despite evidence that some listeners who were interviewed seemed to confuse this business rival with INEHSCO. The program in question was essentially a half-hour advertisement, but it employed a number of radio techniques to make its (commercial) message more attractive to listeners: the use of colourful, descriptive language, a lively tone and pace, frequent repetition of the main message and economic incentives and other strategies commonly (and successfully) used by commercial broadcasters. Additionally, this "naturopath" deliberately manipulated the powerful (for campesino audiences) symbols and terminology of the Catholic Church. For instance, he called himself a "Brother" as a way to gain credibility (and possibly to imply some connection to Father Milla). It was easy to see why listeners unfamiliar with INEHSCO's work or even those already organised by the NGO might be attracted to this

style of programming.

Besides competition on the airwaves, INEHSCO was facing increasing competition from other development and assistance projects claiming expertise in natural medicines and sustainable, grassroots development. When INEHSCO began working in the Santa Rosa region, there were few other NGOs in the area. Today there are dozens, many of them financed through international aid agencies, each with its own development agenda. Yet as in the case with the rival radio program, INEHSCO's administrator consistently downplayed the potential negative impact of such competition and rarely addressed the issue of how to maintain and consolidate the considerable gains already achieved over a decade of grassroots organising.

Radio San Miguel

RSM is based in the town of Marcala, about four hours by bus from the capital city of Tegucigalpa. Most of the population is engaged in subsistence farming, supplementing their income by growing coffee, the main staple of this mountainous region. The ethnic make-up of the population is predominantly Lenca, though most of the language and cultural traits have long since been assimilated. There is a strong military presence in the region as the border area in neighbouring El Salvador was a stronghold for the FMLN insurgency during that country's civil war. RSM began religious broadcasting in 1985, in the heat of the tension and political violence associated with heavy U.S. involvement in the Central American region and the ascendancy of extremists within the Honduran military .

Under the direction of the parish priest, Father Lucio Nuñez, RSM began to address issues of social justice and became an immediate target for the military. The station was bombed and sabotaged, acts which strengthened its support from the local population, especially rural campesinos who most often bore the brunt of the military's abuses. The hostility of the military and the local business and political elite provided an oppositional focus for the station for the first few years of its existence. Despite the change in political climate in the 1990s and a more conciliatory mood from the military (though no less

vigilance), RSM has had difficulty adapting to the changing times and lacks focus and a sense of purpose.[12]

The strength of the station was in the more remote areas of the countryside where rural listeners depend on RSM to relay announcements and messages to relatives and friends who would otherwise be isolated. The radio also acted as a conduit for complaints about abuses of power by the military and other elite groups, further legitimising the station amongst the popular classes. In earlier years, RSM was able to mobilise the financial and logistical support of hundreds of volunteers and produced a number of innovative programs, including one program which won an award from UNICEF for its focus on children. Since that time the station appeared to have done little to build on its past successes.

Organisational Structure

RSM relied heavily on funding from external sources. The station's explicit links to the Catholic Church meant that it benefited from grants and subsidies from the diocese and from Catholic aid organisations in Europe and North America. Contributions from the community also helped cover some of the operating costs. The parish's health and agriculture projects were also financed by external sources. All parish activities, including the radio station and social projects, fell under the jurisdiction of an appointed Board of Directors, but this board rarely met and had little active involvement in the day-to-day operations of parish-based projects. The station was run by Father Lucio (the director), a paid station manager and eight paid deejays/announcers. A station manager was in charge of the day-to-day operations of the station, but in reality decision-making authority rested with Father Lucio. The deejays were all young males from the town of Marcala. The parish health and agricultural projects each had at least two paid coordinators and several community 'promoters' who received an honorarium for their work.

Radio Programming

---

12 For example, one day the power was cut to RSM's antenna. The station claimed that it was the work of saboteurs and immediately launched a vociferous attack on its "enemies" (the military and landowning elite of the area) over the airwaves. It was later discovered that the problem was a simple short-circuit caused by poor wiring. No retraction or explanation was ever provided.

The bulk of RSM's programming is music, followed by religious and educational programs. Although there is a rich tradition of campesino *ranchera* and *marimba* music and a number of talented musical groups in the area, RSM relied heavily on recorded Latin American pop and rock music, followed by *ranchera* music from Mexico. The *ranchera* music was far and away the preference of the rural campesino audience, while the pop and rock music appealed mainly to the tastes of the deejays and the younger, urban audience of Marcala. No music with English lyrics was permitted at the station (much to the disappointment of many of the deejay's). The religious programs tended to follow a rather rigid format of hymns, prayers and solemn messages of religious faith. These programs were run by some of the most devout members of the parish and tended to appeal to older, more conservative and urban members of the parish. The parish health and agriculture projects (also under the directorship of Father Lucio) each had a regular program on RSM. In addition, three campesino organisations purchased airtime to broadcast programs to their respective constituency groups. With the exception of the parish health project, all of the educational programs carried on RSM followed a magazine format of spoken word, interviews and features interspersed with musical selections as a means to direct their messages to the audience.

Despite the station's claim to being of and for the community, in reality access was filtered through processes similar to those that INEHSCO faced at commercial stations. Still, given the prevalent media environment in Honduras, it was unlikely that many community groups that had air time at the station would have had the same opportunity to express their views at commercial stations. Most of the educational and religious programmers had little to no technical training in radio and relied on the paid deejays to provide assistance with studio and recording equipment and to run their programs. The result was that most of the educational or development-oriented programming at RSM was produced live on-air with a minimum of planning and few opportunities for audience involvement.

The exception to this was the radio program produced by the parish health project. The

project trained community health promoters in natural medicines and basic health care and utilised the radio program to reinforce ideas already introduced to communities through the health promoters. The program was aired once a week at 2 p.m., when many campesinos had returned home from work in the fields. Like INEHSCO, the target audience for the program was mainly conceived to be women, though it was hoped that the program would appeal to a wider audience. The program utilized the *radionovela* (radio soap opera) format to introduce the audience to general health issues and project activities through the daily life of a fictional Lenca (indigenous) family. *La familia Lenca* was the most popular and successful educational program carried by the station according to RSM staff and audience members alike, regardless of age, class or gender.[13]

Unlike the other educational programs at RSM, the two women coordinators of the parish health project, Sonia Medina and Catalina Calix, clearly recognised the importance of the radio program as a vital component of project activities and dedicated time and resources to plan and produce the program. They enthusiastically sought out additional training in production skills and constantly recruited community members to get involved in the program. One glaring inadequacy of the radio program was that two English health care workers who were assisting with the health project played the part of members of the Lenca family in the *radionovela*. To their credit, the Hondurans and their English counterparts recognised the contradiction of using foreigners to promote traditional health care practises and their immediate goal was to recruit more community members to help plan and produce the radio show, freeing up time for the coordinators to carry out other duties. [14]

Competition

While campesino support for RSM was high, there was a danger that loyalty to the station would erode if the station did not continue to provide programming that met the

---

[13] Interestingly, unlike INEHSCO, the parish health project had consciously recruited both men and women promoters and there was near gender equity among promoters.

[14] This weakness could easily have been converted into a strong point. For example, the *novela* could have had the English cooperants cast as foreign 'experts' - know-it-alls whose assumptions would be constantly proven wrong by indigenous approaches to health care. The idea was enthusiastically embraced by the coordinators, but just as we began work on the project the health coordinators were fired by Father Lucio.

information and entertainment needs of the rural audience. The station faced competition from two other AM stations in the town, each owned by members of the two dominant political parties in Honduras, the Liberal Party and the National Party. Of these stations, Radio Libertad provided programming similar to that of RSM but without the religious orientation. Recently, RSM faced controversy after it began charging for announcements and greetings while Radio Libertad continued to offer this important service for free. Recognising the popularity of *La familia Lenca* , Radio Libertad at one stage courted the project coordinators to produce a similar program for Libertad. The other station in Marcala, Radio Suarez, focussed its programming on the youth of the town by playing pop and rock music from North American and Latin American artists. Radio Suarez carried no educational programming. Within RSM there was an assumption that because the station had always supported campesino and popular organisations, the majority of people in the area were loyal listeners to the station. However, field research in outlying communities revealed that only between one-half to two-thirds of radio listeners were tuned to RSM. Again, as in the case of INEHSCO, this complacency was dangerous considering the growing competition from commercial interests eager to capitalise on the successes of grassroots organisations. While campesino support for the station remained high, there was the risk that loyalty to the station would erode if the station did not continue to provide programming that met the informational and cultural needs of the rural audience.

The near complete absence of state or international development agencies in the area meant there was little competition with the parish's health and agriculture projects. Given the almost complete isolation from public services, grassroots development organisations tended to cooperate reasonably well, rather than compete with each other for campesino support. As the largest and best organised 'social' agency the Catholic Church became the rallying point for most grassroots efforts in the area. There was, however, some opposition within Marcala to the Church's role in the community. Large landowners, business elite and conservative Catholics occasionally lobbied the Archbishop of the diocese for a more orthodox priest less aligned with the marginalised social groups. This illustrates one of the drawbacks to relying on the Church as an organising force for social change; clergy

supportive of grassroots development can be removed by the Church hierarchy at any time, to be replaced by clergy who may have very different priorities.[15]

Technical, Financial and Organisational Constraints

The external political environment has provided much of the drive and focus for RSM and INEHSCO. In many ways, both organisations owe their existence to the adverse conditions of marginalisation and hostility and/or indifference from government and elites. But the focus on external political conditions sometimes disguises other important internal factors which affect how RSM and INEHSCO have been able to deliver their grassroots development messages through radio. These constraints limit the effectiveness of both organisation radio programming.

Technical Constraints:

Despite its overall simplicity (compared to other mass media), radio has certain technical requirements that hamper grassroots organisations from using the medium effectively. The technical problems faced by RSM or INEHSCO are widespread among those involved in community radio in Latin America. A 1985 report identified the lack of reliable equipment and technical training as a key concern for most community radio stations in the region (Whittingdon 1985). In the case of RSM and INEHSCO, lack of training and access to reliable recording and production equipment hampered attempts to produce quality radio programs. Most of the people involved in producing educational radio programs at INEHSCO and RSM were primarily involved in other activities and had no training or background in radio, limiting the possibilities to explore the potential of the medium. In addition, the equipment available to them was limited, and was usually unreliable and improperly maintained. This was true at both RSM or at the commercial station where INEHSCO purchased airtime. Production quality suffered as a result. Programs were often improvised and produced with little thought given to sound quality. Like millions of other people around the world, programmers at RSM and INEHSCO were

---

[15] This was in fact a major concern for both priests as the Church hierarchy in their respective dioceses repeatedly instructed them to focus more on pastoral duties and less on 'unrelated' activities. They had also received threats of sanctions or replacement, but no action appeared to have been taken by the Church hierarchy during my time in Honduras.

essentially self-taught, learning the basics of radio and adapting that knowledge to fit their needs and circumstances. Nevertheless, additional training, particularly from the perspective of community radio, and access to better equipment would have significantly improved the results of their efforts. The fieldwork portion of this project sought to do just that by providing technical assistance and basic production equipment to both organisations. As indicated below, the results were mixed.

As with many of the smaller radio stations in the country, RSM operated with a hodgepodge of outdated though functional equipment. The station's transmitter, for example, operated on vacuum tubes! The station was fortunate to have an American broadcast engineer work with them on a one-year placement through a Catholic-based development organisation. But even so, it was very difficult for the station to cover repair costs or budget for equipment upgrades. In addition, a significant amount of the station's overhead went towards paying the electricity costs of operating this outdated equipment. Newer equipment would save both energy and repair costs, but the station could not afford the initial outlay to purchase such equipment. The station was required to focus much of its time and financial resources on maintaining transmission equipment rather than investing in strategies that would increase audience participation in programming such as remote studios or field productions. As a result, programming content reflected much more the interests and perspectives of the audience in Marcala than that of the audience in outlying rural areas.

Non-profit groups, especially those, like INEHSCO, for which radio is only part of their many activities, lack the financial resources to purchase their own equipment and must buy studio and air time from commercial stations. Besides the high costs involved, the group is in an extremely vulnerable position. Station owners can cancel their program at any moment. If the program is prerecorded in studio, the group often must deal with indifference, condescension or intimidation from the production staff. Time and budgetary considerations means that most groups produce their programs live on-air. Again, the group is dependent on the deejay or operator to cue and play musical selections, taped interviews

or other materials in the proper sequence and time. To illustrate, according to Father Milla INEHSCO had to find another station to broadcast its program because the deejays at the first station would purposely play commercials for soft drinks and cigarettes immediately following their program. For a group dedicated to promoting natural herbal medicines and nutrition this was the ultimate insult.

Both organisations had ambitious technical plans for expansion of their radio activities. Yet rather than see broadcasting technology in terms of how it might be applied to meet social or developmental goals, such as increased participation of the community in programming, acquiring new equipment and broadcasting technologies was considered as an end in and of itself. It appeared as if the prestige of the organisations within the international development or national media community seemed to be the priority. For example, Fausto Milla mistakenly and naively believed that this project would provide all the equipment and technical assistance necessary for installing an entire radio station in the remote border community of Tomalá, and spoke of plans to have INEHSCO's radio program rebroadcast nationally. At Radio San Miguel, Lucio Nuñez intended to install repeater transmitters to broadcast RSM's signal as far away as the departmental capital of Comayagua, well beyond its immediate geographical 'community'. These plans failed to address the fundamental question of how and why such expansions would benefit RSM or INEHSCO's main organisational objectives of promoting grassroots development. In most cases these plans represented an enormous expenditure of money and effort for NGOs already swamped by their existing commitments, with no clear benefits in terms of improving the services being provided to the groups targeted for their development projects. Too often the emphasis was on the capabilities of the medium rather than the content of the message. The technical difficulties encountered on a day-to-day basis while producing existing radio programs indicates just how unrealistic these plans were.

The overall lack of knowledge about technical aspects of radio broadcasting demonstrated how easily specific knowledge can be monopolised by a technical elite at the expense of more democratic participation by marginalised communities. RSM was

dependent on broadcast and production engineers to configure and maintain their transmission and studio equipment. INEHSCO relied exclusively on the operators at commercial stations to set up their broadcasts. But that same relationship of dependence was reenacted within both organisations. At RSM, the paid deejays' knowledge regarding studio equipment and operations acted as a way of setting them apart from other users of the station. Similarly, because INEHSCO's radio program was hosted and produced by its paid staff, it left the impression that programming was the domain of experts and professionals, certainly not for grassroots members of the organisation.

The monopoly of knowledge seemed to become more entrenched when basic recording and production equipment was donated to each organisation as part of this project. The equipment was specifically selected to enhance the opportunities for audience members to participate in programming (i.e. ease of use, reliability, etc.). Instead, access to the equipment was determined by a subtle organisational hierarchy which excluded all but the most senior members of the organisations. This meant, for example, that tape recorders were kept locked up and not used for field recordings in remote communities or for community members wishing to practice interviewing skills, etc. In the case of Radio San Miguel, Father Lucio had apparently reserved one portable tape recorder for his exclusive use to tape university classes he was taking in Tegucigalpa. Similarly, Father Fausto rarely allowed the tape recorders to leave INEHSCO's offices.

In response to the need for training and orientation in basic production skills a series of training workshops were developed. These workshops were conceived as a way to provide an opportunity for 'grassroots' members of the audience to participate in the production process and thus to encourage them to take a more active role in the design, implementation and evaluation of the development projects associated with the radio programs. As well, the workshop incorporated the specific needs identified by each of the participating organisations as well as any other areas of concern observed during fieldwork. In reality, though, attendance was determined largely by the administration of the participating organisations. The participants chosen tended to be more representative of the urban, higher

educated populations of Santa Rosa and Marcala, subverting somewhat the original intent of the workshops.

For many participants, the workshops were their first comprehensive and hands-on introduction to radio, despite the fact that some of them had been producing radio programs for years. Dependency on technicians or deejays (to set sound levels and cue music, etc.) and an unfamiliarity with the history of educational radio and the technical processes involved in broadcasting meant that for many participants radio had an intimidating, almost mystical quality. The workshop attempted to 'demystify' radio by demonstrating that anyone could participate in creating radio by giving examples of how other Latin American popular organisations have used radio and overcome challenges similar to those faced by Honduran NGOs. Participants were encouraged to find creative adaptations appropriate to their own culture and environment.

An example of such a creative adaptation was the innovative approach to teaching recording techniques that was developed for these workshops. Using technology that was familiar to participants - a "boom box" cassette player - and a professional quality cassette recorder and microphone, participants learned basic skills needed for any radio production such as setting recording levels, using music fade-ins, prerecorded segments and editing. The total cost of this 'mini-studio' was under $500 USD. One interesting note was that at the end of the workshops, the production quality of radio shows produced using this method was much higher than shows produced by participants using more 'sophisticated' recording technology such as studio recording equipment .

Participants rated the workshops very highly and came away with enthusiasm and confidence in their own abilities to produce high quality, effective educational programming. However, when they attempted to implement their new skills, they came across institutional barriers that frustrated their efforts to initiate programming changes. There was little motivation, encouragement or commitment from the administration to pursue new directions in programming. Access to resources, redistribution of workloads to allow more time for

planning and producing, coordination of activities and other key changes that would have facilitated the attempts to improve programming were not forthcoming. Many participants abandoned their efforts, concluding that the organisational structure and culture had to change before programming could.

The project identified several other significant technical problems for RSM and INEHSCO. Although beyond the scope of this project, these problems deserve mention because they impacted on audiences. Outdated transmission equipment and poor quality production resulted in distorted, weak or wandering signals transmitted to listeners. At the audience end, geography and poor quality radio receivers impeded that signal from arriving clearly. For example, many campesinos reported that their radio sets had quite literally "blown-up" due to leaking batteries. The probability that spoken word educational programs would arrive unintelligible to listeners was high. A bulk purchase of higher quality transistor radios or the use of newer, wind-up radio receivers (such as the BAYGEN radio) for distribution to audience members is one possible solution.

Finances

RSM and INEHSCO both grappled with the issue of achieving greater financial self-reliance. Operating a radio station or purchasing airtime on a commercial radio station can be a costly expense for a grassroots organisation. Although RSM and INEHSCO saw radio as an integral and complimentary component of their overall development activities, radio was always in competition with other organisational projects for scarce resources. It seemed that in most cases the ephemeral quality of radio placed it at a disadvantage to more practical, visible activities such as hands-on workshops on natural health remedies.

In the past, international development organisations have been generous in their contributions, at least for diffusion projects. But external funding for participatory media projects is harder and harder to find in these days of cutbacks and 'cost efficiency'. For many development agencies, media projects simply haven't lived up to past expectations. In any case, external funding can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, such funding

allows an organisation to continue its radio work; on the other, the money rarely comes with no strings attached. Most agencies have complex application and reporting procedures and demand that a project demonstrate measurable results and outcomes. For a grassroots organisation with few resources to begin with, the end result may be that more energy is spent in trying to comply with the bureaucratic norms and conditions of the funding agency than working in the field. But how realistic is it for a grassroots organisation to ask the most marginalised sectors of the population to financially sustain and support the organisation given their own pressing economic needs? And how can a grassroots organisation avoid dependence on external sources, whether from international development agencies, government grants, or commercial revenues?

The issue of financial self-reliance was highlighted when RSM began to charge audience members for broadcasting announcements to family and friends. In rural Latin America this is a vital service to link people who otherwise would have no means of communicating with each other. The policy caused an uproar because at the time, Radio Libertad, RSM's main competition, was still offering the service for free. Of course, Radio Libertad could subsidise its operations through on-air commercials and other forms of cross-subsidisation. Father Nuñez lamented the fact that the community seemed to be unaware of the costs involved in running the station. "If we accept paid commercials or sell airtime to other groups, we become the same as the rest of the radio stations, but we need to recover some costs!" he remarked.

Father Milla was preoccupied with the financial situation of INEHSCO too. His approach was to explore commercial ventures such as a health food store, a naturopath clinic and several farms as a way to subsidise the costs of INEHSCO's operations. But these activities were sometimes viewed with suspicion by some campesinos, wary of past examples of leaders of grassroots organisations selling out the membership.[16] To compound

---

[16] One of the most effective ways for State and elite interests to impede the emergence of a coherent popular movement in Honduras has been to co-opt the leadership of campesino organization (usually in the form of a new car and a position within some government agency) and sow dissent, mistrust and rivalry amongst campesino groups. In some ways the very marginalization of the western region of Honduras meant that popular organizations that operated in the region had been protected from such tactics. Nevertheless, there was a deep sense of suspicion amongst campesinos that community leaders or development projects might have ulterior motives.

these problems, there were increasing demands from deejays, health promoters and other junior staff of INEHSCO and RSM for more financial compensation for the valuable work they performed. Again, a dilemma for a grassroots organisation: is the choice between keeping staffing costs to a minimum at the risk of being accused of exploitation or paying adequate wages at the expense of other activities.

Organisational constraints

The development establishment is looking increasingly to NGOs and private business to execute projects with the assumption that NGOs can deliver development assistance more effectively and efficiently than a large bureaucracy (Brohman 1996). Small non-profit organisations are considered to have an advantage over larger organisations in that they are not hampered by excessive bureaucratic procedures and are thus often better able to employ participatory techniques in their development projects. But those same NGOs can also be at a disadvantage when it comes to radio. While an NGO might instinctively choose radio to complement their development or educational activities, there is little in the way of resources to guide them. As a result, many of the mistakes of past radio education projects are repeated as the organisation experiments with radio. Often NGOs overextend themselves beyond their organisational capacity when attempting to carry out multi-faceted development activities.

This was the case with RSM and INEHSCO. Both RSM and INEHSCO evolved in response to the specific sociopolitical context they faced during the early 1980s, a time characterised by a repressive military and regional conflict. By default, the task of providing health and related services to the rural population was taken on by these organisations. They had to struggle with building a grassroots organisation in the face of hostility from the military and local elites and government indifference. In such a situation, any NGO committed to social justice or even to bettering the lives of marginalised groups was under suspicion. A defensive mentality was necessary to survive as mistakes in judgment could have tragic consequences, as seen in Fausto Milla's forced exile and the

bombing of RSM. Despite changes in the political climate of the country and region in the 1990s an attitude of mistrust was still prevalent among the top-ranking staff of RSM and INEHSCO.

It is perhaps not surprising then that both organisations developed an organisational hierarchy that belied their reputation as grassroots democratic NGOs. In the precarious political context of Honduras, RSM and INEHSCO found themselves in an environment where they had to constantly defend the gains they had already made. Along the way there were no signposts or directions, and both organisations had to learn as they went. Decision-making processes became highly centralised, with power tightly controlled by small groups at the top of the organisational hierarchy and innuendo and suspicion within the ranks of staff. Fundamental issues such as the role and objectives of each organisation were often identified but never addressed in substantial discussions. The autocratic control exercised by the directors meant organisational goals and priorities were established according to their criteria and frequently did not correspond to the practical limitations of staff and resources. Over the years a number of the rank-and-file members and staff have endeavoured to democratise decision-making processes and create a more hospitable environment for change, but these efforts could not seem to overcome the organisations' inertia. It remains to be seen whether the suggestions, ideas and examples from within the organisations will act as a catalyst for change in the future.

Neither organisation could be said to have a clear grasp of the characteristics and limitations of the medium or the techniques to take full advantage of its potential. As is to be expected, INEHSCO and the parish health project on RSM concentrated efforts on those activities which they knew best, namely health. In both organisations resources were scarce, and personnel had many and varied responsibilities. In INEHSCO for example, three staff members were responsible for all planning activities, field visits to community groups, training workshops and administrative duties. On top of that, each staff member was responsible for hosting and producing INEHSCO's daily radio program at least twice a week. The situation at Radio San Miguel was no different. Members of the parish's health

and agriculture projects had little time to plan and produce radio programs after completing all their other duties. In contrast, the company that was contracted to produce the *Nuevo Amanecer* literacy program for the Ministry of Education employs a minimum of five staff simply for scripting. This lack of resources and familiarity with the medium resulted in radio programming that did not complement their main development activity as effectively as it could have or should have, considering the investment of time and resources. Instead, it was as if radio was an afterthought. As a result, the programming produced was largely improvised and ad hoc, with little clear link to the very specific objectives of the health projects.

Both organisations lacked the structures and processes to implement and sustain effective programming strategies and, apparently, the will to foster full participation of the audience in the design and implementation of development programs. As noted above, radio activities often were relegated to a position of minor importance in the overall scope of organisational activities. There were very few discussions to identify the potential audience, set long-term objectives for the radio programs and integrate them into other activities. Short-term planning to coordinate continuity of themes and content was also absent. Without effective decision-making or planning mechanisms, there was no means to follow-up the information presented to audiences or monitor its impact. By the same measure, there were no mechanisms to incorporate the participation of the audience in the design, planning, production and evaluation of the radio program.

One other organizational constraint deserve mention. The close association with the Catholic Church afforded some degree of legitimacy and protection to both RSM and INEHSCO. That association, however, often intruded on the program content of their radio programs. The Catholic Church hierarchy at time 'suggested' that radio program content, whether at RSM or INEHSCO, should focus more on pastoral themes or strictly educational themes like health and nutrition, and steer clear of any radical political messages. This ran counter to the sentiments of most of the staff and listeners of RSM and INEHSCO's programs, who clearly saw linkages between organizing around health issues and organizing

around political issues such as asking why their communities were marginalized in the first place. The Church also intervened in program content when issues of population or birth control were raised. For the women coordinators of RSM and INEHSCO this was a fundamental health issue given the high infant mortality rate in the country and a sharp rise in sexually-transmitted diseases like AIDS among campesinos (Honduras ranks amongst the highest in Latin America for HIV-AIDS). Nevertheless, it was on of the many compromises that were necessary in order to protect the organizations and continue their work.

Two developments that occurred near the final stages of the fieldwork component accentuated the fragile nature of each organisation. First, at RSM Father Lucio unexpectedly and unilaterally terminated the parish health project. The project leaders had frequently disagreed with Father Lucio over the autonomy of the project and its direction, and it seemed that the situation had reached crisis levels. Father Lucio planned to reinstate the project under new leadership, selecting two women who had completed basic health training under the former health project. The highly successful program *La familia Lenca* was temporarily cancelled. Considering that the new project leaders had no training in radio, it was uncertain when the program would resume broadcasting or in what format.

The cancellation came at a critical moment of the fieldwork as intensive focus group sessions had been planned to take place in order to comprehensively evaluate the quality and effectiveness of changes made in the program. In the meantime, the former project leaders, Catalina Calix and Sonia Medina, and their English counterparts were invited to initiate a health project in the neighbouring parish of San José. The new project, PISIL, had tentative plans to produce a radio program to be broadcast on Radio Libertad. Overnight, RSM had lost one of its most effective and popular educational programs, while the parish lost a talented team of health promoters. But at the same time, the organisational skills and knowledge gained from the Marcala project were being transferred and shared in another community.

The second development took place within INEHSCO. In follow-up activities after

training workshops, staff identified workloads and lack of resources as the major obstacles to improving radio programming. The formation of a new NGO dedicated exclusively to producing INEHSCO's radio programs and other educational media materials was suggested as a possible solution to this problem. The NGO was to be made up of INEHSCO staff and workshop participants and would contract out its services to other NGOs in the area. Initially Father Milla enthusiastically backed the proposal, but when it became evident that the members of the group wanted legal and financial autonomy from INEHSCO, he withdrew his support. Undeterred, the group surveyed popular organisations and national and international development agencies in the region to determine the level of support for such a service. The response was extremely positive and soon after INHCOES, the Instituto Hondureño de Comunicación y Educación Social (Honduran Institute for Social Communication and Education) was constituted.

Rosa Isabel Ochoa, one of INEHSCO's most competent grassroots organisers and radio programmers, left the organisation in order to assume the leadership of INHCOES. Shortly after, INHCOES established a participatory radio training and production centre and began working with popular organisations and development agencies to produce educational radio programming from a grassroots perspective. Again, in the space of a few days, INEHSCO had lost one of its most valuable members. But on the positive side, a new NGO was created that combines the knowledge gained from INEHSCO's years of grassroots organising with the practices and principles of participatory communications.

Chapter Four
Evaluating the Community Radio Model

The previous chapters describe the internal and external constraints faced by both INEHSCO and Radio San Miguel when using community radio. This chapter evaluates how effectively radio was used as a component of grassroots development processes. The underlying questions follow from Innis' reflections on empires and the bias of communication: Can community radio overcome the space-binding bias of the medium that have accentuated access and control from the centre at the expense of the margin? Can participatory use of radio break down the monopoly of knowledge exercised by development elites? The questions are answered, to the extent possible, by examining how effectively each organisation utilised local language, culture and knowledge in their programming, and what provisions each organisation adopted to incorporate participation into all aspects of their radio activities. Finally, the impact of programming on the intended audience is described.

For advocates of grassroots development, participation has become the benchmark for measuring the effectiveness of grassroots processes. Participation is not limited to merely implementing a project. Popular participation in planning, decision-making, and evaluating is seen as essential if grassroots processes are to effectively create long-term alternatives to the dominant model (Klees et al. 1986, de Schutter 1991, Contreras 1991). Similarly, organisations like AMARC and ALER suggest that community radio should strive to include full participation of the community in the design, implementation, evaluation and management of projects. Furthermore, community radio should promote access to resources and decision-making processes and employ local language, culture and indigenous knowledge in its programming (Roncagliolo 1993, Lopez Vigil 1992). Grassroots communication practises presumably then would give participants a greater sense of ownership and involvement in the process of social change. The use of local language, culture and knowledge to confront the specific reality faced at a community level would imply a higher level of confidence and trust in grassroots development processes than in

development projects based on alien knowledge and cultural values and implemented by external agencies. Finally, through participation in grassroots communication processes, community members could acquire the skills to articulate the concerns of the community and organise collectively to address those concerns.

There are methodological challenges in evaluating whether the participatory, community-based radio model represents an effective approach to development. The grassroots development model is less interested in single development issues like the adoption of a new agricultural technique than in the **process** of community-based development. Accordingly, any assessment of the grassroots model should attempt to understand the dynamics of development as a fluid and constantly evolving process. What is needed is a longer-term perspective that is able to trace the ebb and flow of the community. A one-year study of RSM and INEHSCO barely afforded a glimpse at how both organisations evolved and responded to changing external and internal demands. While this is better than the cursory survey conducted by many development agencies, it is still inadequate.

Use of Local Language, Culture, and Knowledge

July 20, 1992. Every year Honduran school children celebrate the Day of Lempira. They dress up as Hollywood-style "Indians" and parade with marching bands down the main streets of their towns, honouring the memory of Lempira, a tribal chief who fought against the Spanish conquistadores hundreds of years earlier. But this year is different. In Gracias, a town halfway between Marcala and Santa Rosa and the birthplace of Lempira, hundreds of indigenous people and representatives of popular organisations have gathered to commemorate five hundred years of oppression. They have come to take back the memory of Lempira, to expose the hypocrisy of Honduran society, which celebrates a caricature of Lempira but refuses to acknowledge the continued exploitation and oppression of the country's indigenous population. Silently, the crowd slips into the ranks of the parade, gradually taking it over completely. When the local dignitaries are greeted not by brightly dressed school children but by a raucous, angry, celebratory multitude waving banners and playing flutes and drums, they are shocked and furious. "How can they ruin this day for

us?" they ask incredulously. In the crowd, Manuel from RSM, and Chabelita from INEHSCO are recording non-stop the historic event. They are the only ones covering the event. Commercial and state broadcasters are nowhere to be found.

One of the main differences between the grassroots development model and the dominant, modernisation model revolves around the issues of local and traditional language, popular culture and indigenous knowledge (Sirvent 1991, Shiva 1993). The grassroots model seeks to preserve and maintain a diversity of expressions of traditional culture and knowledge, while the dominant model privileges an instrumental, "rational," western science-based definition of knowledge. In the dominant model, traditional knowledge and culture are seen as an obstacle to progress. Traditional knowledge is only useful in terms of its potential benefits to modern society (e.g.. pharmaceutical applications of indigenous medicines) (see Johnson and Ruttan 1992). In terms of communications, the dominant model uses local languages and cultural expressions when it is convenient as a strategy to introduce 'modern' concepts to development's beneficiaries. In the grassroots approach, traditional knowledge and culture is taken as the starting point for development processes that are defined and managed by and for the communities involved. The emphasis on understanding local conditions or marginalisation often lead to a more global awareness of the dynamics of centre-periphery (Ferreira 1986). The grassroots development model rejects the imposition of alien, externally-imposed knowledge systems. Instead, participatory communications are used "to facilitate the recovery of indigenous knowledge and historical memory" (Riaño 1994:35).

The use of local language, culture, and indigenous knowledge and their intimate understanding of the needs and concerns of the rural population were key factors in explaining the longevity and success of RSM and INEHSCO. Both RSM and INEHSCO effectively incorporated vernacular language into their programming. Because the programs were produced in towns close to the areas of activities and hosted by people from the region, the language used tended to reflect the dialects and usage of the region and had an immediate appeal to rural listeners. The exceptions to this were the urban bias of RSM

deejays, the use of two English cooperants as actors in the Marcala health project's *radionovela* , and the cosmopolitan language used by Father Milla when hosting INEHSCO's radio program.

Cultural expressions such as local or indigenous music were used to a lesser degree. On occasion, INEHSCO played campesino music recorded from its yearly music festival, while Radio San Miguel invited local bands in to play on air. Both organisations tended to select music with some didactic message (e.g. protest music from Latin American artists) for their educational programs rather than music that was familiar to and popular with audience members. Quite apart from artistic expressions of local culture, RSM and INEHSCO understood the *cultura popular* , the culture of the disenfranchised marginalised populations of rural Honduras. Both organisations were born out of the context of that marginalisation, and their genealogy and conscious alignment with the popular classes' struggle for empowerment and self-reliance gave them enormous credibility in the country. No outside agency could ever hope to gain such an intimate knowledge of the local culture and language. Still, a clearer statement or policy regarding the use and preservation of local cultural expressions similar to policies at other community radios (see Hein 1988, O'Sullivan 1987) would have sent a stronger message about the importance of local culture to the audience.

With respect to the use of indigenous knowledge, both health projects were very effective at utilising traditional knowledge of medicinal plants and remedies in their programs. A description of the medicinal properties of commonly-found plants was normally incorporated into the content of each program. And the nutritional values of traditional food crops were often promoted as a preventive health measure. Similarly, when dealing with other themes such as sustainable agriculture, the health programs as well as other programs at RSM emphasised traditional methods of farming, such as the use of natural insecticides and companion planting. Another characteristic of the INEHSCO and RSM's programs is that they used local examples to illustrate how indigenous knowledge was being applied in the community.

The health project in Marcala was particularly adept at meshing traditional knowledge with western-based medical knowledge to provide listeners with useful, relevant and safe information. for example, the fictional Lenca family in their *radionovela* use herbal teas along with oral rehydration salts to combat diarrhoea. In contrast, Father Milla adamantly rejected western medicine. Some critics have claimed that some of the remedies promoted by INEHSCO, such as alcohol-based homeopathic tinctures, were not indigenous to the area and potentially dangerous to campesinos not adequately trained in their preparation. Moreover, Father Milla was criticised for monopolising knowledge instead of promoting self-sufficiency among campesinos by insisting that he alone perform any health diagnoses at the INEHSCO clinic rather than training campesinos to do this in their own communities.

One disappointment with both health projects is that their radio programs did not seek out in a more deliberate and systematic manner traditional knowledge from community elders and become a forum for preserving and sharing that knowledge with their listeners. And both organisations could have dedicated more efforts to drawing links between the imposition of external knowledge systems and culture and the marginalisation faced by their communities each day. Despite these criticisms, there can be no doubt that both organisations have had a significant positive impact on the rural population by promoting low-cost, readily available traditional remedies for common health problems. The fact that the Honduran Ministry of Health itself began promoting the medicinal qualities of certain native plants is a testament to the success of these and other NGOs. It also demonstrates how quickly the centre can adopt the innovations that emerge on the margins in order to maintain its advantage and dominance over the margins.

Access and Participation

February 13, 1993. Mateo is young, only about twelve. Every Saturday he gets up at three a.m. to begin the four-hour walk from Santa Elena to Marcala, carrying on his back the vegetables his family will sell that day at the market. After he is finished at the market, he always stops by the radio station. He stands shyly at the door for hours, peeking into the

studio, his bright eyes following every move of Luis, the deejay. When Luis flicks a switch, Mateo mimics him. When he announces a song, Mateo mouths the words. After a while, his sister comes to get him, and he starts on his way back to Santa Elena, returning to the station the next Saturday. At RSM, no one pays attention to Mateo. He's just a kid, and anyway, what would he know about radio?

March 25, 1993. In El Espíritu, Doña Dorila has gathered her family and friends in her house. The mood is festive. Dorila can barely contain herself. Today she is going to be on the radio! A month earlier, Chabelita had visited the village and interviewed Dorila and her neighbours about their involvement with the local INEHSCO committee. Every week since the interview anxious messages were sent to INEHSCO by whatever means possible asking the all-important question; "When will the interviews be aired?" Finally, on the previous week's program, Chabelita had announced the date. Smiles break out when the people of El Espiritu hear their own voices talking about their real life problems. Heads nod in agreement when natural remedies for common health problems are discussed and shared. There is a deep sense of satisfaction in the room: today **they** are the experts.

Participation in radio can range along a continuum, from simply listening to a program, to providing feedback on program content to more complex forms of participation such as involvement in program design and production or management (Balke 1985). Obviously, not every listener will have the interest or resources to regularly participate in production or management. Campesinos living in outlying communities are a case in point. Domestic duties and farming take up much of the campesinos' time, and a long journey on foot to a production studio is a formidable task. For community radio, however, the commitment to participatory communications means that special efforts must be made to provide listeners appropriate options for participation. At a very basic level, community radio should consult closely with audience members about the design and content of radio programming. Otherwise, the committment to two-way horizontal communication is lost.

There are many examples in Latin America of community radio which have met this

challenge and developed unique and innovative ways to ensure audience participation. Radio Occidente in Venezuela has used "campesino correspondents" as a way to involve the community in local news gathering and dissemination (O'Sullivan 1987). Radio Bahia in Ecuador has organised (and subsequently broadcast) children's and indigenous music festivals as a way to foster local culture (Hein 1988). Other radio group use participatory evaluation techniques both as a way to gather feedback on past programs while planning new programs. But there was little evidence that RSM or INEHSCO had adopted similar strategies to actively encourage participation from the community.

The reputation of each organisation as a grassroots, democratic NGO belied an organisational hierarchy where control and authority clearly rested in the hands of the directors (Fathers Milla and Nuñez respectively). The autocratic control exercised by the directors meant organisational goals and priorities were established according to their criteria and frequently did not correspond to the practical limitations of staff and resources. More importantly, there was no consultation mechanism with community members to discuss and set long-term objectives for the radio programs or integrate them into other activities. Short-term planning to coordinate continuity of themes and content was also absent. Programming content was assumed to be inherently beneficial for the community, and in the absence of feedback mechanisms, there was no way to follow up the information presented to audiences or monitor its impact. In this regard, neither RSM or INEHSCO effectively incorporated the participation of the audience in the design, planning and evaluation of the radio program.

There were greater opportunities for audience contributions to the actual content and production of radio programming, but again, RSM and INEHSCO used these opportunities in a very limited fashion. Listeners occasionally received on-air greetings from the program hosts and the successes of participants in projects were recognised from time to time on the programs, but interviews were infrequently used either for inclusion in the radio program or for the purpose of feedback and evaluation of project activities. Staff simply did not have the time or resources to actively solicit audience contributions to their programs. Again, this

relates to the organisational priorities of each organisation. A firm commitment from the administration to increased audience participation along with clear policies to increase participation in the radio programs would have done much to improve this situation.

The donation of field recording equipment to RSM and INEHSCO and training workshops were conceived as a way of increasing participation. However, as noted above, equipment was monopolised by a select few staff. Similarly, participants in the workshops were chosen by the administrators instead of by the community itself. Once trained, many workshop participants were eager to try out their new skills in radio. But they did not encounter a hospitable environment at RSM or INEHSCO. There was little encouragement given to potential volunteers, nor were existing programmers given any incentive to improve their programs. Faced with this indifference, many programmers simply resigned themselves to the status quo while other volunteers left in disappointment and frustration. This was a pattern that was repeated over and over again, reinforcing the perception that radio was the domain of a select knowledgeable elite, not the community.

There were exceptions to the tendency to erect barriers against participation. One of INEHSCO's coordinators, Rosa Isabel Ochoa, and Sonia Medina and Catalina Calix, the coordinators of Marcala's health project, actively encouraged community members to participate in all aspects of their programs. They were concerned that program content was integrated into their main development activities and that the concerns and feedback of community members were considered. The host of the parish agricultural program also deserves mention for attempting to incorporate participatory techniques into the program. But ironically the very staff members that were most concerned about creating spaces for the participation of community members eventually left RSM and INEHSCO, leaving the organisations even less prepared to deal with issues of access and participation.

Impact of Programming

September 6, 1992. Thousands and thousands of campesinos have all converged in the main plaza and principal streets of Marcala to celebrate the anniversary of Radio San

Miguel. But unlike a commercial station there are no gimmicks, no prize giveaways, just sincere, honest people who have walked for hours just to express their thanks for RSM's existence. Several villages have festooned wagons with flowers and colourful paper, and an impromptu parade begins. One group has even painstakingly constructed a replica of RSM's studio out of discarded cardboard! Later that evening, guitars and violins fill the night with serenades for the station. It is an incredible display of solidarity and support.

April 21, 1993. During the 1980s San Jose was home of the Mesa Grande refugee camp, where thousands of Salvadorans and Guatemalans sought refuge from the violence of their own countries. An equal number of Honduran soldiers surrounded the camps, making sure that subversive elements didn't slip out and infect Honduras with their revolutionary ideas. Throughout this period, INEHSCO was organising in the area, sharing the knowledge of how to cope with health problems in the absence of any government health agencies. Now the camps are gone and the people of San Jose are rebuilding their lives after ten years of disruption. Today INEHSCO has organised a music festival and song competition in San Jose to celebrate the efforts of INEHSCO health committees in the area. Hundreds of campesinos compete with original songs that tell of the traditional remedies available to all and the sense of empowerment when people collectively organise to change their reality. The prize? The song will be aired on INEHSCO's radio program.

The lack of audience participation in production, management and evaluation in two organisations that billed themselves as democratic and participatory was regrettable. However, it is important not to measure RSM and INEHSCO solely on the basis of how well they conform to the grassroots model's ideal of participation. Within AMARC and other organisations dedicated to community radio there is a recognition that different historical and sociopolitical contexts have dictated different approaches to participatory communications. Community radio may have radically different approaches in terms of dealing with issues of access and participation, organisational structures, use of indigenous knowledge and culture, etc. (Girard 1992). Perhaps the most significant - and relevant - measure of the effectiveness of community radio is in terms of the impact of its programming

on its audience. Considered in this way, both RSM and INEHSCO were unequivocally successful.

Over a ten-year period, RSM and INEHSCO each built up a loyal audience for their radio programming. This was confirmed by field research which indicated that both health programs had large listening audiences - perhaps the largest in their particular time slot. Campesinos interviewed consistently identified the organisations and their radio programs as 'belonging' to the poor and marginalised people of the region and claimed that they were regular listeners. The fact that RSM and INEHSCO had taken radical stances in favour of the most marginalised sectors of the population, and had suffered severe consequences as a result of that commitment, created a deep sense of loyalty among campesino audiences. That listenership was inconsistent though. Domestic and agricultural duties were the most common reasons reported for missing programs, though the problems of poor quality batteries and receivers and weak transmission signals were also contributing factors. Increased competition from music or news programs on other stations also eroded that audience share. To illustrate, when conducting interviews the majority of respondents knew of either RSM or INEHSCO. When asked to describe a recent program, however, some listeners instead described the rival naturopath's radio show, or, in the case of RSM, a program on Radio Libertad. On one occasion, a campesino women emphatically stated that she only listened to RSM, only to discover somewhat bemusedly that the radio playing in the background was in fact tuned into Radio Libertad![17]

The educational content of both radio programs was considered a credible and reliable source of information on health issues. In no cases did any respondents indicate otherwise. "We learn about all the things we already know, things that our grandparents taught us" said one campesino. But because programs lacked clearly defined objectives and were in essence improvised with little continuity in thematic content, it was difficult to gauge their effectiveness in either motivating audience members to participate in development activities or providing specific information for use by listeners. Though most respondents considered

---

[17] Most likely this was due to the transmission signals of radio stations in the area 'wandering' and not an attempt to exaggerate support for the station or feed the 'right' answer to the researcher.

the programs interesting and relevant and could provide an example of a specific remedy that they had heard of through the radio and subsequently used, there were no cases of listeners citing the radio program as the catalyst for their involvement (if any) in either of the NGOs' projects. Personal contact with the community health promoters was most often the prime motivation for involvement in such activities.

In focus groups, many respondents remarked that the programs' emphasis on indigenous knowledge and community self-reliance instead of dependence on external agencies was a powerful positive message that resonated in other areas of their lives such as organising to confront injustices. They felt that the radio programs implicitly provided inspiration and moral support when they had organised to address community issues and all agreed that both organisations actively supported the goals and aspirations of the marginalised sectors of the population. In contrast, when focus groups compared the government literacy program *Nuevo Amanecer* against sample programs from RSM and INEHSCO in focus group sessions, *Nuevo Amanecer*'s content rated low in perceived credibility and reliability. For most respondents, the program was not a reflection of the reality of campesinos and was not relevant to the immediate needs of their communities. A few respondents were offended by the presumption of urban actors taking their 'voice'. Needless to say, these types of responses were not generated by the RSM or INEHSCO programs.[18] This further supports the argument that radio programs that incorporate traditional knowledge and appropriate cultural styles and respond to specific local needs and concerns are more effective in sustaining long-term development efforts.

Field interviews and focus groups also indicated that most audience members would welcome increased opportunities to participate in a radio program, though many respondents felt uncertain of their competence and ability to contribute to programming. It was difficult for respondents to specify in what manner they would like to participate or to offer specific suggestions on how to improve programming. This can be attributed to the

---

[18] The English health workers generated a positive response from listeners in the Marcala area because most listeners were aware that they were working with the health project and were committed to working collaboratively with community members to resolve local health concerns.

lack of examples or models of participatory media for listeners to refer to. But when simple techniques like interviews with campesinos or acknowledgment of the work of individual health promoters or community groups were incorporated into programming, there were dramatic results. In every case, the persons interviewed or mentioned on air later reported a deep sense of satisfaction that their work had been recognised and renewed enthusiasm for implementing the ideas proposed by the NGOs. Additionally, the anticipation of being recognised in the programs was an incentive to listen more frequently to the programs - and to convince family and friends to listen as well. Equally, in focus groups, hearing the voices and words of friends and neighbours competently articulating their knowledge on the radio was described as empowering.

Clearly, both RSM and INEHSCO have had a significant impact on their intended audiences. It is also quite evident though that the impact and the effectiveness of their radio programs could have been greatly improved had there been a more conscious effort to coordinate the content of the radio program with other development activities such as the work of community health promoters. Increased audience participation in program content would likely have increased the impact of programming also. Finally, active involvement of the audience in planning and evaluation would give a greater sense of ownership of the development process.

Chapter Five
Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

From the outset, this thesis questioned the potential of the grassroots participatory development model to overcome the monopoly of knowledge of the dominant development model. Specifically, this study asked if community radio is an effective component of grassroots development. The answer to that question, at least in the case of RSM and INEHSCO, was ambiguous. In some areas, such as the use of local language and indigenous knowledge, RSM and INEHSCO were successful in breaking down monopolies of knowledge of the dominant development model. In other areas, like access and participation in planning and decision-making, both organisations seemed to replicate or internalise the same inequalities and injustices of the dominant model. What the study did do was generate important information on *how* specifically radio is being used by two NGOs. While those uses are tempered by the specific contexts faced by RSM and INEHSCO, there are implications for the community radio movement as a whole. Before discussing those implications and making some suggestions for improvement, the strengths and weaknesses of RSM and INEHSCO's programming in the framework of the grassroots development model are summarised.

First and foremost, it is important to recognise the extremely adverse conditions and marginalisation faced by RSM and INEHSCO. RSM and INEHSCO took on much of the responsibilities for the welfare of the rural population, stepping in to provide services that state agencies were unwilling or unable to provide. Both organisations have faced hostility and harassment from the most powerful forces in Honduran society yet have persevered for nearly a decade to provide relevant development-oriented radio programming sensitive to the needs of their audiences. Along the way, they have won the respect of the marginalised rural population and built up a huge and loyal base of support. This is quite an achievement considering the fragmented political system and the lack of a coherent popular movement in Honduras.

The impact of RSM's and INEHSCO's radio programming on the rural audience was impressive. Though difficult to confirm, both programs appeared to have a significant share of their intended audiences, perhaps as high as seventy-five percent in some areas. Campesinos frequently stated in interviews that RSM and INEHSCO 'belonged' to the people. The use of the vernacular and local cultural expressions contributed to the perception among audience members that RSM and INEHSCO were credible and reliable sources of information around grassroots development issues. Indigenous knowledge, particularly around the themes of health and nutrition, was used very effectively in programming content as a way to promote community self-reliance and self-sufficiency. The radio programs became a powerful tool to preserve, promote and share traditional knowledge. Because this knowledge belonged to the community, it also became a tool for empowerment, for showing community members what could be accomplished using local resources.

RSM and INEHSCO's programming had many weaknesses. The organisations faced economic and technical constraints which limited the effectiveness of programming. Both organisations lacked access to reliable equipment that would allow them to carry out a range of activities that would have improved the production quality of their programs and increase the level of participation in programming. Neither did they have the financial resources to invest in long-term training and equipment purchases to expand their radio activities. Indeed, both organisations were in a precarious financial situation that meant that much administrative energy was spent trying to obtain and maintain funding for a number of development projects. Radio programming was often the lowest on a long list of priorities.

But the main barriers to improving the effectiveness of the radio programming were not technical so much as organisational. The goals and objectives of the radio programs were never clearly established let alone linked to the objectives of the audience or the organisation. Neither NGO allocated sufficient time or human resources to effectively plan

and coordinate their programs and as a result programs were largely improvised. Without any long-term planning it was impossible to provide listeners with any continuity in subject matter or to make clear links to other development activities. There were no provisions or mechanisms for obtaining audience feedback or for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of programming.

The interplay between power and participation had a significant impact on the organisations. The exercise of power to control resources came at the expense of democratic participation in RSM and INEHSCO. The top-down, autocratic style of leadership at RSM and INEHSCO ran contrary to the spirit of democratic participation and cooperation that imbued these organisations at a grassroots level. This affected the effectiveness of programming at all levels. Community participation in radio programming was limited to occasional contributions in the form of interviews, etc. There were even less opportunities for community members to participate in planning the show content. Nor were they actively encouraged to take part in the planning and production of radio programs. Even more problematic was the fact that audience and community members were not consulted for feedback on the effectiveness of radio programs. Efforts to increase grassroots participation in planning and producing RSM and INEHSCO's radio programming, such as the training workshops, were stifled. Similarly, by isolating funding efforts from the community, the administration effectively denied the community access to knowledge about the real costs of sustaining the radio projects. In effect, a new monopoly of knowledge was created, where a core of staff, by virtue of their intimate knowledge of the organisation, dictated the goals and direction of the NGO.

Despite these weaknesses, there can be no doubt that the radio programs of RSM and INEHSCO had a significant impact on their rural audiences. There were many challenges to obtaining reliable data, but the information obtained consistently showed a high degree of listener confidence in the information provided through the radio programs. In the absence of any formal mechanisms for audience participation, the positive impact on audiences can be attributed to the use of indigenous knowledge and local cultural expressions and the

perception among audience members that RSM and INEHSCO were credible, locally-based organisations that are concerned about local issues. It should be noted, however, that wherever participatory practices were incorporated into the programming, listeners responded enthusiastically, suggesting that such practices would increase the positive impact on audiences.

At issue, however, is whether or not each NGO was able to overcome its organisational weaknesses to sustain and improve the effectiveness of its radio programming. RSM and INEHSCO have succeeded so far in maintaining radio programming for nearly a decade. But it seems clear from this project that both NGOs will be unlikely to build upon past efforts given their existing institutional structures. The frequent but fruitless attempts of staff and community members to foster more democratic and participatory processes within RSM and INEHSCO were met with organisational inertia and indifference, which in turn has created a climate of frustration and mistrust among some personnel and community members. The departure of key personnel in both organisations, specifically, those staff members most capable and committed to improving the quality and effectiveness of radio programming, is a case in point. The inability of either NGOs to effectively incorporate participatory techniques and processes into their programming or organisational structure is an indication that they have not responded to the changing demands and needs of the community. Given these circumstances, it is unclear whether RSM or INEHSCO will be able to effect the necessary changes to become a truly participatory grassroots organisation. Much of this will depend on the commitment of community members, staff and, most importantly, the administrators to create this change.

Another concern is that the internal problems of the organisations could make them more susceptible to external pressures, whether economic, political or social. In the past, political pressure from the military and elites was the greatest threat to the survival of RSM and INEHSCO. Economic and social pressures in the form of decreased funding and increased competition are the major challenges today. Already RSM and INEHSCO are confronting competition from commercial interests such as the rival naturopath in La Entrada or Radio

Libertad in Marcala. At the same time, development projects by agencies aligned with the dominant development model are capitalising on the effectiveness of RSM and INEHSCO's methods to woo the social base of the two organisations. In these times of economic neo-liberalism, RSM and INEHSCO can ill-afford to spend their valuable resources on ineffective or uninteresting radio programming. Lopez Vigil (1992), warns that if community radio is to survive, it **must** be able to compete against commercial and state interests and win, not because of some vague political commitment to the marginalised classes but because of better radio programming, radio that is entertaining **and** informative all the while encouraging participatory grassroots initiatives. It is a message that RSM and INEHSCO would do well to consider.

Still, it is worthwhile to situate the experiences of RSM and INEHSCO in the context of educational radio in Honduras. The fact that RSM and INEHSCO responded to local concerns and issues, used the language and culture of the area and based their development activities on familiar traditional knowledge placed them at the forefront - in Honduras - of grassroots development practices. Despite the dissatisfaction and frustration of many community members with the organisational structures and limited avenues for participation, both Radio San Miguel and INEHSCO provided access to marginalised communities to a degree rarely seen in mainstream development projects in the country. Grassroots development is an ongoing process, one without any blueprints or easy-to-follow recipes for success. It is unrealistic to expect RSM and INEHSCO as institutions to embody all of the ideal characteristics of the grassroots model. They must be allowed to make and learn from their mistakes.

It would also be a mistake to assume that the effectiveness of RSM and INEHSCO can only be measured within the parameters of each organisation. RSM and INEHSCO are not the sole repositories for indigenous knowledge and culture, nor do they hold proprietary rights over grassroots organising. Both organisations emerged from a specific context of marginalisation and grassroots organising, building on the initiatives of others before them, like the *Escuelas Radiofónicas Suyapa* and campesino organisations. Over the past decade

RSM and INEHSCO's knowledge about grassroots organising and indigenous culture has been shared and disseminated amongst thousands of campesinos. Their work has reshaped the political landscape in Honduras and provided a powerful example of how grassroots organisations can create social change. They have helped thousands of campesinos confront issues of marginalization and have demonstrably improved health conditions by encouraging local self-reliance and self-sufficiency for health care.

Seen in this light, the fact that several key organisers from RSM and INEHSCO left to form new organisations should not be considered a setback but an opportunity for meeting the challenges of grassroots development. The formation of INHCOES, an NGO dedicated to operating a participatory media training and production centre in Santa Rosa, and the PISIL health project in San José, are an encouraging sign. Both organisations bring an intimate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their parent organisations that may allow them to implement more effectively the grassroots development model.

Grassroots movements face many obstacles in their attempts to move beyond the inadequacies of the dominant development model. The grassroots approach is not without its contradictions and inconsistencies. Issues of power, control, access and participation need to be addressed or a grassroots organisation risks replicating the structures and culture of the dominant development model. Nevertheless, this project demonstrated that community-based, participatory radio has enormous potential to break down monopolies of knowledge and power and address the fundamental imbalances between elites and marginalised sectors of the population. This project has made a positive contribution to our understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the grassroots approach to development communication. More importantly, RSM and INEHSCO and the communities that they serve received training and technical assistance that will allow them to build upon their considerable achievements.

Perhaps more than anything, this ambiguity reveals the dialectic between centre and periphery that Innis recognised long ago. The periphery provides opportunities for the

adaptation of media. These adaptations may be used in ways that challenge the dominance of the centre. But at the same time, the centre seeks to exert its influence to maintain power and control by appropriating such adaptations. By critically examining the specific contexts and practices of community radio like RSM and INEHSCO, we gain a better understanding of how to recognise and avoid the traps and pitfalls that lead to the centre appropriating grassroots efforts on the margins - or worse, grassroots efforts replicating the values of the centre.

The outcome of this project suggests that there are several fundamental elements to building successful community-based radio programs: use of local language and culture; information content based on traditional knowledge; participation of audience in programming; and well-organised, consistent and creative programming. Audience members reacted favourably to programming that incorporated these elements. In contrast, high-quality, slickly-produced educational programs that did not employ these elements fared poorly in terms of levels of confidence and trust among audience members. By the same token, commercial entertainment programs that were able to incorporate elements like local language and culture were quite popular with listeners.

The strategy for community radio projects would seem to be to subvert the stylistic techniques that have made commercial entertainment and informational programming successful in Latin America and adapt them to the philosophy and practises of the grassroots development model. Of course, this is not intended as a rationalization of manipulative persuasive tactics used by commercial radio to increase market shares or to promote values that are problematic for community-based development, like individualism or consumerism. There are, however, lessons to be learned in the way techniques like drama, humour, suspense and even sound have been used to create and intensify the magical atmosphere that radio can create. Indeed, this has been the approach taken by some of the most successful examples of community-based radio in Latin America, with outstanding results. In Peru, for example, a feminist radio collective has had enormous success with thought-provoking, sometimes humorous radio "spots" (short announcements) that utilized

familiar themes from commercial radio such as the latest musical hit and subverted them to get across a different message. Commercial stations were eager to air the spots because they proved to be so popular (and controversial) with audiences (Arriola 1992). Unfortunately, institutional constraints at RSM and INEHSCO did not allow participants to experiment more with similar techniques. The results of this project confirm that even limited use of these techniques can significantly improve the effectiveness of radio programming in support of development projects.

The experience of RSM and INEHSCO clearly demonstrate that social groups at the margins can effectively adapt and subvert a the space-binding properties of radio to challenge the dominance of the centre. However, the bias of radio toward centralized control and one-way, vertical communication flows is constantly present, and can contribute, as it did in the case of RSM and INEHSCO, to the creation of new monopolies of knowledge. Because the radio stations and the administrative functions of RSM and INEHSCO were located in towns, it immediately reinforced the centralizing tendency of radio. Participation required community members from rural villages to come to the centre in order to have access to media. That bias, however, is by no means absolute. As workshops, field recordings and other participatory techniques proved, participatory radio practises have the potential to create horizontal communication and break down the monopolies of knowledge. By using portable studios and visiting village, offering training workshops in the field and other techniques, RSM and INEHSCO had opportunities to strengthen two-way horizontal communication flows.

Similarly, efforts by AMARC to distribute via the Internet a daily radio news bulletin (Pulsar Informativo) with information from the perspective of community radio and grassroots development demonstrate that new technologies can also be shaped to support horizontal communication and 'older' media like radio. Questions of access and participation also need to be addressed, however, if new monopolies of knowledge are to be avoided.

Recommendations

The following recommendations explore some of the implications of using community radio to support grassroots development initiatives. They are based on the specific experiences of RSM and INEHSCO and therefore are not intended to be prescriptive. My own experience with community radio in Canada, however, suggests that many of these suggestions may be applicable to other situations.

Appropriate Methodological Tools

Part of the promise of grassroots development is that development initiatives will be more responsive to the real needs of the community because the community itself participates in planning development objectives and outcomes. Contreras (1991) Motta (1986) and others suggest that the very process of engaging in participatory planning can be a powerful tool for consciousness-raising and empowerment. But advocates of community radio must also confront an entrenched media environment that by its very nature shuts down the ability for marginalised audiences to dream and imagine other possible ways of creating radio. Effective participatory planning methods are needed if an organisation is to provide a forum for community members to express their needs and wants in their own voice, rather than the organisation speaking on the community's behalf. As Bordenave (1986) suggests, we need to create a participatory society where participation in decision-making is central and where a 'culture of participation' is passed along to our children, not just limited to the confines of a single project.

There is also a real need to develop methodological tools that can accurately evaluate the effectiveness of participatory radio as a component of development projects. Commercial media have sophisticated research methods to determine audience share, listener habits and other marketing information. These research methods do not transfer well to community radio. Community radio is not interested in the sheer numbers of listeners; rather, the objective is to provide programming that impacts on the lives of community members by providing useful and relevant information and a forum of expression for indigenous knowledge and culture. Proponents of grassroots development and participatory

94

communications often call for the active involvement of the community in evaluating development efforts (Prieto 1986, de Schutter 1986). But there are too few practical suggestions on how to achieve this. The challenge for grassroots, community-based radio is to design participatory research tools that can be utilised by the community itself to provide data that assist in planning and evaluating programming and its impact on the community. At the same time, it is important that this information supports the goals and aspirations of the community by documenting the importance of alternative communications in terms that governments and funding agencies can recognise.

In this regard, attempts during fieldwork to use quantitative survey techniques were not useful due to the limited resources of the project and the physical geography of the area. Instead, the use of interactive participatory research methods proved to be an effective way to combine technical assistance with an evaluation of the organisational processes and programming. Focus group sessions were also helpful, though I was unable to use this technique extensively for reasons explained above (i.e. the abrupt suspension of the Marcala health project and the departure of key staff at INEHSCO). My own participation in the daily activities of the organisations was a key factor in gaining the trust, confidence and legitimation of staff and community members. While these techniques permitted great insights into the functioning of each organisation, a more systematic approach to generating information on audiences needs to be developed. Certainly, if an organisation has mechanisms in place for community participation, much of this information will be readily available.

Technical Training and Equipment

Lack of equipment and training was a major impediment to RSM and INEHSCO producing effective programming. It is essential that organisations undertake an assessment of technical needs and relate them to organisational goals *before* investing in equipment or technology. It is often easy for administrators and technically competent staff to be seduced by the potential of a technology, but much of that potential will be unrealised if there is not a similar investment in planning and human resources. Broadcasting louder or farther does

nothing to improve the effectiveness of the message being transmitted, to say nothing about generating a dialogue and two-way communication. Equipment should be selected on the basis of increasing accessibility and participation in programming. Processes must be in place in order to provide access to equipment and adequate training for all personnel, not just a privileged few. Failure to do so may inadvertently concentrate power in the hands of technically competent personnel and replicate the one-way, vertical communication flow of state and commercial radio, creating the very monopolies of knowledge that the grassroots model hopes to avoid.

Projects attempting to promote or consolidate grassroots participation should try to select equipment that is low-cost, durable and easy to operate. Cassette recording equipment rather than open reel recorders or digital audio recorders is strongly recommended for community radios as the cassette medium is most likely familiar to even the most marginalised of communities. The success in workshops and in the field when using portable cassette recorders/players attests to this. It is true that in purely technical terms there may be a slight decrease in sound quality, however, it must be remembered that beginners will not have the skills or experience to effectively use more complex recording techniques. The potential for increased participation by audience members outweighs these technical concerns. If the equipment is to be donated to the participating organisations, there should some provisions to demonstrate, within reasonable limits, that it is going to be used as intended before transferring ownership. Particular emphasis should be placed on *who* will be using the equipment and for what purpose.

Competitive Programming

The success of educational radio programming will depend in part on how well that programming can compete against commercial entertainment programming. It is precisely because of RSM and INEHSCO's past and present successes in grassroots mobilisation that other organisations hope to imitate them - the difference being that for the most part these competitors do not share the same philosophy or commitment to the popular (marginalised) classes. The other striking difference is that the commercial competitors have a very clear

96

grasp of their own objectives (e.g. audience share and profit) and methods. This is in sharp contrast with RSM and INEHSCO, which seemed to have difficulty defining specific organisational objectives and the means to achieve them.

This point is especially important because in a world increasingly dominated by the language of economics, NGOs using radio in support of grassroots development practices must pay very close attention to their competitors and, more importantly, their audience if they are to survive. The message given to the audience must be effective, not only in terms of meeting the informational, entertainment and social needs of the audience but also in terms of the actual costs of production and broadcasting. Broadcasting, for example, as INEHSCO has done at times, exclusively to a group of fifty health promoters and community health committees, is simply not effective use of a *mass* medium. Programming must be able to attract and sustain the interest of a mass audience or risk losing that audience to the competition.

Funding:

NGOs like INEHSCO and RSM require a stable funding base in order to effectively plan and implement successful programming strategies. Calls for self-reliance are a worthy goal, but it too has difficulties (Bordenave 1986). Funding from government or external agencies tends to be short-term and also carries hidden long-term costs such as financial dependence on such agencies or a the imposition of administrative processes that do not fit well into the NGO model. For good reasons, community radio has rejected the commercial radio model for its reliance on advertising and least-common-denominator programming. Yet it may be unrealistic to expect the most marginalised sectors of the population to financially sustain radio programming. Possible solutions to the problem of funding may include a mix of external funding, limited commercial sponsorship and direct contributions from listeners, but such solutions will necessarily need to adapt to the specific context faced by the organisation. What is recommended is that the organisation maintain transparent budgetary and financial procedures so that the real costs of sustaining community radio are clear to audience members.

Increased Dialogue and Diversity

It became readily apparent during fieldwork that RSM or INEHSCO had been isolated from trends towards democratization of community radio that have been occurring elsewhere in Latin America and around the world. Many of the problems and constraints, including marginalization and oppression from elite classes, have been dealt with by other community radio broadcasters. As well, there is a growing recognition that there are differing forms of marginalization and oppression. Community radio must confront issues such as participation and power, gender, class, and ethnicity if it is to act as a coherent movement for positive social change. There needs to be more opportunities within the grassroots movement and community radio for cultural, political and social diversity.

In this regard, RSM and INEHSCO would benefit from increased dialogue with other community radio broadcasters and grassroots organizations. More exchanges, such as through conferences like AMARC, would allow each organization to learn new technical skills on how to confront the space-binding properties of radio as well as expose them to the richness of diversity in approaches to programming and management. Already, this has begun with new organizations like INHCOES and PISIL that have consciously chosen to build their organizations on the principles of dialogue with their local communities as well as with the larger global 'community' of community radio.

References

Acker, A. (1987). *Honduras: The Making of a Banana Republic* . Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Alfaro, R. (1994). Women as Social Agents of Communication: Social Maternity and Leadership. In Riaño, P. (ed), *Women in Grassroots Communication*, London: Sage Publications.

Alvares, C. (1992). Science, Colonialism and Violence: A Luddite View. In Nandy, A. (ed) *Science, Hegemony and Violence*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Arancibibia, J. (1988). *Honduras: Un estado nacional?* Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.

Arjona, A. (1993). *Inventario de medios de comunicación en América Latina* . Quito: CIESPAL.

Arriola, T. (1992). The Feminist Radio Collective of Peru. In Girard, B. (ed.), *A Passion for Radio*, Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Ashby, L. et al. (1980). Alternative Strategies in the Economic Analysis of Information/Education Projects. In McAnany (ed),*Communication in the Rural Third World*.

Aspinall, R. (1971).*A manual for radio program production*. Paris: UNESCO.

Atwood, R. and McAnany, E (eds.). (1986). *Communication and Latin American Society*. Madison:University of Wisconsin Press

Balke, T. (1986) "The Audience Relation: An Analysis of Educational Radio Broadcasting in Bolivia." Simon Fraser University (unpublished MA thesis).

Balsebre, A. (1994) *El Lenguage Radiofónica* . Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra.

Banuri. T. (1990). Development and the Politics of Knowledge: A Critical Interpretation of the Social Role of Modernization. In Marglin, S. and Marglin F. (eds), *Dominating Knowledge: Development, Culture, and Resistance*, Oxford: Claredon Press.

Banuri, T. (1990). Modernization and its Discontents: A Cultural Perspective on Theories of Development. In *Dominating Knowledge*.

Beltrán, L. (1976). "Alien Premises, Objects, and Methods in Latin American Communications Research" In Rogers, (Ed) *Communication and Development*.

Benjamin, M. (Ed./trans) (1987). *Don't Be Afraid Gringo - A Honduran Woman Speaks From the Heart*. San Francisco: The Institute For Food and Policy Development.

Benjamin, M. (1988) Campesinos: Between the Carrot and the Stick. *NACLA Report on the Americas* 22(1) Jan/Feb 1988.

Berryman, P. (1984). *The Religious Roots of Rebellion: Christians in Central American Revolutions.* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.

Bordenave, J. (1976). "Communication of Agricultural Innovations" in Rogers (ed) *Communication and Development.*

Bordenave, J. (1977) *Communication and Rural Development .* Paris: UNESCO.

Bordenave, J. (1991). La sociedad participativa. In Moncayo, R. (Ed.) *Lecturas de Extensión: Los campesinos y la participación.* Quito: Proyecto Desarrollo Forestal Participativo en los Andes.

Bradford Burns, E. (1986). *Latin America: A Concise Interpretive History (4th ed.)* .New York:Prentice Hall.

Brohman, John (1996). *Popular Development: Rethinking the Theory and Practice of Development .* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Carey, J. (1981). Culture, Geography, and Communications: The Work of Harold Innis in an American Context. In Melody, W. et al. (Eds), *Culture, Communications and Dependency: The Tradition of H.A. Innis.* Norwood: Ablex.

Christian, W. (1977). Harold Innis as Political Theorist. *Canadian Journal of Political Science X:1* (March)

CIDA (1991). Country Report: Honduras. Unpublished report, CIDA Briefing Centre, Hull.

CODEH. (1992) Informe anual de la situacion de derechos humanos en Honduras. Tegucigalpa: Comite para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (CODEH).

Contreras, E. (1980). Brazil and Guatemala: Communications, Rural Modernity, and Structural Constraints. In McAnany, E. (ed), *Communication in the Rural Third World.* New York: Praeger.

Contreras, E. (1991). La planificación como herramienta educativa, comunicativa y organizativa de la comunidad. In Moncayo, R. (ed), *Lecturas de Extension,* Quito: Proyecto Desarrollo Forestal Participativo en los Andes.

Crabtree, R. (1993) La radio comunitaria. *Chasqui 47* (Nov) 53-57.

Czitrom, D. (1982) *Media and the American Mind: From Morse to McLuhan.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Delorme, M. (1992). Preamble to *A Passion n for Radio,* Girard, B. (Ed.), Montreal: Black Rose Books.

de Schutter, A. (1991). Métodos y proceso de la investigación participativa en la capacitación rural. In Moncayo, R., *Lecturas de Extensión: Los campesinos y la Participación .* Quito: Proyecto Desarrollo Forestal Participativo en los Andes.

Dorfman, A. and Mattelart, A. (1975). *Como leer el Pato Donald.* Mexico:Siglo XXI

Esteva, G. (1987). Regenerating People's Spaces. *Alternatives*, 12 (1).

Fals-Borda, O. (1985). Wisdom as Power. *Development :Seeds of Change* (3).

Ferreira, M. (1986). La planificación del desarrollo local como proceso de aprendizaje social. In Werthein, J. and Argumedo, M. (Eds.) *Educación y Participación* . Brasília: IICA.

Fox, E. (1988). *Media and Politics in Latin America: The Struggle for Democracy*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Freire, P. (1971) *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press.

Girard, B. (ed) (1992)..*A Passion for Radio: .* Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Gutierrez, F. and Schement, J. (1979). *Spanish-Language Radio in the Southwestern United States*. Austin:University of Texas at Austin.

Hawkridge, D. and Robinson, J. (1982). *Organising Educational Broadcasts..* London: Croom Helm London / The UNESCO Press.

Hein, K. (1988) *Radio Bahá'í Ecuador: Bahá'í Development Project* . Oxford: George Ronald.

Howard, P. (1993, June) The Confrontation of Knowledge Systems in Development. Paper Presented at Canadian Communication Association, Ottawa.

Innis, H. (1946). *Political Economy and the Modern State*. Toronto: Ryerson Press.

Innis, H. (1949) Notes from Values Discussion Group meeting, April 5, 1949. Unpublished manuscript.

Innis, H. (1950). *Empire and Communication* . Victoria: Press Porcépic (1986 Edition).

Innis, H. (1951) *The Bias of Communication* . Toronto: University of Toronto Press (1991 edition).

Innis, H. (1956). *Essays in Canadian Economic History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Janus, N. (1986). Transnational Advertising: Some Considerations on the Impact on Peripheral Societies. In Atwood and McAnany *Communication and Latin American Society*.

Johnson, M. (ed) (1992). *Lore: Capturing Traditional Environmental Knowledge*. Ottawa: IDRC.

Johnson, M. and Ruttan, R. (1992). Traditional Environmental Knowledge of the Dene: A Pilot Project. In *Lore: Capturing Traditional Environmental Knowledge*.

Katz, E., and Wedell, G. (1977) *Broadcasting in the Third World: Promise and Performance* . Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Latin American Working Group. (1989, Feb.). Paved With Good Intentions: Canadian Aid to Honduras. *LAWG Letter #44* .

Lopez Vigil, J. (1992, August) La nueva cara de nuestras radios en estos tiempos neoliberales. Paper presented at AMARC 5 Conference. Oaxtepec, Mexico.

Lopez Vigil, J. (1996) Giddy-up Democracy! *InteRadio 8(1)* 8-9.

Mata, M. (1993) ¿Radio popular o comunitaria? *Chasqui 47* (Nov), 57-60.

MacBride, S. (Ed) (1980) *Many Voices:, One World: Report for the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems.* Paris: UNESCO.

McAnany, E. (Ed). (1980). *Communication in the Rural Third World.* New York: Praeger.

Moncayo, R. (1991) *Lecturas de Extensión: Los campesinos y la Participación .* Quito: Proyecto Desarrollo Forestal Participativo en los Andes.

Motta, L. (1991). ¿Que es la planificación participativa? In Moncayo, R., *Lecturas de Extensión: Los campesinos y la Participación .* Quito: Proyecto Desarrollo Forestal Participativo en los Andes.

Morris, J. (1984). *Honduras - Caudillo Politics and Military Rulers .* Boulder: Westview Press.

Muñoz, S. (1994). Notes for Reflection: Popular Women and Uses of Mass Media. In Riaño, P. (ed), *Women in Grassroots Communication*, London: Sage Publications.

Oseguera de Ochoa, M. (1987). *Honduras: Sociedad y Crisis Politica.* Tegucigalpa: CEDOH.

O'Sullivan, J. (1987) *Radio Occidente: El pueblo dialoga con el pueblo .* Quito: ALER.

Pal, L. (1977). Scholarship and the Later Innis. *Journal of Canadian Studies ,V.12, No. 5* (Winter) pp 32-44.

Peckinham, N. and Street, A. (1985) *Honduras: Portrait of a Captive Nation.* Toronto: Praeger.

Peigh, Terry et. al. (1979).*Use of Radio in Social Development.* Chicago:Community and Family Study Center, University of Chicago.

Prieto, D. (1991). El autodiagnóstico Comunitario. In Moncayo, R. (Ed).*Lecturas de Extensión: Los campesinos y la Participación .* Quito: Proyecto Desarrollo Forestal Participativo en los Andes

Protz, M.. (1994). Understanding Women's Grassroots Experiences in Producing and Manipulating Media. In Riaño, P. (ed), *Women in Grassroots Communication*, London: Sage Publications.

Puntel, J. (1993) The Catholic Church Searching for Democratization in Latin America. Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Simon Fraser University.

Rahnema, M. (1985) NGOs: Sifting the Wheat from the Chaff. *Development: Seeds of Change* , (3).

Rahnema, M. (1988) A New Variety of AIDS and its Pathogens: Homo Economicus, Development and Aid. *Alternatives*, XII.

Reyes Matta, F. (1986) "Alternative Communication: Solidarity and Development in the Face of Transnational Expansion" in Atwood and McAnany (Ens.) *Communication and Latin American Society*.

Riaño, P.. (1990). Las Galladas: Street Youth and Cultural Identities. Simon Fraser University (unpublished MA thesis).

Riaño, P. (Ed.). (1994). *Women in Grassroots Communication: furthering Social Change* . London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Rogers, Everett. (1962). *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York:Free Press.

Rogers, Everett (ed). (1976). *Communication and Development..* Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Rogers, E. and Kincaid, D. (1981). *Communication Networks - Toward a New Paradigm for Research*. New York:Free Press.

Röling, N. et al. (1976). The Diffusion of Innovations and the Issue of Equity in Rural Development. In Rogers, (ed), *Communication and Development..*

Roncagliolo, R. (1992, August) La comunicación alternativa en el umbral del tercer milenio. Paper presented at AMARC 5 Conference, Oaxtepec, Mexico.

Roncagliolo, R. (1996). Guaranteeing pluralism: The argument for community radio legislation. *InteRadio 8(1)* 4.

Ruíz, C. (1994). Losing Fear: Video and Radio Productions of Native Aymara Women in Bolivia. In Riaño, P. (ed), *Women in Grassroots Communication*, London: Sage Publications.

Sachs, W. (ed) (1992). *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*. London: Zed.

Salomon, L. (1982). *Militarismo y Reformismo en Honduras*. Tegucigalpa: Editorial Guaymuras.

Savage, P. (1989). "Doing Community Radio: The Practice of Information Programming at a Community Radio Station in Comparison to a Commercial Radio Station". Simon Fraser University (unpublished MA thesis).

Salter, L (1981). Public and Mass Media in Canada: Dialectics in Innis's Communication Analysis. In In Melody, W. et al. (Eds), *Culture, Communications and Dependency: The Tradition of H.A. Innis*. Norwood: Ablex.

Schneider, A. (Ed.) (1989). *Deforestation and "Development" in Canada and the Tropics*. (Sydney: Center for International Studies.

Schwarz, C. and Jaramillo, O. (1986) Hispanic American Critical Communication Research in its Historical Context. In Atwood and McAnany (Ens.), *Communication and Latin American Society.*

Schwoch, James. (1990) *The American Radio Industry and its Latin American Activities, 1900-1939.* Chicago:University of Illinois.

Shephard, P. (1988). The Case of Invisible Aid. *NACLA Report on the Americas* 22(1) Jan/Feb. 1988.

Sheth, D. (1985). Alternative Development as Political Practice. *Alternatives,* 12 (1).

Shiva, V. (1992). Reductionist Science as Epistemological Violence. In *Science, Hegemony and Violence.*

Shiva, V. (1993) *Monocultures of the Mind.* Penang: Zed Books.

Shore, L. (1980). "Mass Media for Development: A Reexamination of Access, Exposure, and Impact" in McAnany (ed), *Communications in the Rural Third World.*

Simpson Grinberg. (1986) "Trends in Alternative Communication Research in Latin America" in Atwood and McAnany (Eds)*Communication and Latin American Society.*

Sirvent, M. (1986). Participación, educación y cultura popular. In Werthein, J. and Argumedo, M. (Eds.) *Educación y Participación* . Brasília: IICA.

Tamminga, P. (1989). Canadian Development Aid to Honduras: A Critical Assessment. Unpublished manuscript, Simon Fraser University.

Tamminga, P. (1992). Healing by Tradition: Herbs and Liberation Theology in Honduras. In Meyer, C. and Moosang, F. (Eds), *Living with the Land: Communities Restoring the Earth,.* Gabriola Island: New Society Publishers.

Theroux, J. (1978). *Techniques for Improving Educational Radio programs.* Paris:UNESCO.

Thomas, B. (1992). How KPFA Found a New Home. In Girard, B. (Ed.) *A Passion for Radio,* Montreal: Black Rose Books.

Truglia, E. (1996). Community Radio Gridlock: Legal obstacles plague Latin American and Caribbean community radio. *InteRadio 8(1)* 10-11.

UNESCO. (1967). *New education media in action: case studies for planners Vols 1-3* Paris:UNESCO.

UNESCO. (1979). *Rural radio: program formats* . Paris:UNESCO.

UNESCO. (1980). *North-South: A Program for Survival* . Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (1982). *Radio Broadcasting in Venezuela.* Paris:UNESCO.

Werthein, J. and Argumedo, M. (Eds.) (1986) *Educación y Participación* . Brasília: IICA.

White, R. (1976). *An Alternative Pattern of basic education: Radio Santa Maria.* Paris: UNESCO.

White, R. (1977). Structural Factors in Rural Development: The Church and the Peasant in Honduras. Unpublished PhD. Dissertation. Cornell University.

Whittingdon, B. (1985). "Some Latin American Community Radio Experiments: A Report to CUSO". Unpublished report.