Digital Songlines: the adaption of modern communication technology at Yuendemu, a remote Aboriginal Community in Central Australia

by

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WARNING: This work contains the names of people who may have passed away since the time of writing.

ABSTRACT

During the early 1980s the Warlpiri at Yuendemu, a remote Aboriginal community in Central Australia, began their own experiments in local television and radio production. This was prior to the launch of the AUSSAT satellite in 1985 which brought broadcast television and radio to remote Australia for the first time. There was concern amongst remote Aboriginal communities, as well as policy makers, that the imposition of mass media without consultation could result in permanent damage to Aboriginal culture and language. As a result, a policy review 'Out of the Silent Land' was published in 1985 and from that developed the Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) which allowed communities to receive radio and television from the satellite. BRACS also provided the option to turn off mainstream media and insert locally produced material.

This study of the Warlpiri at Yuendemu has found that, since the original experiments, they have enthusiastically used modern communication technology including radio, video making, locally produced television, and, more recently, on-line services. The Warlpiri have <u>adapted</u> rather than <u>adopted</u> the new technology. That is they have used modern communications technology within existing cultural patterns to strengthen their language and culture rather than to replace traditional practices and social structures. The Warlpiri Media Association has inspired other remote broadcasters and is now one of eight remote media networks that link to form a national network via the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia.

The Warlpiri have actively adapted modern communication technology because it is to their advantage. The new technology has been used to preserve culture and language, to restore, and possibly improve, traditional communications and to provide employment and other opportunities for earning income. It appeals to all age groups, especially the elders who have retained control over broadcasts and it also provides entertainment.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ABT	Australian Broadcasting Tribunal
AFI	Australian Film Institute
AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AUSSAT	The Australian telecommunication satellite
BRACS	Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme
BRS	BRACS Revitalisation Strategy
CAAMA	Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CDEP	Community Development Employment Fund
CLC	Central Land Council
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
DEET	Department of Employment, Education and Training
DETYA	Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs
DRCS	Digital Radio Concentrator System
DVD	Digital Video Disc
EVTV	Ernabella Video Television
HF Shower	High Frequency Radio Shower
ICA	Indigenous Communications Australia
ICAM	Indigenous Cultural Affairs Magazine
NIMAA	National Indigenous Media Association of Australia
NIRS	National Indigenous Radio Service
NLC	Northern Land Council
PC	Productivity Commission
RCTS	Remote Commercial Television Service
RTIF	Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund
RUCS	Remote and Underserviced Community Scheme
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
TAIMA	Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association
TAPE	The Aboriginal Program Exchange
TEABBA	Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association
UHF	Ultra High Frequency
VHF	Very High Frequency
WAAMA	Western Australia Aboriginal Media Association
WMA	Warlpiri Media Association

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The introduction of modern communication technology to remote Aboriginal communities

Sixteen years have passed since the Department of Aboriginal Affairs first published its policy document on Aboriginal[1] broadcasting, 'Out of the Silent Land', in 1984. This policy aimed to address Aboriginal needs arising from the launch of the AUSSAT satellite which would bring radio and television services to remote communities for the first time. Not only would the satellite bring these services to remote European homesteads and settlements, it would also provide the same services, without consultation, to traditional Aboriginal communities. Many of these Aboriginal communities had only been settled from a hunting and gathering lifestyle since the 1940s and 1950s and they were still preserving their unique languages, ceremonies and culture.

Yuendemu is a Warlpiri settlement approximately 300 kilometres north west of Alice Springs. Unlike much of Aboriginal Australia, contact between the Warlpiri and Europeans happened later with its main impact not until the 1920s. Despite massacres, the impact on culture by missionaries and the stolen generation, the Warlpiri at Yuendemu were able to maintain much of their traditional culture in the face of European colonisation. (Bell 1983,40-60, Meggitt 1962, 16-42.) Because they had retained much of their culture, and were in convenient proximity to Alice Springs, they became the focus of colonial anthropological study (Michaels 1986, 14).

In 1978, the Warlpiri at Yuendemu had the local lease and a large area of their traditional lands in the neighbouring Tanami Desert returned to them as freehold land by the Commonwealth Government. Previous European restrictions on their movement were lifted and, under an element of self determination, they were able to set up an outstation movement and move about their land once again (Michaels 1986, 13-14). The Warlpiri had remained strong, not only retaining their own culture and language, but also in

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[1] Recently the term indigenous has replaced Aboriginal to include all of Australia's indigenous population of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. To avoid confusion I will use the term Aboriginal in this thesis as it is about Aboriginal communities. I will use the term indigenous when discussing the broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or indigenous communities in countries other than Australia.

resisting European ways. Their literacy rates remained low at under 25%, although there had been generations of attempted white education (Michaels 1990,9). Even today there has not been much improvement. By 1999 indigenous children made up 38% of the Northern Territory school population yet only 4% of indigenous children at age 11 met the reading benchmark for their age (Collins 1999). This raised calls from the Northern Territory Chief Minister for indigenous communities to embrace the advantages of western education and society (Burke 1999). Health educators had spent many frustrating years trying to achieve the adoption of basic European public health practices (Michaels, 1987a, 62; Rowse 1990, 193). In 1953 the Warlpiri had almost a 25% mortality rate for children under five (Middleton and Francis 1976,16) which the researchers put down to a resistance to European concepts:

> 'Throughout our data we see evidence that many new ideas and behaviours that have been acquired by the Aboriginal as a consequence of settlement are only skin deep.' (Middleton and Francis 1976,133).

By the late 1990s, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were dying at a rate three times greater than the rest of the population and they faced high levels of long-term health problems such as asthma and diabetes. Their life expectancy was 56.9 years for men (compared with 75.2 years for non-indigenous men) and 61.7 years for women (compared with 81.1 years for non-indigenous women) (Deeble 1998 vi; McLennan and Madden 1999,2-6) which would suggest European designed practices in health and education were not working for the Warlpiri.

The Warlpiri had remained on the edge of the European frontier but this was about to change in the mid 1980s with the launch of the new communications satellite, AUSSAT, which would, for the first time, bring western broadcast media to remote Australia. Concerns about the new communication technology were based on the experience of the indigenous Inuit people in remote Canada where satellite television services had been introduced with no consultation. As a result, Inuit culture was severely affected with young people turning away from their language and adopting western ways in less than a year (Brisebois 1994, 141-146). Debbie Brisebois (1994, 141) was the Executive Director of the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation and now the President of the Inuit Tapirisat or

Parliament. (Meadows 1995,np.) She describes an Inuit woman recalling watching for the first time 'All in the Family' (the US equivalent of the British comedy 'Till Death us do Part'):

> 'There was the father, obviously a stupid man, shouting at his children and his wife. He seemed to hate them. They were lying to him, they were treating him with contempt, they were screaming back at him and then in the last five minutes everyone kissed and made up. We were always taught to treat our elders with respect. I was embarrassed for those people on TV. I know I always thought white people were weird. I wondered if that was really what people were like in the South.'

In 1988 Freda Glynn (in Ginsberg 1993, 360), one of the founding members of the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, said:

> 'TV is like an invasion. We have had grog, guns and disease, but we have been really fortunate that people outside the major communities have had no communication like radio and TV. Language and culture has been protected by neglect. Now they are not going to be. They need protection because TV will be going into those communities 24 hours a day in a foreign language - English. It only takes a few months and the kids start changing...'

The Warlpiri's use of electronic media has been made famous nationally and internationally by the pioneering work of Eric Michaels (Turner 1998, 183), an American anthropologist and communication specialist, who combined modern communication theory with the ethnographic methods of anthropology (Hinkson 1995,51;Ruby 1990, 34). Michaels observed the Warlpiri using communication technology for their own means. He also became involved, as a result of his research fellowship at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, in the policy development of remote Aboriginal broadcasting. Essentially, as Rose put it, Michaels was posing a question about 'what will space age technology do to a stone age people?' (Rose 1990, 161).

Michaels' work was prolific and much of it has been published since his death in 1988. He recorded this early use of modern communication technology among the Warlpiri in Central Australia in his research report, 'The Aboriginal Invention of Television' (1986). This early media experiment by the Warlpiri involved the use of domestic quality equipment to produce video tapes which were circulated throughout the local communities. The experiment at Yuendemu, as well as a similar one at Ernabella in South Australia, was used as a model for the Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS). BRACS was introduced by the Federal Government in 1988. This scheme provided basic broadcasting equipment to remote communities so they could both receive the new satellite television and radio services and also produce and narrowcast their own local programming. The introduction of the BRACS system had mixed success with many communities rejecting the broad distribution of the technology with insufficient consultation or training (ATSIC 1992,2-4; Turner 1998,7-8).

Since Michaels' original work, researchers such as Ginsburg (1993), Hinkson (1999), Langton (1993), Meadows (1992), and Molnar (1995) have continued to focus on this pioneering media work by the Warlpiri at Yuendemu. In a way, the Warlpiri have become seen as the originators of indigenous media in Australia in the same way as Papunya has been considered the birthplace of the modern Aboriginal art which produced traditional dot paintings using a modern acrylic medium.

This thesis examines the use of modern communication technology by the Warlpiri over this sixteen year period and it also delves back a little further to examine if the Warlpiri were interested in media prior to Michaels' arrival. It will look at the impact of the introduction of the new electronic media on this remote Aboriginal community. Particularly, it examines what seems to be an anomaly. Rather than resisting the new technology, as they had with many other European practices, the Warlpiri at Yuendemu appear to have embraced the new medium and used it for their own purposes to turn the tables on their colonisers and produce programs from their own viewpoint. It will also look briefly at similar developments in broadcasting in other remote Aboriginal communities as well as indigenous broadcasting developments in Canada and New Zealand.

Michaels (1986,2) points out that:

> 'Media and other novelties are never introduced into a vacuum. Instead they come into an existing setting where culture, society, and in this case, prior communications systems, are operating.'

Traditional Aboriginal Communications

In order to understand the use of modern communication technology by the Warlpiri, it is necessary to have some understanding of traditional Aboriginal communications. Warlpiri society was a pre-literate society. Having no form of written communication Aborigines relied on memory and knowledge was passed down through the generations in a complex system of initiation stages and learning. Men were responsible for a certain set of knowledge and women for another. Older women passed on knowledge to younger women and girls, and older men to younger men and boys. Traditional Aboriginal communications relied strongly on symbols: it was very visual with knowledge linked to the landscape and spelt out in art forms painted on the ground, on people's bodies, on bark and on rock walls (Australia Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1984,85; Langton 1993,77; Munn 1973,xix-xi). There were strong symbolic links between the visual landscape and the economic and spiritual life of the Warlpiri:

> 'Access to the country of one's forebears provides substance for the Dreamtime experience and an identity based on community life and values which were constantly reaffirmed in ritual and in use of the land.' (Bell 1983,47-8.)

At the time of European invasion, there were approximately 250 indigenous language groups throughout Australia. Groups of approximately 300 people spoke a single language and were linked to a certain area of land. This area of land had no defined border with the next language group but would usually be bounded by an area of less productive land or physical barrier such as a mountain range and would have a major permanent watercourse. Each group would understand the language of the neighbouring groups but would define itself as separate from their neighbours by emphasising minor differences in vocabulary (Dixon 1980,31,35; Schmidt 1993,v). These groups were not

isolated from each other. They certainly conversed with neighbouring groups and young men would travel to more distant groups on ceremonial visits, often taking message sticks which would symbolically describe the reason for their visit (Dixon 1980,31; Reynolds 1981, 10-11). There is evidence of the exchange of material goods such as stone axes and shells as well as the exchange of intellectual property such as songs and ceremonies right across Australia (Flood 1983,237). Knowledge and intellectual property spread along well defined 'dreaming tracks' or 'songlines' right across the continent (Rose 1996, xix). Michaels (1986,2) describes pre-contact communication to be far from a 'Silent Land':

> 'On the contrary, pre-contact Australia appears to have been a land abuzz with information, travelling sometimes quite rapidly along traditional 'dreaming tracks' which networked the continent.'

During the period of white invasion there was also evidence that groups, who had not yet had contact with Europeans, were aware of what was happening through wide communication networks where news could travel hundreds of kilometres very quickly (Reynolds 1981, 11). Neighbours of the Warlpiri were thought to have first heard of the Europeans through message sticks and visits from Aboriginal travellers from western Queensland (Bell 1983,61). It is likely that they used this knowledge to deter white explorers, such as the occasion when the neighbouring Warramunga attacked the explorer Stuart with boomerangs in 1860 (Meggitt 1962,17).

For most of the year the Warlpiri, as a language group, would break up into a number of extended family groups to hunt and gather. The whole group would come together to hold ceremonies at times when there was a good food and water supply (Dixon 1980,32). During the day, an extended family group would split up as men and boys hunted large animals and women and young children gathered food and hunted small animals. Non-productive members of the group, such as the older people, would stay in camp. During the late afternoon the groups would come back together again and share the food they had not eaten during the day (Bell 1983, 47; Meggitt 1962,49; Munn 1973,7). Kinship status was very important in establishing who had to provide food for whom and also indicated how people fitted into the society providing the template, or roadmap, for society to follow (Bell 1983,54; Geertz 1973, 218; Meggitt 1962,52). Michaels (1986,8) argued that

kinship was also a communications system as it defined who could talk to whom, for instance many groups had a special 'avoidance' language for certain relationships such as that between classificatory mother-in-law/son-in-law. Conversation with young children was also in a special language. (Dixon 1980, 58-9.) People would marry someone of a different clan, or 'skin' group, usually within their own language group. Depending on the area, a group would have two or four (or occasionally eight) different skin groups. In the case of the Warlpiri there were four skin groups, Yalpara, Waneiga, Walmalla and Ngalia, each linked with an area of land of between 7,000 and 15,000 square miles. Although difficult to estimate, pre-colonial numbers are thought to have been about 200 for each skin group. The group ultimately settled at Yuendemu were Ngalia. (Meggitt 1962,47; Rowse 1990, 180.) Warlpiri society was divided into two 'skin groups' Kirda and Kurdulunga. Within these skin groups there were subsection/clans with names which were prefixed with 'n' for women and 'j' for men. Each kirda/kurdungurlu group had a different ceremonial role and a person from one group must marry someone from the other group. Today, each kinship group at Yuendemu consists of 10 to 60 adults with a total of about 5 kin groups who support each other financially and emotionally. However, to people outside Yuendemu, the Warlpiri defined themselves as one group. (Dussart 1988 60-72, Michaels, 1986,9-10.)

As Warlpiri people grew older and passed through rites of passage they had access to more complex traditional knowledge. Young children were given a basic education as part of the women's group. As they reached seven or eight years of age, young boys would join the men's group during the day to learn to hunt. The young men would commence a series of initiations as they reached puberty. (Meggitt 1962,281-316.) A special secret language was used in ceremonies and initiation rites (Dixon 1980,68). Women would pass through a similar process as they reached puberty, got married and had children. Their most senior level of knowledge was obtained when their children had grown (Bell 1983,35,45). Men and women had access to different types of knowledge, although older women were aware of some men's business and vice versa (Bell 1983, 183)[2].

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[2] A full description of Warlpiri Men's and Women's ritual lifecycle according to anthropologist Francoise Dussart can be found at Appendix 3.

Although the Warlpiri had no formal writing, in her classic study 'Walbiri[3] Iconography', Nancy Munn (1973,32) argues that their symbolic design system used in sand, rock and body painting had language-like properties.

> 'Walbiri cosmology has embedded within it a cultural theory or folk model concerning visual and verbal signs and their relationship to the social and natural orders, totemic designs... This "semiotic" is important, since it integrates key concepts that set out the basic spatio-temporal organization of the Walbiri World ...it binds notions such as "ancestors", "country", and "dreams" into a unitary matrix of ideas, and it defines the relations between the present world of proximal, visible forms and the ancestral world that is distal and "out of sight".' (Munn 1973,4-5.)

Munn (1973, 64) describes the telling of stories in sand drawing by Warlpiri women. Standard symbols were used to represent a number of things; for example a straight line could represent a person lying down or a spear, depending on the context of the story. Munn (1973,95) also observed the story-tellers moving between prose, song and graphic representation while telling their story. The stories were usually about ancestral beings and their journeys. The ancestors would travel past well known landmarks, telling a Dreamtime story as they went and ultimately disappearing into the ground from where they had first appeared (Munn 1973, 95-132). The Warlpiri also used a distinct sign language which had parallels with speech. It was also extremely complex and could convey, not just objects, but emotions, concepts of time and space, movement and perception. Warlpiri women were highly competent in sign language possibly because of the long periods of mourning when they had to observe silence. Men also used signs when hunting so as not to disturb quarry. (Kendon 1985,1-11)

Michaels (1990,22) described knowledge as the basis of the Warlpiri economy:

> '...Aboriginal modes of communication are extensions of the oral and face-to-face nature of that society. These allowed, even required, that information be owned, a

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[3] I will use, as have most recent writers on the Warlpiri, the more accurate orthography Warlpiri rather than the previously used Walbiri.

kind of intellectual property at the heart of what I understand the traditional
Aboriginal economy to be about. Knowledge in the form of stories and songs is the
prerogative of senior men and women (elders) and the rules governing
transmission are highly regulated. Violating speaking constraints and rights here is
treated as theft and recognised to be highly subversive of the traditional
gerontocratic social structure.'

Traditional communication patterns in a pre-literate society can be easily damaged or
permanently lost through a break in the information flow between generations.
Communication has been affected by white contact as Aborigines have been forcibly
moved off traditional land onto missions and children taken away as part of government
policy (Reynolds 1981,158).

Colonial history of the Warlpiri

Contact between the Warlpiri and Europeans was later compared with most Aboriginal
groups. Warlpiri contact with early explorers and miners was minimal, particularly as the
local Aborigines showed resistance towards the Europeans giving them a reputation for
fierceness (Meggitt 1962,16). In 1860 a neighbouring group to the Warlpiri attacked the
explorer Stuart until he retreated (Bell 1983, 60). The overland telegraph and its
European settlements bypassed Warlpiri areas. Warlpiri land was marginal for the
pastoralists and large pastoral properties were not established until the 1920s long after
the pastoral industry was established in other nearby areas (Meggitt 1962,20). Traditional
Warlpiri culture co-existed with European pastoralism and mining for a while but
pressure from stock on scarce water supplies, as well as on the hunting and gathering
economy, led to stress and anger as it had in other areas of Australia (Reynolds 1981,130;
Bell 1983,61). The 1924 drought forced the Warlpiri towards the settlements of
pastoralists, miners and the overland telegraph stations for food supplies, giving them a
taste of European commodities, especially tobacco, for the first time (Bell 1983,44;
Meggitt 1962,25).

The stress of contact culminated in a number of attacks on whites leading to savage
reprisals. The best known being the Coniston massacre in 1924 where it was officially

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recorded that 31 Warlpiri were killed by local police in revenge for the murder of a trapper. These Warlpiri called this the 'killing times' and themselves considered the number of deaths much higher than the official European account (Bell 1983,69). One result of the massacre was that, unlike some other Aboriginal groups, many of the young Warlpiri men rejected white contact and moved back under the traditional control of older Warlpiri men. The Warlpiri were also physically excluded by the government from white settlements for a while, being forced to stay at least ten miles away from miners' camps (Meggitt 1962,25). This was a contributing factor to cultural preservation as the young people stayed in the community, allowing traditional knowledge to continue to be passed down the generations.

The settlement of the Warlpiri at Yuendemu by the Government occurred in 1946 (Meggitt 1962,29). This forced settlement on to missions or Government settlements often built up stress among groups who would not normally have extended contact (Bell 1983,73). These settlements were often confined to places with poor water supplies so as not to offend pastoralists. This was to have long term effects on Aboriginal health (National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party, 1989,vii). Although those at Yuendemu were mainly one clan of Warlpiri, fights still broke out between the groups (Rowse 1990,180). A Government attempt to split the group between Yuendemu and Hooker Creek failed with many families walking back to Yuendemu (Bell 1983, 42). By 1955, two thirds of the Warlpiri lived at Yuendemu with the remainder on nearby cattle stations where they worked only for rations and received no wages (Meggitt 1962,29). Attempts at nearby Phillip Creek to keep children in dormitories segregated by sex and 'degree of Aboriginality' were strongly resisted. A missionary was later convicted for sexual abuse of the children in the dormitory. Over the years part-Aboriginal children were also removed by the European 'Welfare' (Bell 1983, 70).

Warlpiri communication was severely affected by this forced settlement. The traditional patterns of moving off in bands to hunt and gather to return to a large group for ceremonies several times a year was broken down. Even the day-to-day movement of groups of men and women moving out to hunt and gather was restricted. Fences also prevented movement and, therefore, communication between groups (Reynolds 1981,129-30), although there still appeared to be some free movement between the

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Yuendemu settlement and Warlpiri camps at the Mt Doreen, Mt Allan and Coniston cattle stations (Munn 1973,7). Traditional patterns, especially kinship, were important in coping with this severe change. Bell observed that the people, including the Warlpiri, she studied at nearby Warrabri were mixed with other language groups yet they all kept to discreet language groups in the camp. They also camped physically closest to the area of their traditional lands, for instance in the north of the camp if their lands were to the north. (Bell 1993,8; Munn 1973, 11.)

By the late 1970s, land rights legislation had allowed the local lease to be returned to the Warlpiri at Yuendemu. They also received a large area of their traditional lands in the neighbouring Tanami Desert. Previous European restriction on their movement was lifted and, under an element of self-determination, they were able to set up an outstation movement and move about their land once again (Michaels 1986,14). The spirit of self-determination and the outstation movement throughout the Northern Territory raised an interest in improved communication without which the isolated outstations were unlikely to survive. The outstation movement was linked to the increased use of four wheel drive vehicles. A communication link with neighbouring groups for social contact and emergency services was essential for this movement.

In her recent research Melinda Hinkson (1999) considers that the Warlpiri have made a deliberate attempt to develop a two way relationship with European Australians and are also proud of their reputation of being warriors and fierce. Stotz (1993,6) agrees that the Warlpiri have made a deliberate attempt to work with rather than against European colonisers:

> '...the Warlpiri's strategy to resist colonialism so far has been to promote cross-cultural relations. These relations are maintained under the condition that the Warlpiri remain the Other of Western discourse. The Warlpiri are active agents in the differential colonising process.'

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Aboriginal policy development in Australia

Communication in Aboriginal communities since European contact has been subject to the changing policies in Aboriginal affairs. These policies towards the indigenous population of Australia, the practical outcomes of which have been described in the previous section on the colonial history of the Warlpiri, can best be described in three phases.

Firstly, the policy was one of paternalism with the objective to protect and preserve Aborigines. Those that were unable to change and enter European society were confined to reserves where they could spend their years living traditional lifestyles until their race died out. Communication with Aboriginal Australians was not a priority for Government. Those Aborigines who were 'civilised' enough could join European society while those who were unable to cope were carefully locked away on reserves where European Australians could easily forget about them. (Altman 1987,10)

The second phase was assimilation. From the 1950s, Aborigines were absorbed into mainstream society if they were considered sufficiently 'civilised'. Communities were broken up and people resettled on Government or religious missions. The owners of pastoral leases used local people as cheap or free labour. Children with lighter skins were removed from their mothers by welfare boards (Altman 1987,10; Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia 1994, 68-9). It was during this period that many Aboriginal languages were lost when communities were scattered, language groups mixed so that English became the lingua franca and children were removed to dormitories. However, some languages and cultures, such at those of the Warlpiri, Pitjantjatjara and Arrente, remained strong. (Schmidt 1993,13-14).

The third phase[4] occurred in the 1960s when European Australians were feeling uncomfortable with the assimilation policy and the civil rights movements had become more active. In 1967, a national referendum was carried which allowed the

Commonwealth to assume responsibility for Aboriginal people. In 1972, with the incoming Whitlam Labor Government, the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs was established and the Government announced a policy of land rights. In 1974, the Government established the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee (NAC), with 35 elected Aboriginal members, to advise on policy. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1985,9; Tatz 1977,384-398.) The NAC became incorporated in 1975 and the first elections were held in 1977 under the Fraser Coalition Government, although it never became more than an advisory body. *The Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act* was brought in during 1976. This was a major policy development as it allowed Aboriginal organisations to incorporate, accept money, hold property and manage their own affairs. (Rowley 1978, 208-222.) The *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act* came in during 1977 opening up 26% of the Territory to Aboriginal land claims. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 1981,np; Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia1994, 873.)

Despite the lack of recognition of Aboriginal occupancy of Australia and assimilationist policies, Aboriginal Australians had strongly resisted colonialism and attempted, as much as possible, to preserve their language and culture (Reynolds 1981). The role of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs strengthened in 1983 with the election of the Hawke Labor Government and its policies of Aboriginal self-determination (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1981,np). The Department of Aboriginal Affairs had senior Aboriginal staff by then, with the appointment of Charles Perkins as Secretary and shortly after the appointment of Aboriginal educator Eric Wilmott as Deputy Secretary. With increasing land rights, Aboriginal people were moving away from their government based settlements back to their land. The outstation or homelands movement required infrastructure support, especially good communications and emergency transport. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 1981; 1984a, 41.)

The outstation, or homelands, movement commenced in the 1970s when land rights and the establishment of Aboriginal Land Councils allowed the infrastructure for indigenous people once again to return to their land. The original intention of the Federal

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[4] It has been suggested that Australia is entering a fourth phase of indigenous relationships: that of reconciliation. This follows the holding of a Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in 1989 and the *Native Title Act 1992* (National Health and Medical Research Council 1996,11) although this concept has a long way to go as yet.

Government's land rights policy was to provide work and income for Aboriginal communities through activities, such as pastoral work or royalties from mineral exploration, which was achieved to some extent. Yet Aboriginal elders also used the policy for their own priority of returning to their lands in traditional family groups and resuming a more traditional lifestyle. By 1983 10,000 indigenous people in central and northern Australia had moved back onto 360 homelands, 260 of which were populated at any one time, depending on the season. At the time the Federal Government saw advantages in the outstation movement, not just in ensuring Aboriginal self-determination, but also in improving health. The intention was that Aboriginal health would improve with people living in smaller family groups, in a traditional lifestyle and under less stress. Nutrition was also likely to improve with hunting and the gathering of bush food. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1981; 1984,40-41).

Previously, communication between governments and Aborigines living in remote communities had been done through European administrators or missionaries. With centralised responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs, the Federal Government had to find effective means to communicate with remote Aborigines. More importantly, the Government had to find means of listening to Aboriginal views, firstly through the NAC, and then through ATSIC, in order to effectively administrate policies. For the first time there was an attempt at two-way communication.

In March 1990, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission was established to replace the former Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Aboriginal Development Commission. Its twenty-member board consisted of an appointed chairperson and two appointed commissioners plus seventeen elected commissions, each representing 60 regions with an elected regional council also. In 1992-93, ATSIC's budget was $800 million or two thirds of Federal Aboriginal programs. By 1999/2000 financial year, under the Howard Coalition Government, ATSIC has lost many of its functions such as health and housing and now only administers 50 Federal Aboriginal programs. (ATSIC, 1999a; Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia 1994,71)

International indigenous policy development

The rights of indigenous people to achieve land rights, have self-determination and control their media has been recognised in the international arena. In 1993, the United Nations completed a draft declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations 1993,np). Article 31 of this recognises the right to self-government:

> 'As a form of self-determination, indigenous peoples have the right to self-government in relation to their own affairs. These include culture, religion, education, media, health, housing, employment, social security, economic activities, land and resource management, environment and entry by non-members.'

Article 17 refers specifically to indigenous media:

> 'Indigenous people have the right to their own media in their languages. They shall also have equal access to non-indigenous media. Government owned media must reflect indigenous culture.'

This draft has not been ratified as yet. (ATSIC 1999a,np.)

Portrayal of Aborigines in the media

One of the questions raised about why indigenous Australians need their own media service separate to that of other Australians lies in how Aborigines are portrayed in the mainstream media. In his book on Aboriginal journalism 'For the Record', Michael Rose (1996,xx) observed:

> '...European media in Australia have done a poor job in reflecting Aboriginal society, both past and present, and have in many cases perpetuated racist and erroneous stereotypes about Aboriginal people. More and more Aboriginal people

have come to the conclusion that an indigenous media network, which they
control and produce, is an important way of rectifying these problems.'

In a study of mainstream newspapers during the time of the Commonwealth Games in
1982, Christine Jennet (1983,28-37) observed that: 'Media images of and messages about
Australian Aborigines are constructed by non-Aborigines operating within the dominant
Anglo-European cultural framework.' At the Games, Jennet found that there was
considerable sensationalist reporting of violence and even incorrect reports of Maori
militants carrying out terrorist training for Aborigines in the Queensland jungle. This
occurred even though the protests about land rights and other issues were non-violent and
an Aboriginal media centre had been established to ensure the media were kept informed.

Michael Meadows, a postgraduate student of Eric Michaels and now an Associate
Professor at Griffith University, also observed the negative portrayal of indigenous
Australians in the media in Cairns in Far North Queensland. He cites the case where the
'People' magazine quoted a local, senior policeman who stated that 90% of crime in
Cairns was due to Aborigines. The local Aboriginal community was misquoted and there
was no attempt to check actual crime statistics for the region. A complaint to the Press
Council was overruled. Meadows surveyed the local community who agreed that media
access was important for the local community and there was a need to report on the
'strengths' of the Aboriginal people. (Meadows 1987,102-112.) Both Powis (1985, 30-2)
and Meadows (1992,4) argue that this biased reporting is a good reason for the
introduction of independent indigenous broadcasting.

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs was concerned about this negative portrayal, as
well as the overall lack of portrayal of Aboriginal people. In 1985 the Department
challenged the commercial licence renewals of the three main commercial television
stations: Channel Seven, Nine and Ten in Sydney and Melbourne to ensure that
Aboriginal people were features in their key Australian content programming (Australia.
Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1985, 1-10). Their concern was not just for Aboriginal
residents of the major cities but also the regional and remote areas who would soon be
serviced by satellite television. The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal agreed to the
submission. Over the years more Aboriginal actors have began to appear in Australian

drama such as 'A Country Practice' and later there were some newsreaders and presenters, such as Stan Grant (Leigh 1994,xli). However, there has still not been a significant increase in Aboriginal faces on television (Downut, 1991,40; Langton 1993,21). Recently, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (1999a, 5) recognises no improvement stating '...indigenous people are either invisible in the mainstream media or perpetuated through system stereotyping.'

Research objectives

In this thesis I will look at the impact of policy development in Aboriginal broadcasting on one specific Aboriginal community: the Warlpiri at Yuendemu. I will examine what influences the policy had on Warlpiri media as well as the influences the Warlpiri may have had on indigenous media policy themselves. I will attempt to see if the Warlpiri have benefited from the original policy objectives of 'Out of the Silent Land' by asking the following questions:

- Why did the Warlpiri at Yuendemu actively embrace the new communication technology?

- Did the Warlpiri prefer some forms of technology (for instance telecommunications, radio or television) over others?

- Were Warlpiri traditional culture/social practices damaged by the new technology, for instance did relationships alter between young and old or between the genders?

- Were Warlpiri traditional culture/social practices enhanced by the new technology, for instance has it helped build up links lost by cultural change, have language and cultural practices been revived or preserved?

- Has two way communications between the white Australian community and the Warlpiri at Yuendemu been enhanced?

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Possibly the answers to these questions can assist policy makers to learn from the introduction and development of indigenous media policy, a system of policy making that can be used to work with indigenous people on other issues?

Summary

The Warlpiri had retained a strong sense of language and culture despite European contact. This was due to their relatively late level of contact with Europeans, their strong resistance to colonial influences, and their isolation in Central Australia. Their traditional communication patterns were based on knowledge passed down the generations and this knowledge could easily have been lost if contact between the generations was disrupted. By the early 1980s the Warlpiri had survived the first two phases of Australian Aboriginal policy making: paternalism and assimilation. They were using the most recent policy of self-determination to restore their traditional communication patterns through the outstation movement. Good communications was an important component of self determination and the Warlpiri were already establishing their own media system using video and audio tapes. There was concern by policy makers, and Aborigines themselves, that the launch of AUSSAT in 1985 would severely undermine traditional culture in remote communities by bringing radio and television services for the first time. This followed the experience of the Inuit people in remote Canada. There was also concern about both the lack of portrayal and the negative portrayal of Aboriginal people in the mainstream Australian media. A policy review by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Communications was published as 'Out of the Silent Land' in 1984. This review examined the experiment by the Warlpiri, and a similar one by the Pitjantjatjara people in South Australia, and recommended the Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme. This Scheme would enable remote Aboriginal communities to receive radio and television broadcasts via the satellite and also to switch off the signal and insert their own locally made programming. This study looks at the impact of policy development in Aboriginal broadcasting on the Warlpiri at Yuendemu, what influences the policy had on Warlpiri media, as well as the influences the Warlpiri may have had on indigenous media policy themselves, and whether the Warlpiri have benefited from the original policy objectives of 'Out of the Silent Land'.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Cross cultural studies are complex to carry out as, not only are there differences in language, there are also differences in cultural meanings. 79% of Aborigines in Central Australia speak their own language at home (McLennan and Madden 1999,19) and often they learn one or more other Aboriginal language before learning English. As I cannot speak Warlpiri I was reliant on using English speakers. Walsh (1991, 3) observed that Aborigines have a non-dyadic style of conversation which uses plenty of silence between words unlike the two-way conversation in western society. The more influential members of society, such as older people, just listen and reply when they wish. This was also the view of Spark who observed long gaps between speaking and found that, when communicating with Europeans, Aborigines often agree to a proposal in the first place to be polite and later fail to recognise any agreement. (Spark 1994, np.) Michaels (1986,xviii) himself observed that cross cultural studies were complex:

> 'Proper senior authorities, however, demonstrate their authority by maintaining control of the pedagogic dialogue. One is taught in sequence, and the sequence is determined by tradition, not by the researcher's desire to fill out a questionnaire or pursue his own research agenda.'

By its nature, a study of communications in remote Aboriginal communities is also a challenge, not only because it is a recent area of study, but also because it is difficult reaching such physically remote locations. Yuendemu is a four-hour journey along an unsealed road north-west of Alice Springs. Ernabella and nearby Umuwa can only be reached by driving along unsealed and unsignposted tracks for over 200 kilometres from the main highway.

FIGURE 1:LOCATION MAP OF YUENDEMU
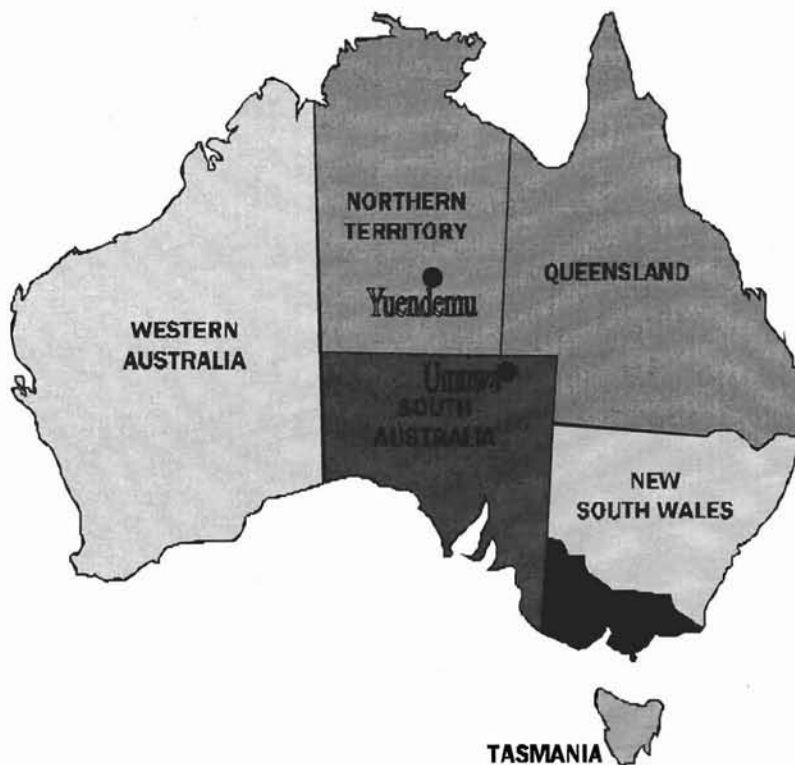
Selection of a group to study – why the Warlpiri?

The study of the BRACS scheme over an almost twenty year period was broad, so it was important that it be limited to a specific geographic location. The Warlpiri at Yuendemu seemed to be an appropriate choice because of the extent of written material available following Michaels' original work. As already noted, the Warlpiri have come to be considered as the founders of Aboriginal broadcasting and there is a body of literature available on this subject. The majority of indigenous broadcasting policy has focussed on remote Aboriginal communities and not on the needs of urban or regional Aborigines. While this study focuses on remote Aboriginal communities, this does not mean that the needs of urban or regional Aborigines are any less important. Indeed this is an area that requires considerable study.

Even before the introduction of the satellite, the Yuendemu community was already embracing the new technology by making film, video and sound recordings. The Warlpiri have continued with their interest in the media and today, there are more than 80 broadcasters in remote Aboriginal communities (Molnar 1999,10), nearly all inspired by

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this initial experiment at Yuendemu. Their radio programs are networked throughout the country and even more advanced technology such as on-line communication has been adopted by the Warlpiri. The Warlpiri also welcome researchers. Hinkson (1999) in her recent doctoral research argues that the Warlpiri have deliberately set out to establish two way relationships with Europeans.

Availability of source material

Indigenous broadcasting in Australia is a relatively new development. There is a body of literature built up around the work of Eric Michaels and those who have continued with his work, such as Michael Meadows and Helen Molnar, who have specialised in Aboriginal broadcasting. Michaels' work was published posthumously in 1994 in a consolidated collection 'Bad Aboriginal Art: Tradition, Media, and Technological Horizons'. An appraisal of his work was also published in a special edition of 'Continuum: an Australian Journal of the Media' in 1990 (3:2).

A lot has been written about Michaels' work with the Warlpiri but there has been little criticism of his views, possibly because of his untimely death from AIDS in 1988. A body of work is in progress at the moment, so I took the opportunity of interviewing a number of researchers. These included Philip Batty (1999), founder member of CAAMA who is also completing his PhD on the organisation, Jennifer Deger (1999) who is completing a PhD on BRACS, and Melinda Hinkson (1999) who has completed a PhD on the Tanami Network.

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AITSIS) and the National Library of Australia have a considerable amount of literature on the subject of indigenous issues, as well as information on traditional Aboriginal lifestyle ranging from historical accounts to ethnographies. Founded in 1963, AITSIS has done much to collect and retrieve material about indigenous Australians. Prior to this much writing about indigenous Australians has been from the viewpoint of the coloniser and only in the last twenty or thirty years has this been turned round by historians such as Henry Reynolds and the late Dianne Barwick who have written from the Aboriginal viewpoint (McGrath 1995,367-9). The AIATSIS collection also houses the papers of Eric Michaels and some

early videos from the Warlpiri Media Association. The latter were good sources for a textual analysis of video making through Aboriginal eyes. Textual analysis is a useful tool but not the main tool of this thesis because, as Marshall McLuhan (1964,10) mentions, '...content analysis describes the scratch but not the itch.'

All of this was valuable research material to enable the analysis of documents and the video material. Conference proceedings were particularly useful as a primary source of indigenous comment especially the 'Telling Both Stories' Media Forum held by the Centre for Research into Culture and Communication at Murdoch University in Western Australia (Hartley and McKee 1996). Newspaper and electronic media coverage was also available[5]. However, as already noted, there has been debate about the balance of such reporting and its bias against Aborigines (Meadows 1992,4; Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1985,6).

I interviewed Gerry Pyne, the co-ordinator of the National Indigenous Radio Service, in July 1998. Pyne provided an insight into the working of NIRS, NIMAA and BRACS and Aboriginal broadcasting as a whole. I also spoke with those involved in policy, such as Greg Harris, Assistant Manager of the ATSIC broadcasting unit. In 1998, Neil Turner completed a major review of BRACS for the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia (NIMAA). This proved a useful source document as it reviewed all BRACS facilities and gave some of their history, although it was very difficult to source a copy of the report even from NIMAA themselves. Towards the end of my study, ATSIC released the executive summary of the first major review of Aboriginal broadcasting since 'Out of the Silent Land'. It is titled 'Digital Dreaming: a national review of indigenous media and communications' (1999a) and provided valuable up-to-date information. In the latter half of 1999, a number of submissions were made to the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Broadcasting (ATSIC 1999c, NIMAA 1999a; 1999b) which also gave an insight into the future direction of indigenous broadcasting.

The Internet also proved a valuable source of material, especially as more indigenous communities are now building websites. However, email proved an ineffective method of

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[5] My employment requires me to monitor print and electronic media in Australia and in New Zealand.

reaching Aboriginal communities as messages were not read. Traditional methods of telephones and facsimiles therefore had to be used to arrange meetings.

A suitable methodology

Pioneers in this area of indigenous communication, such as Eric Michaels, used ethnographic methods as the basis of his work, living in the community for several years and observing what was happening. Michaels relied on Europeans to provide him with information especially in his early time at Yuendemu before he had built up trust (Michaels 1986,xviii). Michaels also used textual analysis to assist him to understand how the Warlpiri interpreted media, as he was aware that their reading of television text was very different to that of Europeans (Michaels 1986,46). Michael Meadows used similar methods to Michaels when studying the introduction of media to the Torres Strait Islands (Meadows 1988,162-9.) Aboriginal activist Marcia Langton has also written on this subject. She, too, has an academic background in anthropology which she has also combined with textual analysis in her major work 'Well I heard it on the radio and I saw it on the Television' (1993).

There have been attempts at using surveys and quantitative work with Aboriginal communities. The Australian Bureau of Statistics recognises the complexities of including Aboriginal people in the census, much of this due to distrust of government officials, low levels of literacy and an oral based communication heritage that does not use forms. This was difficult for the Bureau to overcome even by using indigenous census field officers. (Alphenaar et al. 1999,1,4.) There have been some successes in carrying out surveys in Aboriginal communities. Michaels (1986,29-34) carried out a brief survey of the communication needs of the Warlpiri at Yuendemu in 1983. Meadows (1987, 102-112) surveyed the Townsville Aboriginal community on their portrayal in the media. Marika Moisseeff (1999) conducted a survey of the Aboriginal community at Davenport South Australia and Neil Turner (1999) surveyed BRACS broadcasters throughout Australia in 1999. However, Turner and Moisseeff's surveys were conducted at the request of Aboriginal people themselves. Moisseeff had also lived and carried out fieldwork at Davenport for several years and Turner was a well respected European BRACS worker well known to Aboriginal broadcasters. Michaels conducted his survey

with the assistance of Peter Toyne the European adult educator at Yuendemu. Toyne was well known by the community. The information in the latest ATSIC review of Aboriginal broadcasting 'Digital Dreaming' was obtained from questionnaires and telephone interviews (ATSIC 1999b,8). Even though this information was requested through Aboriginal organisations of ATSIC and NIMAA, the final report 'Digital Dreaming' does not seem to have the depth of the material in the Turner review.

It was becoming evident at the design stage of this research that using the existing literature would not be sufficient. In particular, there was little recently available material that could provide any information about what was currently happening, if anything, in remote Aboriginal broadcasting. So in April and May 1999, I travelled to interview key members of the Warlpiri Media Association at Yuendemu in the Northern Territory and PY Media at Umuwa, near Ernabella, in South Australia. I also spent time in Alice Springs with the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) and Imparja the Aboriginal run company that is the licence holder for the central zone commercial television licence.

The intention was not to carry out in-depth ethnographic fieldwork, as there was neither the time or scope in this Masters study to do so, nor were the interviews I carried out intended to be the primary source for this research. Rather they were an addition to the document analysis and a means of gathering up-to-date information from both questions and observation. Travelling to remote communities also made further documentation available, providing access to valuable papers and reports tucked away in the bottom of filing cabinets.

Interview questions

I interviewed a total of 20 people: 13 male and 5 female; 13 non-indigenous and 5 indigenous, all of whom had worked until recently, or were still working, in Aboriginal media. The interviewees included co-ordinators of the BRACS services for the Warlpiri Media Association, for CAAMA and for PY Media at Umuwa near Ernabella. The non-Aboriginal people interviewed were employed by Aboriginal media associations or land councils and were nominated as suitable people to be interviewed by those bodies. Brief

biographical details of the interviewees can be found at Appendix 3. I had to apply for a permit to visit these communities through their regional Land Councils and approval was granted to speak with nominated people. Restrictions were imposed as part of the permit for instance on carrying or consuming alcohol, entering private property without permission (including public areas outside houses) and taking photographs without permission.

The following questions were covered in unstructured interviews:

Q1. How would you describe yourself or your organisation?

Q2. Can you describe what you or your organisation does?

Q3. In your opinion has Aboriginal broadcasting been a success? If so why or if not why not?

Q4. In your view has broadcasting affected traditional culture?

Q5. Are men and women equally involved in Aboriginal broadcasting? (Ask both women and men)

Q6. What links do you have with other organisations and what are they?

I also kept the questions informal, allowing respondents to reply broadly and in detail. Respondents also showed me around the broadcasting facilities. Interviews could not be set up with strict appointments. I waited patiently and stopped and resumed interviews at different times. I did check that all questions had been covered on completion. In addition to their answers to the questions, interviewees offered considerably more material. This additional information provided greater insight into Aboriginal broadcasting, for example, historical information and other background.

My intention to record interviews on tape did not occur as it was not only difficult to obtain the equipment to take to such a remote area but it would also have been intrusive. I took notes at the time of the interview and wrote them up as soon as possible afterwards. I also kept a journal. An outline of this thesis has been offered to the communities to comment on or correct anything that is not accurate.

The limitations of ethnographic studies

As this thesis relies on some ethnographic material by others, as well as ethnographic interviews that I have carried out, I would like to note some of the limitations of ethnography, especially in Aboriginal communities where society is strictly divided between young and old and male and female.

Michaels (1987d, 127-141) was critical of anthropology, and was never really accepted into the academic discipline (Hebdige 1994,x; Hodge 1990,201). He stated:

> 'Can we still justify placing a bell jar over a culture and claim to describe it adequately in nine (or twelve or twenty) chapters, or does this now prove preposterous?'(Michaels 1987g, 130.)

Spradley (1979, 25) notes that building relationships with informants is an important part of the ethnographic interview:

> 'Ethnographers work together with informants to produce a cultural description. This relationship is complex and ...[the] success of doing ethnography depends to a great extent, on understanding the nature of this relationship. An ethnographer seeks out ordinary people with ordinary knowledge and builds on common experience. Slowly, through a series of interviews, by repeated explanations and through the use of special questions, ordinary people become excellent informants.'

Spradley stresses that taking time to build these relationships is important as well as to entertain dialogue. However the question /answer model proposed by Spradley is not necessarily appropriate for interviews with Aborigines. As already mentioned, Walsh (1991, 3) argues that Aborigines have a non-dyadic style of conversation which uses plenty of silence between words, unlike the two-way conversation in western society. The more influential members of society, such as older people, just listen and reply when they need. Community elders agreed that I should be able to visit, greeted me politely and left

me to interview their emissaries in the form of the non-Aboriginal employee. Yet there was an element of trust in this relationship in that my permit had been granted and their spokespeople were also trusted to represent community views. I recognise that my mature age, as well as my background in community broadcasting and anthropology, have left me with links with those involved in Aboriginal broadcasting that could lead to building trust. I had sufficient empathy to understand the difficulties of broadcasting in remote areas and I had knowledge of the technology.

Male bias in anthropology has been recognised in recent years. Edwin Ardener (1975, 3) in his paper *Belief and the Problem of Women* states:

> 'The fact is that no one could come back from an ethnographic study of "the X", having talked only to women and about men, without professional comment and some self doubt. The reverse can and does happen constantly.'

Feminist anthropologist Diane Bell (1983,26) argued that she was able to elicit more information in her study of Warlpiri women, as she was an adult woman with children thus giving her status in Warlpiri eyes. Others have argued that Bell's status as a European was as important as that of her age or motherhood (Stotz 1999).

There is a strong possibility of introducing one's own cultural bias into ethnography, a problem anthropologists have recognised in recent years and tried to address, to the extent that some have observed that anthropology can only teach you about your own culture not that of someone else. I was careful not to impose any cultural bias in my study. I did end up speaking with more male respondents than female, but they did point out the strong female involvement in broadcasting. However, from the written sources I used there were more female ethnographers (Bell, Dussart, Munn, and Stotz) of the Warlpiri than men (Meggitt and Michaels).

My understanding of Aboriginal culture also assisted in observations as well as interviews. For instance, I was able to understand the importance of 'sorry business' or the ritual mourning process after a death which was involving much of the Yuendemu community, especially the women, while I was there. Because of this, much of the usual

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activity in broadcasting had been curtailed. Someone with less experience of Aboriginal culture may have interpreted it as lack of interest in broadcasting.

Comparative analysis with other remote indigenous broadcasters

Glaser and Strauss (1967, 21,49-50) recommend in social research that some comparative analysis be made with a group that has features in common with the group being studied. I have included a brief comparison with the Pitjantjatjara in South Australia in Chapters 5 and 6. Information for this has been obtained from my fieldwork, where I had the opportunity to visit the Pitjantjatjara in South Australia and the BRACS broadcasters serviced by CAAMA out of Alice Springs. In particular, the Pitjantjatjara shared a similar colonial experience with the Warlpiri. They were forcibly settled in the 1940s but were also able to keep strong ties with their land, language and culture. Michaels was aware of the early video experiments at Ernabella and possibly they were an influence on his work at Yuendemu (Batty 1999, Michaels 1986,88-9). Unlike the Warlpiri, there is little written material on the experiment with broadcasting at Ernabella, although some videos are currently archived in the South Australian Museum and there has been some written material by Neil Turner (1990; 1998) who worked in broadcasting with the Pitjantjatjara. Information about other remote Aboriginal broadcasters was obtained from Neil Turner's (1999) report and ATSIC's Digital Dreaming report (ATSIC 1999b).

There may also be insights into why the Warlpiri adopted modern communications technology in a comparative analysis with the indigenous communities of other countries. There is considerable literature concerning the adoption of new technology in the third world. Most of these economies are agrarian rather than hunting and gathering and differ culturally. For this reason, and for reasons of space, I have chosen to limit the comparison of Aboriginal broadcasting to the experience of the Inuit in remote Northern Canada and the Maori from Aotearoa (New Zealand). They both have a hunting and gathering component of their economy similar to Aboriginal economy, although the Maori also have some horticulture. Both are pre-literate cultures, have experienced a similar colonial experience as a British colony and they still have a dominant European coloniser. Information on indigenous media development in Canada was available in the literature, especially joint journals such as Australian Canadian Studies and the Canadian Journal of

Communication. Maori broadcasting was more difficult to source from literature and the opportunity to interview broadcasting policy makers on a recent trip to New Zealand provided useful information (Hollings 1999).

Summary

Cross cultural studies have been recognised as difficult due to differences in language and culture. The study of indigenous media is a recent one and there is a limited amount of source material available. The remote locations of communities involved, and poor communications, also makes obtaining information difficult. Of all Aboriginal media organisations, the Warlpiri Media Association is possibly the best documented through the original work of Eric Michaels and others who have followed in his footsteps such as Meadows and Molnar. Source material on Aboriginal issues in general was available at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, although the early ethnographic material had to be viewed for possible European bias. The use of surveys and questionnaires in Aboriginal communities has been fraught with difficulty due to low literacy skills and a distrust of forms, so the questions I asked were done face to face. The period of fieldwork was a necessity to obtain up-to-date information from a primary source through interviews and observation and also assisted in filling in the missing pieces adding to the depth of this study. It was only when seeing the broadcasting system in operation at Yuendemu that much of the theoretical framework fell into place and it also provided an opportunity to visit a number of other remote Aboriginal broadcasters. I also examined briefly the development of indigenous broadcasting in New Zealand and Canada supplementing the written material on New Zealand with a visit to Maori broadcasters.

Towards the end of the study additional up-to-date material became available. This material included the ATSIC report 'Digital Dreaming'(1999b), Neil Turner's 1998 review of BRACS and the debate on indigenous broadcasting at the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into the Broadcasting Services Act (1999).

CHAPTER THREE: THE INTRODUCTION OF MEDIA TECHNOLOGY - THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE THESIS

Introduction

The development of indigenous broadcasting policy in Australia in the 1970s and early 1980s was built on a number of theoretical influences. One was the role of the media in development communications theory to 'modernise' third world countries into taking up western ways (Altman, 1987,6; Katz, 1977, 113; Rogers 1995). This contrasted with the colonial view that Australia had inherited of preserving indigenous cultures in Australia and New Guinea as a 'living museum' before they were totally overtaken by the dominant culture (Carpenter 1976,92). During this period, the Aboriginal Affairs policy that had been based on assimilation into mainstream Australian society was slowly being replaced by a policy of self-determination (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1981). Meanwhile, the broadcasting policy of the Federal Government sought to ensure that that external dominant cultures were not imposed through the mass media to ensure the maintenance of Australian culture (Turner 1997,342).

The original policy document on Aboriginal broadcasting 'Out of the Silent Land' was developed in 1984 by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, in conjunction with the Department of Communications. The policy reflected some of the older colonial views. For instance, there was blanket assumption that Aborigines in remote areas would not wish to receive any form of western electronic media but would prefer to either turn off the signal or embed their own programming. This was not necessarily true at a time when indigenous communities were beginning to seek more dialogue with non-Aboriginal Australians. 'Out of the Silent Land' was a strange mixture of development theory, a drive for technological change and a touch of old fashioned anthropology.

This Chapter looks at the theoretical basis of the influences on Aboriginal broadcasting policy. Firstly, there is an examination of the theory of the introduction of modern communication technology to western culture as a whole, and mainstream Australia in particular. Then there is an examination of the theory about the introduction of modern

communication technology to indigenous communities and a discussion about whether Aboriginal communities can change.

The introduction of mass media to western culture

During the 1980s, media analysis began to be carried out in a social context using the methodology of ethnography originally developed by anthropologists and sociologists (Hall 1980, 59;Turner 1997, 389). An example of this was Carolyn Marvin's (1988) work 'When Old Technologies were New' which examined the impact of the introduction of electricity, with the resulting telegraphy and telephony, on *fin de siecle* Western culture. Marvin found relationships between the genders were altered as courtship occurred using the telephone where there was no paternal control, class distinctions were broken down, as visual clues to class were not available during telephone conversations, and men's conversations were restricted as female telephone operators could overhear any swearing.

The introduction of television into western culture was considered to have made a similar social impact to that of telecommunications. Concerns were expressed, particularly about its effect on the breakdown of family life (Turner and Tulloch 1989, xi). A film documentary of the introduction of television to Fort Wayne, a small town in Texas, in 1955 chronicled a number of changes to the local community. Cinemas were empty and libraries lent far fewer books. The mid-week church service was cancelled. Already concerns were raised about the effect of television on children, that it would increase violence and lead to sleeplessness in the general population. Even eating patterns changed with the introduction of TV dinners (BBC and WBGH 1998).

One of the major issues concerning the influence of the media has been its influence on children. Hodge (1987,158-9) examined research on the effects of the media on children. He placed the influence of mass media in a cultural context, concluding that there was no direct influence as the media can only affect behaviour indirectly via the meaning, beliefs and values of the social group of the child. He also pointed out that there was a contradiction in the concerns over children and the media in that:

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'On the one hand, children are seen as helpless, vulnerable and innocent, the passive victims of powerful and rapacious forces seeking to harm and exploit them. The function of this ideological message is clear. The more helpless the child, and the more evil the enemy, the more power its guardian can claim on its behalf....But children are also seen as incessantly, wilfully seeking out pleasure, tending towards destruction and evil/anti-social behaviour.' (Hodge 1987,159.)

There is a strong correlation between the view of the impact of mass media on children and the paternalistic view of some policy makers, including some Aboriginal policy makers, about the impact of the media on indigenous communities. Few recognised that indigenous cultures had survived major intrusions and that mass media was part of a continuous line of European impacts.

The introduction of mass media to mainstream Australia

The introduction of new media in Australia met with similar concerns to those raised in other western countries. Much of the focus of study into the introduction of communication technology in Australia has placed it in the context of infrastructural development, for example the introduction of the telegraph or telephone was seen as a means of improving the infrastructure of the country. This was done without examining the social impact of the introduction of that technology (Langton, 1994,xvi,). There is an element of this still today in communication policy making, which is often done in isolation to the social effects of that media. This has been particularly true in the case of indigenous media development where technology has often been developed with minimal consultation with communities (Corker 1989,43-4).

The debate on influence of the media in Australia in the 1970s was based on the neo Marxist theory of the power of elites and a suspicion of US mass manipulation theories (McQueen 1977, 208; Turner 1997,314). Concerns were raised about the control of the media by a few powerful Australians, as well as the effect of imported American programming on a defined post-colonial Australian culture (Turner 1997,342). The 1970s and 1980s saw a freeing up of radio and television licences for use by the community as a whole not just by commercial broadcasters and the ABC. Radio, in particular, was

becoming an accessible medium where the general community could learn the skills to broadcast and afford the technology involved (Molnar 1997, 203). There appeared to be an overall concern from those involved in broadcasting policy and other interested individuals that the general Australian community should have access to, and control of, broadcast media. McQueen (1977, 208) considered community radio was the only answer to the control of the media by Australian and overseas power elites. This view was put into practice with the adoption of community radio broadcasting from the mid 1970s by interest groups such a specialist music broadcasters, the politically aware, ethnic broadcasters and radio for the print handicapped (Molnar 1997, 203 personal experience[6]).

The introduction of mass media to indigenous cultures

The impact on the third world of mass media as a positive force for change over old-fashioned ideas was a contradiction to the views of the impact of the introduction of mass media to western cultures, where the introduction of mass media was considered to particularly upset traditional power balances and social structures in general (Curran, Gurevitch, and Woollacott 1982, 14). This was a contradiction to the view that the introduction of mass media to the third world could only bring change for the good. In other words, it is all right for the mass media to change your society but not to influence mine.

Michaels (1986,2) was of the view that new technology could not be viewed in isolation from the culture, whether western or indigenous, in which it is used. Nor does technology have the same impact on different cultures. Rather it must be viewed in the context of that culture. As we have seen, media studies were becoming more complex during the 1980s and emphasis was put on placing electronic media in the context of the culture or society of the people viewing or listening (Ruby 1990, 44).

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[6] From 1977 to 1986 I was involved with Community radio 2XX in Canberra. I was on its Board of Management for several years and was a member of the Public Broadcasting Association of Australia.

Development communication theory

The application of communication theory to indigenous and third world cultures has mainly focussed on the use of mass media to invoke change as part of development programs. Early communication theories, such as Everett Rogers' diffusion model during the 1950s and 1960s, saw the introduction of mass media as a powerful tool for the conversion of the third world to modern methods of agriculture, family planning and public health improvements. The uptake of televisions and radios themselves were considered a measurement of the modernity of a third world country. (Rogers 1995, 56-71, 126.)

In his original diffusion model developed in the 1960s, Rogers (1995, 10-22) describes a linear model where a change is adopted within society. Firstly there are the innovators who adopt the change enthusiastically and influence others to change. The innovators are followed by early adopters, then the early majority (who are influenced by the early adopters), then the late majority (who are reluctant to change) and finally, the laggards (who may never accept the proposed change). Change agents, who are trusted by the community, are used to encourage change. In a recent reworking of his original theory, Rogers accepts that this may have been a simplistic view, which not only assumed that change was always a good thing, but also denied control and participation of those upon whom the change was being imposed. He also recognised that change was unlikely to occur without the community perceiving a benefit for themselves. (Rogers 1995, 120-9.)

Even today many post-colonial writers consider that mass communication has a role in development theory ignoring any impact of the dominant culture. Jamias (1993, 205-7) found that people in rural communities in Indonesia who watched television had a better knowledge of development programs, were better at managing resources, understood health and family planning programs and had learnt the dominant language Bahasa Indonesian. While he saw the acceptance of a consumer society as undesirable he considered changed language patterns to be an advantage to rural people. Recently Trakrov and Bamezai (1996, 163-8) were directly applying Rogers' diffusion theory to promoting changed behaviour in India using satellite television.

Most of the theoretical view was that the overriding effects of mass media were inevitable. The world would speed up its lineal evolutionary line from the invention of the wheel, the road, paper, printing, literacy, the telegraph and ultimately electronic media to become a 'global village', (McLuhan 1964, 92-3). Little thought was put to the destructive effect of western-based mass media on traditional culture. The prevailing view was that changing to western ways and adopting development programs would be of benefit to third world people. There were a number of exceptions, one of which was Elihu Katz (1977, 116) who expressed concern about whether traditional cultures could survive the introduction of new technologies, particularly as these cultures were pre-literate.

Neo-marxism

The neo-marxist movement in the late 1960s and 1970s was highly critical of the role of media in spreading colonialist views. McQueen (1977,178) was particularly suspicious about satellite communication, which he saw as contributing to imperialist conflict rather than just delivering international sports coverage. He also was not supportive of the use of mass media in postcolonial societies:

> 'Today the three countries which have nation-wide educational satellites are India, Indonesia and Brazil. All three are brutal fascist dictatorships whose 'peaceful' satellites are part of a political control system which backs up more direct forms of military repression.' McQueen (1977,181.)

The fourth world

Rogers had developed his theory to apply to third world countries not to those indigenous inhabitants within a country. Fay Ginsberg (1993, 357-375) recognised this in her paper 'Indigenous media: Faustian Contract or Global Village' where she describes indigenous and minority people as the 'fourth world' rather than the third world as they exist as a minority group within a dominant culture. Batty (1996) uses a similar model and describes the Inuit in Canada and Aborigines in Australia as 'Nations within Nations'.

The linking of ethnography and communications theory

As a discipline, anthropology was very much focussed on describing the last vestiges of traditional societies before they succumbed to the changes imposed by colonialism (Cohen 196,1; Worth and Adair 1975,25). These indigenous societies were seen as living museums and, where they were sufficiently remote, there was hope to preserve them as such. Berndt (1977,2) was of the view that Aboriginal societies were 'closed' in that they were usually self-contained and self-sufficient. He, therefore, considered that they were highly likely to break down on contact with other cultures. Katz (Katz and Wedell 1977, 175) was particularly concerned that, as the dominant language ultimately controls broadcasting, smaller or less politically powerful language groups would decline as a result.

By the early 1970s, some communication experts were using ethnographic methods. One of these was Edmund Carpenter (1976,92), a Canadian communication theorist hired by the Australian Government to observe the introduction of radio and film to Highland New Guinea. In his book 'Oh What a Blow the Phantom gave me' he wrote:

> 'We use media to destroy such cultures, but first we use media to create a false record of what we are about to destroy.'

Carpenter (1976, 142) saw mass media, especially radio, as a threat to traditional cultures:

> 'I see radio as potentially very dangerous, especially where it lacks serious competition from other media. Radio's role in North Africa and Indonesia should serve as a warning. In each place it broke down small, traditional tribes, then retribalised the population as a whole, building nationalism to a feverish pitch and creating unreasonable national goals and consumer hopes.'

Yet in an earlier writing with Marshal McLuhan (Carpenter and McLuhan, 1960,69), Carpenter argues that radio is a particularly apt medium for evoking a visual image similar to the traditional stories of the shaman with which indigenous people could relate.

Sol Worth and John Adair (1975) were also among the first to combine ethnography with media studies when in 1966 they sought to find if the Navajo Indians had their own unique style of filmmaking. They provided basic training to six Navajo people about the equipment but did not interfere in the production.

> 'Our object in the survey of 1966 was to determine whether we could teach
> people with a culture different from ours to make motion pictures depicting their
> culture and themselves as they saw fit. We assumed that if such people would use
> motion pictures in their way they would use them in a patterned rather than
> random fashion, and that the particular patterns they used would reflect their
> culture and their particular cognitive style.' (Worth and Adair 1975,11.)

They found that the style and editing of the films were very different to western productions. The Navajo filmmakers used few close-ups or eye contact and the filmmakers did a lot of walking. They utilised jump cuts in the editing and often inserted scenes out of context. (Worth and Adair 1975, 129 -171.) Worth and Adair concentrated on textual analysis in their study and not the social implications of the filmmaking. Although some social elements were recorded when the community was offended by one film and the traditional reciprocity of two girls were obliged to pay their grandfather to appear in their film. (Worth and Adair 1975,183, 269.)

Worth and Adair were the inspiration for Eric Michaels to come to Australia and commence a similar study to see how an Aboriginal community would produce videos if given the equipment. (Michaels and Kelly1984, 33.)

Indigenous culture and the adoption of change – modern anthropological thinking

By the early 1970s, anthropologists and ethnographers were also feeling uncomfortable about their role of recording the 'dying days' of traditional cultures and were looking for new ways of thinking (Benterrak et al. 1996,206-7). Anthropologists began to examine

how traditional cultures coped with change. Geertz (1973, 218) specifically examined cultural change, and saw cultures as 'road maps' which provide templates for societies to follow:

> '...the various sorts of cultural symbol systems are extrinsic sources of information, templates for the organisation of social and psychological processes, they come crucially into play in situations where the particular kind of information they contain is lacking, where institutionalized guides for behaviour, thought or feeling are weak or absent. It is in country unfamiliar emotionally or topographically that one needs poems and road maps.'

From historic records, Henry Reynolds (1981) found evidence that Aborigines quickly adapted to change after the European invasion. They ate the new foods, used new words, built Europeans into their kinship systems and took up animal husbandry and horse riding.

> 'Aborigines were neither apathetic in the face of European invasion nor incurious about the newcomer's lifestyle. The historical record indicates that they were not locked into a rigid unchanging culture. They showed themselves just as capable of adapting to altered circumstances as the European pioneers who were learning to strike their own balance between continuity and innovation in the new world. Yet there were aspects of Aboriginal culture and philosophy which proved remarkably resistant to change. Traditional society was, therefore, both more conservative and more innovative than standard accounts have suggested, with their picture of a culture too rigid to bend collapsing suddenly and completely under the pressure of European invasion.' (Reynolds 1981, 49.)

In examining change specifically in Aboriginal society, Berndt (1977,7) considered that Aboriginal society would be able to adapt to change if that change could be fitted into existing cultural 'templates' such as kinship. This view is similar to the views of Marvin (1988, 235) about technological change fitting into the existing patterns of western culture.

Anthropologists considered ceremonial life to be the most traditional and unchanging area, yet Munn (1973,89) observed the introduction of new stories or designs by the Warlpiri to their ceremonies following a dream. Dussart (1988,34) recognised change occurring in Warlpiri ceremonies:

> 'Aboriginal people constantly and dogmatically assert their cosmology is unchanging and that leading their lives they follow the letter that is prescribed by the Law. The reality of life, however, is that the cosmology and religious order are dynamic and changing.'

Generally there was little recognition by policy makers that Aborigines were a colonised society. Aborigines had two choices, either they opted to become assimilated into European Australia (and had all the advantages of European society) or they remained in their traditional communities where they received 'handouts'. While there was recognition in 'Out of the Silent Land' that broadcasting could play a role in Aboriginal health education and community development (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984,vi) anthropological thinking, inherited from a colonial past, had a greater influence on Australian policy makers in Aboriginal Affairs than did communication development theory.

In reworking his original diffusion theory for communicating change, Everett Rogers (1995, 225) recognises that indigenous knowledge systems can play an important part in innovation:

> ' An innovation may be comparable not only with deeply embedded cultural values but also with previously adopted ideas. Compatibility of an innovation with a preceding idea can either speed up or retard its rate of adoption. Old ideas are the main mental tools that individuals utilise to assess new ideas. One cannot deal with an innovation except on the basis of the familiar, with what is known. Previous practice provides a familiar standard against which an innovation can be interpreted, thus decreasing uncertainty.'

Rogers (1995,268) argues, in the recent revision of his work, that even the most traditional societies can embrace a change if the change fits into the values of the society. He cites the Amish religious sect of North America who, although they avoid any consumer or agricultural innovation still using horse drawn vehicles, have adopted organic farming and ecological groundwater protection systems. These innovations fit into their religious beliefs as clean soil and water has religious significance. However, none of Rogers' examples moves beyond the simple introduction of the technology to the broader political context of colonialism such as loss of land.

Debbie Brisebois (1994,141), Executive Director of the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation in remote Canada, argues that the Inuit have successfully adapted technological innovation throughout their history. Neither firearms nor snowmobiles are indigenous to the north but both have become central elements of contemporary Inuit hunting culture. Rosemarie Kuptana, President of the Inuit Broadcasting Association, (in Ginsburg 1993, 360) makes the same argument that indigenous cultures can cope with change:

> '... the history of the Inuit people is a history of adaption: to climatic change, to cultural threat, to technological innovation.'

Altman's adoption versus adaption theory

Having recognised that traditional indigenous societies do change, recently ethnographers have examined how Aboriginal communities have coped with that change. Altman (1987) found, in his study of the introduction of a cash economy to the Gunwinggu people of remote north-central Arnhem Land, that while social relationships did alter, the cash economy was adapted to fit into existing cultural patterns. For example, while individual people received wages or social security payments replacing traditional sharing of food resources, the cash was often shared through the community, either in traditional ways or through novel means such as gambling in card games. (Altman 1987, 163-8)

Altman (1987, 187) argues that adoption is different from adaption in indigenous communities. He is of the view that a new technology can be adopted and used for totally

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new social circumstances or adapted to fit in with traditional processes. For example, Gunwinggu women adopted European foods by purchasing flour and other foods from the local shop, which replaced the time consuming task of their traditional daily food gathering parties for bush carbohydrate. In very early days the Gunwinggu men, on the other hand, adapted material technology such as iron headed spears, knives, and axes and fishing hooks. More recently they have added shotguns, vehicles and boats. This technology has been adapted for use in traditional hunting parties by Gunwinggu men using traditional social practices. Even when technology was adapted, Altman still observed some slight changes. For example, men could now access their traditional economy of meat and fish more efficiently using the new technology, less skilled hunters could now be more successful with the new technology, and traditional restrictions on hunting native species do not apply to introduced species. The result was that younger men could access more of the economy possibly reducing the power and status of the older men. (1987, 187-9).

'... On the one hand the adoption of market foods has resulted in the liberation of women from the most onerous tasks in the subsistence economy. The adaption of market technology has similarly reduced men's work effort. The fact that market goods are unrestricted has resulted in a freeing of people from consumption prohibitions and subsequent greater egalitarianism in the social relations of production. On the other hand these changes have undermined women's productive autonomy in the economy and have diluted senior men's authority in the secular sphere.' (Altman 1987, 189)

Altman (1987, 189) argues that this is why older people prefer outstation living where the traditional economic authority remains.

Historian Lyndall Ryan (in McGrath 1995,370) argues that Aborigines successfully adapted cattlework into their own cultural framework as being involved in pastoralism allowed them to remain on their traditional lands and continue to share food with their kin. Stotz (1993) examined the use of four wheel drive vehicles in a Warlpiri outstation in Central Australia. She observed that the vehicles were controlled by senior men who undertook traditional kinship obligations such as driving relatives to hospital or children

to school. If these obligations were not carried out their ownership was relinquished and given to another senior man in the clan. In the vehicle traditional kinship patterns occurred with men and women sitting apart and 'avoidance' relationships, where it was not appropriate for classificatory mothers-in-law to communicate with their potential sons-in-law, were still observed.

The use of vehicles, although adapted into traditional patterns, did result in some changes; for example they brought more distant relations into closer contact and sped up life:

> 'Space and time are forever shrinking. While sitting arrangements in the car are still strict reflections of social closeness or distance, the activities contained in the separate spheres are thereby dissolving at the edges, that is at least for the duration of the trip.' (Stotz 1993,129.)

There is strong evidence that indigenous cultures can adapt to change and that the Warlpiri have done so. But this has only occurred in Altman's paradigm of adaption. That is the change, whether it be four wheel drives, metal axes or new ceremonies, is adapted to fit into existing cultural structures rather than adopted to replace former practices and structures entirely.

While Aboriginal communities have shown evidence that they could and would embrace change provided it was not to the detriment of their culture, sometimes this change is perceived as being too fast. In the early 1980s Warlpiri society was facing considerable change with the Warlpiri Media Association observing:

> 'Change has been so swift that Warlpiri speakers haven't had sufficient time to establish a standard for speaking about new things in their language.' (Warlpiri Media Association 1982, 7.)

Summary

The introduction of new media into western cultures as a whole, and Australia in particular, was met with concern that its effects would cause cultural change. However, a similar introduction of new media was seen by western theorists, through development communication theory such as Rogers' (1995) diffusion theory, as a power for good to modernise the third world. Neo-marxist thinking by McQueen (1977) in the 1970s rejected development theory as a method of applying western power structures to the third world. Indigenous cultures that lie within other nations have been described by Ginsburg (1993) as the 'fourth world' and by Batty (1996) as 'Nations within nations'. Rather than communication theory, anthropology, with its concept that traditional cultures should be preserved has been more of an influence on Australian policy makers in Aboriginal affairs. However, there has been some overlap between the two field in the work of people like Carpenter and Worth who combined ethnography with film making and that of Eric Michaels who worked with the Warlpiri at Yuendemu. Traditional anthropologists considered that indigenous cultures could not change but recent anthropological thinking has shown that they can. Altman (1987) argues that Aboriginal cultures adapt change such as the use of new technology, like rifles and vehicles, into their existing cultural patterns rather than adopt the new practices and change their traditional patterns.

CHAPTER FOUR: INDIGENOUS BROADCASTING POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN AUSTRALIA AND A COMPARISON WITH NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA

Introduction

This Chapter looks at the development of broadcasting policy in Australia as well as that of New Zealand and Canada. It seeks to find some comparisons between the development of indigenous media in other countries to attempt to identify if there are any parallels that would assist in explaining the Warlpiri's use of media.

The indigenous population of Australia, New Zealand and Canada share a similar colonial experience. They can be described as the fourth world or nations within nations, as indigenous cultures living within a dominant colonial society.

The development of indigenous media policy in Australia

The following is an overview of indigenous media policy in Australia from the early 1980s until the present.

The early period

The Aboriginal community was calling for a media policy to be developed in the early 1980s. When addressing the North Western Advisory Committee of the ABC in 1980, Lyall Munro of the National Aboriginal Conference called for a policy on Aboriginal media to redress the imbalance of reporting on indigenous issues (Noble and Munro 1980,3-7). In the journal *Media Information Australia*, John Macumba and Philip Batty, founder members of CAAMA, called for an Aboriginal broadcasting policy that worked from the grass roots rather than a top down policy imposed from above. At the time CAAMA was already working with the ABC and SBS to establish Aboriginal programming (Macumba and Batty 1980,8-9). However, there was still no indigenous media policy in place by 1984 when the urgent need for a policy was imposed on the Department of Aboriginal Affairs by the impending launch in July 1985 of the AUSSAT satellite. As already mentioned, there were concerns in remote Aboriginal communities,

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as well as among policy makers in Aboriginal Affairs, about the impact of satellite broadcasting on traditional cultures (Michaels and Warlpiri Media Association 1985,np, Walsh 1983, 71-4). In 1983 Grant Noble and Phillip Elsegood (1983 63-72) surveyed 183 Aboriginal people in a total of four remote Northern Territory communities: two with access to television and two without. They found that the impending satellite was very likely to affect traditional life especially in that '...broadcast TV may upset the traditional value structure and possibly downgrade the position of 'elites' in such communities.' (Noble and Elsegood 1983 70.)[7]

The introduction of satellite technology to remote Australia cannot be divorced from the broader community views of broadcasting at the time nor from broadcasting policy. The 1970s and 1980s saw a freeing up of radio and television licences for use by the community as a whole not just by commercial broadcasters and the ABC. Community Radio, in particular, was becoming an accessible medium where the general community could learn the skills to broadcast and afford the technology involved (Molnar 1997:203). There appeared to be an overall concern from those involved in broadcasting policy and other interested individuals that the general Australian community should have access to and control of broadcast media. Humphrey McQueen (1977, 208) considered community radio was the only answer to the control of the media by Australian and overseas power elites. This view was put into practice with the introduction of community radio from the mid 1970s by interest groups such as specialist music broadcasters, the politically aware, ethnic broadcasters and the print handicapped. Among these groups were Aboriginal broadcasters. Urban Aboriginal radio existed since the beginning of community broadcasting in 1975, usually sharing time on community stations. Most notable was the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) broadcasting Aboriginal public radio in Alice Springs on 8CC in 1983. CAAMA went on to establish its own radio network 8KIN in 1986 (Molnar 1997, 222).

The introduction of a new licensing system required a new regulator and, in 1977, the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT) replaced the former Australian Broadcasting

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[7] This study has been criticised for its sample size and the communities chosen were large and atypical of most remote Aboriginal communities (Walsh 1983,73-4).

Control Board, established in 1949. The role of the ABT was to regulate licensing, ownership and program standards for commercial and public broadcasters. However, the ABC and SBS were also expected to abide by its policies. (Meadows 1992, 9.) As will be shown later, the ABT was to have a considerable influence on the direction of Aboriginal broadcasting, especially in its hearings into the Remote Commercial Television Service (RCTS) licence applications when it took deliberate steps to consult with, and obtain evidence from, indigenous people and their organisations during licence hearings. The Minister for Communication's decision that the Remote Commercial Television Service should be regionalised and given to four separate licensees not just rebroadcast from a capital city also had an impact on indigenous broadcasting as it ensured that indigenous needs were taken into consideration and allowed ultimately for an indigenous broadcaster to hold the RCTS licence for the central zone. (Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1985; 1986.)

Task Force on Remote Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting

From 1983, with the new Hawke Labor Government in power, there was a new policy of self-determination in the area of Aboriginal policy making (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1981,np). Aboriginal bureaucrats, such as Charles Perkins and Eric Willmot who were respectively the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1984a, 1-7), were also concerned about the impact of European television and radio on remote Aboriginal communities. Together with the Department of Communications, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) commissioned a review of remote Aboriginal broadcasting and communications which was published in 1984 as 'Out of the Silent Land'. In this publication, DAA began to consider policy options that would allow the communities some control over the new satellite service. Recommendations from this report would ultimately lead to the introduction of the Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Service (BRACS) (Turner 1998,7).

The Hawke Labor Government established the Task Force on Remote Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting in March 1984 to attempt to identify the needs of remote Aboriginal communities in broadcasting and to develop an indigenous broadcasting

policy. The broader political context in the early 1980s focussed on equity issues, in that Aboriginal communities should have access to the same services as the rest of Australia (or better services where inequities needed to be urgently addressed). It was also the period of fledgling land rights and many communities were moving out to remote outstations creating the need for improved communication in case of emergencies. Good communications in the form of short wave radio, as well as four wheel drive vehicles, were an essential part of the outstation movement and Aboriginal communities lobbied strongly for effective services (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1981, np; 1984a, 40-1; 1986,np).

The Task Force was chaired by Eric Willmot who had a considered view that better communication in remote areas would greatly improve living conditions. The Task Force was a mix of policy makers with different philosophies including representatives from the National Aboriginal Conference, the Aboriginal Development Commission, the National Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting Association, the Department of Communications and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs[8]. The participants from the Department of Communications were very much focussed on the practical introduction of the technology and ensuring that users were aware what the new technology could provide as well as its limitations. Those from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, including both white and Aboriginal social policy makers, were concerned about the social impact of the new technology on the remote communities.[9] (Australia. Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1984, 3-4; Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984, np, Batty 1996, 124-5). There were a number of paradigms within the Task Force. There were a mixture of technologists as well as social policy makers from the broadcasting and education fields, who had been influenced by current theories of media monopolies and control of the media; and social anthropologists

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[8] The Secretariat was based in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and was headed by George Menham and included Simon Richmond, Ron Liddle (who had worked in Aboriginal broadcasting and for the ABC) and Lorraine Leigh. There were also a number of other contributors including Eric Michaels, Brian Walsh (who had carried out indigenous consultation on behalf of AUSSAT in 1982), and representatives from Telecom, Pacific Educational Information Services, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Northern Service and the ABC (Australia. Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1984,3-4; Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984,np, Batty 1996124-5).
[9] I worked briefly with the Task Force Secretariat in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs during the first half of 1985 when it had been retained to develop further some of the policy issues arising from the report 'Out of the Silent Land'. During this period the Task Force prepared submissions to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal on the Remote Commercial Television Service and the Aboriginal content of commercial television services at the licence renewal hearings of commercial television services in Sydney and Melbourne. It also issued capital funding for the Yuendemu and Ernabella video projects and to CAAMA and TAIMA and ABC Aboriginal cadet training in Townsville.

with backgrounds of ethnographic paradigms, particularly the fragility of pre-literate cultures.

It was a hurried review and its final report, 'Out of the Silent Land' was tabled in Parliament after only a five-month period. The Task Force came up with a total of fifty-five recommendations (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1986, np; Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984,vi). Basing their view on a study by Katz (1977,115), the Task Force considered that radio was more appropriate than television because of its low cost and simplicity in comparison to television. They also saw a need to insert television programming at the local level produced from central Aboriginal production houses using Film Australia or the ABC rather than local facilities. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1986, np; Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984,viii.)

The Task Force report made the following recommendations:
- Broadcasting and telecommunication policies should recognise the responsibility to protect and promote Aboriginal cultural identity.
- Aborigines should be able to control the programming received in remote communities in order to reduce the impact on their culture.
- Resources would be provided to these communities to establish their own program making for both television and radio.
- Aborigines should receive suitable training to achieve this.
- Regional broadcasting should be encouraged through organisations such as CAAMA and other regional broadcasters.
- Commercial and ABC programming should be relevant to an Aboriginal audience and reflect their concerns.

The Task Force saw the satellite both as a threat to the preservation of language and culture but also as an opportunity enabling communities to become more self sufficient through improved communication between remote communities and between the communities and major population centres. (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984, 119.) It should be noted that there was

also an advantage for the Federal Government in being able to communicate directly with remote communities on policies affecting those communities and, possibly to avoid criticism for only assisting remote white homestead dwellers through this new technology. The original policy for the satellite was based on the premise that all remote peoples (Aboriginal or European) would accept the satellite services as yet another essential service for the region (Falk 1985,53;Meadows 1992,1; Staley 1985,10.). Where Aboriginal people were mentioned it was often only in relation to the advantages of the satellite. Some of this was quite advanced thinking proposing improvements from satellite services in banking, health care, weather forecasts, education and even teleconferencing. (Hudson 1985,66-7.)

Eric Michaels (1986,136-140) was highly critical of the Task Force report, despite his own contribution to it. Overall, he described the report as 'vague' and criticises it for its focus on radio alone, its lack of consultation and never considering that an Aboriginal group could control a satellite uplink themselves broadcasting television and radio from a central point. In 1986, he went on to criticise the Department of Aboriginal Affairs for still having no policy stating:

> 'The Federal Government considers remote Australia a "Silent Land" perhaps it is just not listening.' (Michaels 1986, 137.)

Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS)

In 1988 the Federal Government finally put the recommendations from the Task Force into operation in remote Aboriginal communities with the roll out of the Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS). Mary Venner (1988,37-42), who worked at the Department of Aboriginal Affairs during the policy development and early stages, described BRACS as being based on Government inquiries, academic initiatives and Aboriginal initiatives. When I was at the Department of Aboriginal Affairs there was considerable discussion about how the Yuendemu and Ernabella experiments worked. The policy development was influenced, not just by the Task Force report, but also by Eric Michaels' work and the experiments at Yuendemu and Ernabella.

BRACS provided basic equipment for the reception and retransmission of satellite radio and television (this also enabled the signal to be turned off), as well as domestic quality equipment to produce local video and radio material to 'embed' in the satellite signal for local broadcast. BRACS equipment was sent to 81 remote communities that met the policy requirements of having a population of over 200, of which at least 80% was indigenous and which did not already receive a terrestrial television and radio service. (ATSIC 1999c, 11; Turner 1998,7.) The basic BRACS units were designed and installed by Telecom between 1988-91. (ATSIC 1991,26; 1999b 20; Venner 1988,37-43.) There were a number of deficiencies:

- the BRACS equipment was delivered to the communities without consultation or training and often with no suitable air-conditioned building for storage;

- Telecom installed the equipment in each community over a two day period giving basic instructions on how the push buttons and how to switch on the ABC retransmitter before leaving;

- there was no ongoing funding for operators and maintenance;

- the inappropriate domestic equipment was damaged in the harsh conditions and incorrect installation led to overheating; and

- Telecom had taken so long to install the equipment it was often out of warranty by the time it reached the communities.

(Meadows 1992, 3; Turner 1998,7, 45-6.)

Not only were there duplications in equipment, some other Aboriginal communities did not want all the equipment or the facilities BRACS provided. Philip Batty (1993, 22-4) recounts a story where Michaels was hired by an remote Aboriginal community to install satellite television reception in time for the AFL grand final. He apparently lectured them on cultural impact until an Aboriginal woman asked him '...who told you we wanted to make our own TV?' Michaels left and the community managed to get the satellite receiver installed in time for the grand final.

As early as 1989, John Corker (1989,43-44) wrote an article 'BRACS destined to fail' in Med*ia Information Australia* citing likely failure because of lack of consultation, training and funding. Brian Walsh was an original contributor to the Task Force report and the author of an inquiry report by AUSSAT in 1982 on the impact of the satellite on remote

Australia. He likened the BRACS scheme in response to Aboriginal broadcasting needs to the use of a 'watering can in the desert' (in Meadows 1992, 43). Michael Meadows wrote a critique of Aboriginal broadcasting policy in 1992, using Walsh's comment as title, stating:

> 'For more than 10 years, indigenous broadcasting has been governed either by a total absence of or by ad hoc, Government policies which have taken little real interest in what Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders really want.' (Meadows 1992,51.)

Remote Commercial Television Service

Much of the early concerns about dangers to Aboriginal culture considered television to be a particularly risky medium (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1984a, 1-7). Neither the original policy model in 'Out of the Silent Land' nor Michaels' preferred model for Aboriginal narrowcasting seriously considered the possibility of a centrally run and owned Aboriginal television station as it was considered too complex and costly. Michaels (1986,140) did, however, criticise policy makers for not considering that Aborigines may actually want their own access to broadcast through the satellite transponder. At most, there was a view that CAAMA would provide a central production house where audio and video tapes could be sent to communities to be inserted into a BRACS system. The 'Out of the Silent Land' proposal was that mainstream broadcasters were to be required to 'embed' suitable Aboriginal programming into their services while radio was considered to be the more appropriate medium which would counteract the effects of television (Willmot, 1985, 64).

The Federal Government policy of the day was to ensure 'locally relevant programming' (Duffy 1985,3). Already the Federal Government had rejected the commercial television networks' request that remote area commercial television be provided directly from the capital cities in favour of four zones based on the satellite broadcast zones or 'footprints' (Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1985, xxvi, Harrison 1985,25.) Ironically ABC television was already broadcasting a centralised service to remote areas and there was no indication that a highbrow ABC service was any more appropriate for remote Aboriginal communities that a centralised commercial television service. Michaels (1987c,66) had

already commented that a rerun of 'Brideshead Revisited' was likely to send Aborigines in search of videos.

In 1985, the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) which held the licence for local Aboriginal community radio station 8KIN, was so concerned about the impact of commercial television on remote Aboriginal communities that it put in its own application for the Remote Commercial Television Service. After a public hearing in Alice Springs in August 1985, the ABT expresssed concerns about CAAMA's financial capability as a television licence holder. They were equally concerned about the service level of the other applicant, Capricornia, who wished just to extend broadcasts from the Darwin commercial television station. In order to address the concerns about its finances, CAAMA formed a commercial television company calling it Imparja (meaning footprint or track in the Arrente language). Their shareholders included Warlpiri Media Association, as an established Aboriginal media association, ATSIC, the regional land councils (the Central Land Council, the Northern Land Council, the Tiwi Land Council, the Kokatha People Trust, the Maralinga Tjarutja Trust, and the Pitjantjatjara Council) and the two other regional Aboriginal broadcasting associations (CAAMA and the Top End Aboriginal Broadcasting Association). Funding of $1.8m was sought from the Aboriginal Development Corporation, $2m from the Australian Bicentennial Authority, and an additional $2m in corporate sponsorship. The Northern Territory Government had also offered to purchase a $2m package from the successful applicant and the South Australia Government had offered $1m loan to Imparja. (Imparja 1998, 4-6; ABT 1986, xvi.)

The other licence applicant, Capricornia Television opposed Imparja's company model claiming that, with their Aboriginal shareholding structure, they had no experience in commercial television and were restrictive as they excluded non-Aborigines from shareholding. The Tribunal rejected both these claims finding that CAAMA was already an experienced broadcaster and (while the ABT did not actually name the families involved) that the family company structure of other commercial television companies also excluded external membership.(Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1986,29.)

Imparja proposed a programming content with 6% produced locally, 19% from regional and independent producers, 35% from the television networks, and 40% from overseas. They proposed to produce an Aboriginal program during prime time at 8pm on a Sunday evening. The ABT concluded that Imparja had formatted its programming in response to specific needs whereas Capricornia had done little to meet Aboriginal needs (Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1986,152). The Aboriginal content requirement for RCTS licence applicants seemed to have created a sudden scrabble to find what type of programming was suitable. Michaels (1987a 58-60) recounts, in a paper given to a conference in Sydney in December 1986, the tale of a television executive of an RCTS licence holder phoning him to try and get a definition of Aboriginal content. The executive asked whether an Aboriginal actor in a Country Practice or a film about Aborigines by Europeans was acceptable. Michaels (1987a, 72) argued in this paper that '...a national television service with no Aboriginal content would be less culturecidal for Aborigines than badly conceived and produced Aboriginal programs.' (Michaels 1987a, 77.) [10]

The Tribunal found that both applicants were suitable and made its final decision based on the quality of programming, eventually awarding the licence to Imparja in August 1986 (Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1986, 172, 183; Imparja 1998, 6-8). The ability to provide suitable Aboriginal programming seems to have also been a factor in the awarding of the two other RCTS licences: Golden West Network (GWN) in Western Australia and Queensland Satellite Television. (Astley 1985,78;ATSIC 1991, 50; Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1985, 421-2; Gentle 1985, 78-80; Meadows 1992, 25-7.) Once it had commenced broadcasting, Imparja was criticised for its lack of programming in language as well as its requirement for high quality programming which precluded much of the local production from BRACS communities. Also, at its commencement in 1988, only 10% of its staff were Aboriginal. (Ginsburg 1993, 360.) Today Philip Batty, non-Aboriginal co-founder of CAAMA, reflects that Imparja may have been a waste of resources and energy for CAAMA. The original intent of the licence application was to gain access to the satellite and Batty felt that they might have been better placed as a production house working with another RCTS licence holder such as

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[10] This brought a curt letter of response from CAAMA and Philip Batty who were particularly annoyed about Michaels' view of Aboriginal content while Imparja was in the middle of its licence hearing. (Michaels 1987a, 77.)

GWN. Indeed, during the licence hearing Capricornia made an offer to go into partnership with CAAMA, to produce Aboriginal programming however this was rejected by CAAMA. Batty also recounts that, just after Imparja was awarded the licence, an offer was made for the licence from Kerry Packer, who had just purchased Channel 8 in Darwin. The offer included broadcasting Imparja's programs from Darwin but was rejected. (Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1986, 36; Batty 1999)

Other Aboriginal broadcasting service providers: the ABC, SBS and Community broadcasting

Because of the early support of the ABC and SBS, the Task Force placed considerable weight on their role in providing Aboriginal content on radio and television as well as training. Both SBS and the ABC were represented on the Task Force Implementation Committee (ATSIC 1992, 11). The ABC had been supportive of Aboriginal broadcasting, as it had been of community broadcasting. Many Aboriginal broadcasters first went to air by sharing broadcasting facilities with the ABC. The ABC assisted with the establishment of CAAMA and provided technical advice and training to CAAMA and Imparja as well as an array of other indigenous media associations. (ATSIC 1999b, 43-4; Hartley 1980,9.)

Initially SBS was resistant to becoming involved in Aboriginal broadcasting. This was mainly due to the fact that Aboriginal broadcasters objected to being categorised with ethnic broadcasters giving the impression that Aborigines were migrants. However, as early as 1977 SBS had set up a working party on Aboriginal needs. (Fowell 1980, 9.) SBS television established its own indigenous broadcasting unit in 1989 headed by Rachel Perkins a former trainee at CAAMA (Morgan 1998,7). SBS had a policy to enhance the positive image of Aborigines in its programming and to recognise the colonial history of Australia and had provided access to Aboriginal programmers on its radio stations 2EA and 3EA in Sydney and Melbourne. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1985, 56). The ATSIC funding of SBS followed criticism by indigenous people of ATSIC's program 'Aboriginal Australia' which was not being produced by Aboriginal people. This program ceased and its funding shared between

SBS for ICAM, the Indigenous Cultural Affairs Magazine, and NIMAA for the funding of the National Indigenous Documentary Fund. (ATSIC, 1991, 38-46; 1999b, 12; Ginsburg 1995,280-1; SBS 1999).

Most of the community broadcasting sector has been sympathetic to the needs of Aboriginal broadcasters and they gave considerable support in fundraising and technical advice at the commencement of CAAMA (Batty 1999, personal experience.) However, there have also been some exceptions and tensions have arisen between Aboriginal broadcasting and community radio providers who have an ethos of voluntarism and are often funded by subscription which Aboriginal listeners can often not afford. (ATSIC 1999b, 38;1999c, 14.) The community broadcasting sector still supports Aboriginal broadcasting in the main and distributes Aboriginal radio programming through its distribution services. It is interesting to observe that the community television sector has not had the success of Imparja.

Indigenous Broadcasting Policy Reviews 1988 -1993

The Secretariat of the Task Force had been retained in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to progress three meetings on the hardware standards, delivery and licensing, and the Aboriginal broadcasters response to the report. (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984,xii.) An implementation committee for the Task Force was established, chaired by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs with representation from the Department of Transport and Communication, the Department of Education and Training, the ABC and SBS (but no representative from an indigenous community). They met three times between February 1986 and December 1988. A new policy paper was developed by this group but not published until 1991 due to disputes amongst the participants. (ATSIC 1992, 11-12.) This paper recommended a peak independent organisation to administer funding, to focus on television as well as radio and to receive funding linked to the percentage of the indigenous population in the Australian population. (ATSIC 1993,75.) A 1991 draft discussion recognised the important role of broadcasting in overcoming Aboriginal disadvantages and spreading Government messages and preserving culture and language. (ATSIC 1991,1-15.)

In 1992 ATSIC published an evaluation of its broadcasting and communications sub-program. The evaluation recognised that BRACS had been successful in most of its 83 communities but that there had been severe deficiencies in the equipment provided, in training and in ongoing funding for maintenance and operators. This meant that not all BRACS communities were using their equipment in an optimum way. (ATSIC 1992, 1-11.) The next year, ATSIC (1993, 4-9) released a further draft policy paper stating that most of the 1989/1991 policy proposals had been overcome by events. The rationale of indigenous broadcasting was spelt out to:

> 'Recognise the importance of all forms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting and communications to contributing to the quality of life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the restoration and preservation of indigenous cultures, including languages, and the better understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.' (ATSIC 1993,7.)

Among the major recommendations were to establish the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia (NIMAA) and to implement the BRACS Revitalisation Strategy (BRS). Also to improve training and simplify licensing. By the time the recommendation was made in the policy review to establish NIMAA, it had already been set up and funded by ATSIC following a conference in May 1992. NIMAA had an elected committee representing all states and territories and BRACS areas, indigenous film and television, indigenous print media and indigenous workers at the ABC and SBS (NIMAA 1997a, 1997b). The aims of NIMAA (ATSIC 1993, 79-80) were to develop and fully fund the indigenous media sector; enhance cultural identity; be a peak representative body; promote the needs of indigenous media associations and indigenous media broadcasters; secure ongoing funding; represent indigenous media on boards and authorities, as well as at national and international forums; teach the broader community; provide training; and promote music. NIMAA's first Chairperson was Tiger Bayles and PY Media and CAAMA were, and still are, on their fifteen member council. (Koori Mail 1999a, 20-1.) Today NIMAA represents up to fifty indigenous media organisations and consists of four sections representing community broadcasting and radio; print and

journalism; film and television; and BRACS. Members include the eight regional hubs for remote broadcasters:

- the Torres Strait Islander Media Association (TSIMA) (19 communities);
- the Remote Indigenous Media Association of Queensland (RIMAQ)/Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association (9 communities);
- PY Media (11 communities);
- Irrunytju Media Association, Western Australia (3 communities);
- CAAMA (5 communities);
- Warlpiri Media Association (7 communities);
- the Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA) (26 communities); and
- the Pilbara and Kimberly Aboriginal Media Association (13 communities).

(ATSIC 1999b, 80-2; Molnar 1999, 10; Turner 1998, 61-252.)

FIGURE 2: MAP OF INDIGENOUS MEDIA ASSOCIATIONS
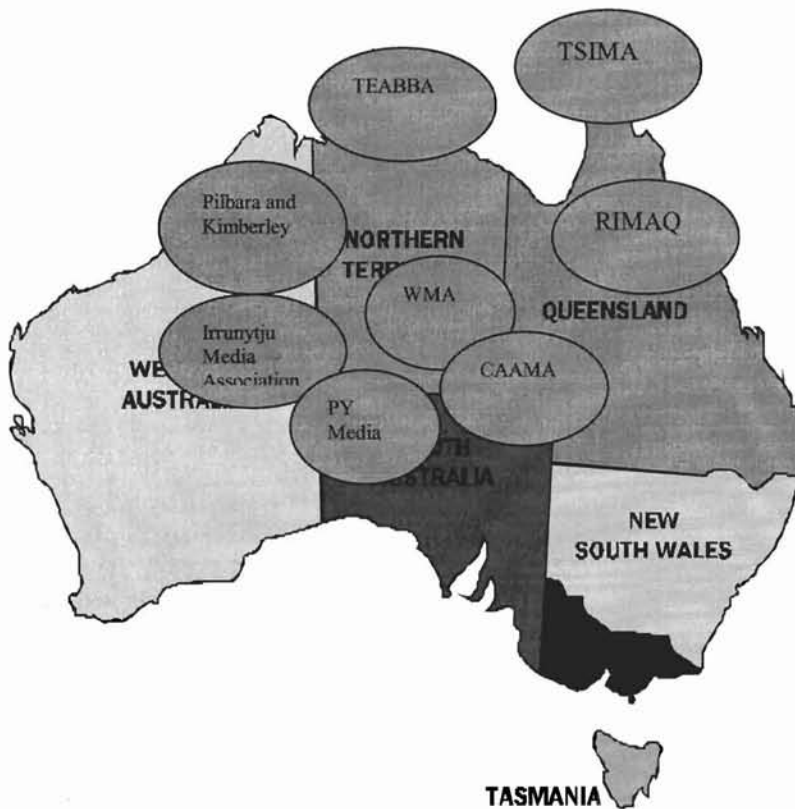
Jim Remedio, Chair of NIMAA, stressing the importance of uniting these associations said at their March 1999 meeting:

'Each media organisation is a small message stick and can be easily snapped like a bit of kindling. But tie all the message sticks, all the individual media organisations, into a bundle and you cannot break them.' (Koori Mail 1999a, 20.)

The BRACS Revitalisation Strategy proceeded to upgrade the original BRACS equipment to broadcast quality and provided BRACS facilities for 20 more communities. It was funded at $7 million over six years between 1992/93 and 1997/98. (Turner 1998,5-7.) Another recommendation of the ATSIC broadcasting policy review was to provide improved and appropriate training. Much of the failure of the original BRACS roll out was due to lack of appropriate training. (ATSIC 1992, 2,30; 1993,4.) This was not just making training available but also ensuring it fitted into Aboriginal needs and lifestyle. Prior to 1992 responsibility for BRACS training lay with the Department of Employment,

Education and Training which had a policy of funding training only when there was a guaranteed job at the end. (Turner 1998, 54) This could seldom be guaranteed especially as many of the BRACS positions were paid for out of the Community Development Employment Fund (CDEP).

Batchelor College, near Katherine in the Northern Territory, was the original focus for Aboriginal training in a number of areas including broadcasting. In 1989 they began broadcasting as Radio Rum Jungle with assistance from the ABC. The original training program at Batchelor College was upgraded as a result of the ATSIC review in 1993 and a number of improvements made. Community groups now go there to be trained together on the equipment they will actually use, fitting the training period into seasonal patterns such as the dry season. It currently offers a certificate course in BRACS which includes an eight week workshop in communities, recording trips and one or more workshops offered either at Batchelor College or in other regional centres. Batchelor College also offers other courses in radio journalism, as does James Cook University in Townsville. But both these residential courses have a high drop out rate as Aboriginal people are living away from their communities. (Batchelor College 1998; Turner 1998, 55-6.)

The review also recommended encouraging indigenous community broadcasters to apply for licences. The licensing of BRACS services is still being reviewed by ATSIC (1999b, 26-7) and a recent submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into broadcasting suggests streamlining so that BRACS operators no longer have to get involved with mainstream regulation including industry codes of practice and licence renewals. The report also raised whether indigenous broadcasting advice should remain with ATSIC or move to the Department of Transport and Communications. It also expressed concern about indigenous people being disadvantaged by the replacement of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal with industry self regulation (ATSIC 1993 6-9).

Also in 1992, the overall Australian broadcasting policy was changing with the introduction of the new *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* which had the objective '...to promote the availability to audiences throughout Australia of a diverse range of radio and television services offering entertainment, education and information.' (Australia. Productivity Commission 1999,87.) The new Act only recognised Aboriginal

broadcasting as a subset of Community Broadcasting. The licensing and regulatory body the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal was replaced by the Australian Broadcasting Authority and a system of self regulation raising concerns in Aboriginal communities about who would set program standards. (ATSIC 1993,17; Australia. Productivity Commission 1999101-2.)

Recent policy developments

In 1998 NIMAA commissioned Neil Turner (1998), who had established indigenous media at Ernabella, to review the progress of BRACS. Turner visited seven regional BRACS meetings over five weeks and each area provided up-to-date information on their equipment and staffing. This report is not easily available but it provided information which was included in ATSIC's report 'Digital Dreaming; a National Review of Indigenous Media and Communications' of which the Executive Summary was released in August 1999. This review was commissioned by ATSIC from Indigenous Media Australia and included contributions from Helen Molnar and Michael Meadows and was edited by Peter Westerway, the former head of the Forward Development Unit of the Department of Communications in the 1980s (Westerway 1985,15-18). The review's terms of reference were to explain current and new technologies and identify current developments, the regulatory framework, strategic planning costs, commercial options and costed recommendations over five years. (ATSIC 1999b 7-8.) Its major recommendation was to establish Indigenous Communications Australia, with a similar independent role to that of the ABC or SBS, and with funding from the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. (ATSIC 1999c, 66-7.) ATSIC has recently put this proposal to the Productivity Commission's enquiry into broadcasting. (Harris 1999; ATSIC 1999d.)

This proposal was considered by NIMAA and in August 1999, NIMAA made a submission to the Productivity Commission's inquiry into broadcasting proposing an ambitious variant of this model through the establishment of Indigenous Communications Australia (ICA). The first stage of ICA would include a radio service that was an expanded NIRS service which would be broadcast on indigenous stations in those capital cities that did not already have indigenous radio stations: Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart. This would commence in 2000/01. The second stage would expand the

BRACS television network to form a remote indigenous television service by 2002/03. Finally by 2005, a national Indigenous Broadcasting Service would link the television and radio networks nationally. The options for distributing the service all rely on the introduction of digital terrestrial services. NIMAA based its submission on the model of SBS, which has the dual role of providing a mainstream service to non-English speakers and also building understanding between the ethnic community and other Australians. ATSIC supported NIMAA in a submission to the Productivity Commission. ATSIC argued that 13% of indigenous people speak their own language at home, with this level rising to 32-39% in remote areas. It also provided the example of the Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network established in Canada in 1997. The intention is that the ICA national television and radio services could be piggybacked onto a national distribution network after the transition to digital broadcasting which would allow for multi-channelling. It proposes using either the ABC or SBS service, which would be less expensive, or a separate infrastructure could be established. It would outsource to existing indigenous production houses most of its production, with the exception of news and current affairs. The cost is estimated by ATSIC to be $1.18 million in initial capital costs and $23.78 million per annum operational costs from 2002 onwards. (ATSIC 1999c; 1999d, 2-12; 1999e, 2-6; NIMAA 1999b,3-18.)

The draft report of the Productivity Commission's inquiry into the Broadcasting Services Act (BSA) recognises the indigenous media sector, both in its main report and in a specific appendix by Michael Meadows. A draft recommendation responds to NIMAA's concerns about indigenous broadcasting being classified in the BSA under Community Broadcasting, together with general community broadcasters and radio for the print handicapped. The Productivity Commission recognises that the community broadcasting model, with its philosophy of voluntary workers and need to attract subscribers, is not suitable for indigenous broadcasting and has proposed a new licence category for indigenous broadcasting which will permit advertising as a revenue raiser. It also recommends that part of the broadcasting spectrum be specifically reserved for indigenous broadcasting. (Australia. Productivity Commission 1999,100-5.) To date the ABC have opposed any sharing arrangement with a proposed ICA (Harris 1999) and the Productivity Commission have asked if SBS would be appropriate. ATSIC has responded

that, while it recognises considerable goodwill from SBS, the indigenous community would consider this to be a second best 'ie bundled in with foreigners' (ATSIC 1999e, 6).

ICA is an ambitious and expensive project that, once again, originated at a grass roots level. Except today there are now two policy bodies, NIMAA and ATSIC, supporting this concept unlike the past when Aboriginal organisations had little backup. A similar model has been successful in Canada but less successful in New Zealand, as we will see later in this Chapter.

Before examining indigenous broadcasting in Canada and New Zealand, I will briefly compare the colonial periods and self-determination movements of the indigenous population of the three countries.

A comparison between the colonial periods and self determination movements of Australian, New Zealand and Canadian indigenous people

The indigenous populations of Australia, New Zealand and Canada share some commonalities from their period of colonisation although they were colonised at slightly different periods. In Canada, France was initially the colonial power in the 17th century and was superseded by the British in the 18th century. Prior to this, from the 16th century onwards, there had been contact with the Norse in Greenland and Basque and Portuguese fishermen with whom the Inuit traded furs. (McGhee and Crowe 1999,np.) The colonising forces did not reach remote far North Canada until the late 19th and early 20th century. Between 1817 and 1929 twenty international treaties were signed between Canadian Indians and the British Government. Canada inherited these treaties from the British Government. In 1876 there was an attempt to streamline the treaties into the Indian Act which was highly prescriptive, particularly in the legal definition of an Indian. (Denamay 1991, np; Canada 2000b,np.) While treaties were signed, they were often to the disadvantage of the indigenous population and involved handing over large tracts of land with little compensation. (Bienvenue 1983, 30-4.) Greater impact came to the far north of Canada with air bases during the Second World War and radar stations in the 1950s. Annual naval patrols began in 1950 and patients suffering from TB were moved to southern hospitals, many for years. Families were moved to towns. Children were often

removed from their culture and taken south to school where they lost language and culture (Amagoalik 2000,np; McGhee and Crowe 1999,np).

New Zealand was colonised from New South Wales in the early 19th century when European missionaries, whalers and sealers began to settle. In 1835 Maori chiefs attempted to rally against colonisation with a Declaration of Independence which recognised a Maori body politic which was able to pass laws for all Maori. The threat of French settlement drove the hasty signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 between the British Crown and a majority of Maori chiefs. The Treaty transferred sovereignty to the Crown in return for the protection of Maori property and the giving of equal citizenship rights to Maori. Maori were ultimately disadvantaged by the Treaty and separated from their land in unfair land deals. The 19th century saw a policy of assimilation and the concept of a 'pan-Maori' culture developed by missionaries and anthropologists. (Durie 1998,53-4,175-6.)

There was early contact during the mid-18th century in Northern Australia with Macassan traders from Indonesia. While there was exchange of material goods and some intermarriage, the Macassans mainly visited to fish for trepang (Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia 1994,638). The progressive claim of British ownership of Australia, from the arrival of James Cook in 1770 onwards, failed to recognise prior occupation, as the colonisers were unable to identify with the indigenous form of land ownership. As Michaels (1998,148) adeptly put it:

> 'Local political systems provided no "leader" to be taken to, a problem that apparently stymied Captain Cook and has plagued 200 years of subsequent race relations.'

This concept of 'terra nullius', or 'no-man's land', remained until overturned by the High Court in the Mabo case in 1992, when prior occupation of Australia was recognised. (Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia, 1994,1063-4).

The colonisation of Australia continued into the early 20th century, with many Aboriginal communities in central and northern Australia continuing traditional lifestyles. Bienvenue

(1983, 34-5) points out that the Canadian policy for indigenous people was based on land where the indigenous population was restricted to a 'reserve' whereas Australia's policy was based on 'race' where Aboriginality was defined by colour, for example half-caste or fullblood. Aboriginal children, considered to be half-caste, were removed from their parents. This policy undermined cultural continuance.

As a result of colonial policies of assimilation, the indigenous populations of Australian, New Zealand and Canada were losing culture and language by the mid-20th century. In some cases, language and cultural practices were permanently lost. However a drive for self-determination of the indigenous populations of all three countries was strong, as well as a determination to survive and be recognised.

FIGURE 3: COMPARISON BETWEEN AUSTRALIAN, NEW ZEALAND AND CANADIAN
INDIGENOUS RELATIONS DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD

	Australia[11]	New Zealand[12]	Canada[13]
First European contact	18th century early contact with Macassan traders. 1788 First Fleet arrives.	Early 19th century sealers and whalers settle. Arrival of Europeans via New South Wales.	Early contact with Norse, Basque and Portuguese fishermen. In 17th century firstly French contact and then British in 18th and 19th century.
Early relations	European settlement from 1788 Initially on the eastern seaboard but slowly spreading until reaching remote central Australia by early 1920s. Concept of terra nullius – an unpopulated land.	1835 Declaration of Independence sets up a Congress of all Maori. 1840 Treaty of Waitangi signed between Maori and the British Crown. 1867 four Maori seats guaranteed in Parliament.	18th and 19th centuries. Treaties were signed from an inferior bargaining position surrendering land in return for small reservations, hunting and fishing rights, some education and medical services, and small annuities.
Language	On European contact 200 language groups estimated. Today only20 languages used fluently and actively transmitted to children.70 others not spoken fluently by younger generation. 32-39% of indigenous Australians in remote Northern Territory and Western Australia speak their own language at home.	On European contact One main language group with minor variations in dialect. 1913 90% of Maori schoolchildren could speak it, 1953 only 26% and 1975 only 5%.	On European contact Six cultural areas and 10 linguistic groups. By 1970 few children could speak Inuktitut.

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[11] Source: Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australian 1994, Dixon 1980, Reynolds 1981, Michaels 1986, McLennan and Madden 1999,1; ATSIC 1999a; 1999b. ATSIC 1999c, 6-7, Australian Bureau of Statistics 1998,np.)
[12] Source: Dancey in Te Mangai Paho 1994, 44-5; Durie 1998, Hollings 1999, ATSIC 1999b pp16-17,
[13] Source: Amagoalik, 2000,np; ATSIC 1999b pp17-21, Bienvenue, 1983 pp30-43, Canada 2000a; 2000b;2000c Denamay 1999, np; McGhee and Crowe 1999,np; Mohr 1996 pp89-102.

	Australia	New Zealand	Canada
Population	**1788** Estimated at between 300,000 and 750,000. **1911** 31,000. **Between 1947 and 1976** increased from 51,000 to 160,916 (also as more people happy to be recognised as indigenous). **In 1996** 386,000 or 2.1% of population.	**On European contact** 40 or more iwi or tribes. In **1857** Maori were 50% of the population by 1874 on 14%. **1896** population had dropped to 42,000 and considered to be dying out. Rapid growth between **1930s** until today. Increased tenfold in last century. **1996** 579,714 in census. 10% of population. It is estimated Maori and pacific islanders will be 25% of population by 2020.	**On European contact** estimated 300,000 indigenous people or 1.9% of population. **1995** 593,000 registered Indians in 608 bands. 55,700 Inuit in 53 communities.
Assimilation period	**Late 19th/early 20th centuries.** Those not assimilated into European society confined to reserves. Policy of forcibly removing children breaks down language and culture and results in stolen generations.	**Late 19th/early 20th centuries.** **1907** Tohunga Suppression Act outlaws traditional guardians. 'Pepperpotting' housing policy mixes Maori and European population. Forbidden to speak Maori language at school. Loss of language.	**1857** Gradual Civilisation Act to encourage Indians to assimilate into European society. **Early 20th centuries.** Children removed and taken away to school where they lost language and culture. Indian Act prohibited voting, alcohol and ceremonies.

In Canada there had been a push for self-determination from the 1960s when newsletters edited by the Inuit began to discuss political issues. In 1969 a Commissioner for Native Claims was established to seek redress and Federal Government funding given to indigenous organisations to make claims. Also in the early 1970s there were concerns about the preservation of language as very few children could speak their language. Inuktitut speaking schools were therefore established. The Native Land Claims settlement in neighbouring Alaska in which the US Government granted 180,000sq km as well as US$ 962 million in compensation, inspired the Inuit to make their own claims. The Inuit Tapirisat was established as an independent parliament in 1971 and in 1976 they made their first claim for Nunavut as a Territory. There was recognition of self-government with the declaration of Nunavut as an independent territory in May 1993, together with

the payment of Can$ 1.1 billion in compensation and the handing over of 1.9 million square kilometres of land and water including mineral rights. The new Government's civil service recognises Inuktitut as an official language together with English and French. Traditional knowledge will play a part in policy making and it is planned to have flexible working hours to allow for hunting and ceremonies. (Brisebois 1994,141, Crowe, Soubliere and Coleman 1999; **www.nunavut.com/language;** www.canada.gc.ca/canadiana/faitc/fa32.)

In New Zealand, the Maori were also pursuing self-determination. In 1975 a land march was held to petition Parliament to compensate for unjust land claims and a protest and sit in on Maori land at Bastion Point in Auckland lasted 506 days. As a result, the Waitangi Treaty Tribunal was established in 1975 to address previously unfair claims. This was followed by a claim in 1980 by traditional iwi (or tribes) for fishing rights and quota payment which was later extended to urban living Maori. A focus on language revival began in the 1930s and by 1981 the first Maori-speaking pre-schools and schools were established followed by high schools and colleges. In 1987the Maori Language Act recognised Te Reo Maori as an official language. (Durie, 1998, 64, 124, 151.)

In Australia, the land rights movement began with the Wave Hill strike in 1966 where Aboriginal stockmen demanded fair wages rather than payment in meagre supplies. Aborigines did not have the right to vote in a Federal election until 1962 (Gardner 1995,109). In a national referendum held during 1967 Australians overwhelmingly voted in favour of moving the right to make laws for the benefit of Aboriginal people from the states to Commonwealth and to include Aborigines in the census. In 1976 the Northern Territory Aboriginal Land Rights Act established the Central and Northern Land Councils. Demonstrations were held against the Bicentennial celebrations in 1988 when the indigenous population held a counter celebration to recognise that they had survived. (Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia, 1994, 933, 977-8,1164-5.)

FIGURE 4: COMPARISON BETWEEN AUSTRALIAN, NEW ZEALAND AND CANADIAN SELF DETERMINATION

Australia[14]	New Zealand[15]	Canada[16]
1966 Wave Hill strike by Aboriginal stockmen beginning of land rights movement.		**1962** Right to vote and full legal rights.
1967 referendum agreed to move right to make laws for the benefit of Aboriginal people from states to Commonwealth.		**1967** Commissioner of Native Claims established.
		1971 Establishment of Inuit Tapirisat or parliament.
1976 Northern Territory Aboriginal Land Rights Act establishes Central and Northern Land Councils.	**1975** land march to petition Parliament to compensate for unjust land claims. **1975** Waitangi Treaty Tribunal established to address claims Protest and sit in on Maori land at Bastion Point tin Auckland lasts 506 days.	**1976** first claim made for Nunavut as a territory.
	1980 claim by traditional iwi for fishing rights and quota, later extended to urban living Maori.	**1970s** control of education given to communities and education in language.
	1981 first Maori speaking pre-schools and schools established.	**1984** Inuvialuit Western Arctic Land claim provides 91,000km2
1988 demonstrations against Bicentenary celebrations.	**1987** Maori language Act recognises it as an official language.	
1992 Mabo High Court case recognised prior indigenous occupation.		**1992** Final agreement for Nunavut as territory backed up by Inuit plebiscite.
		1993 1.9 million sq km of land granted plus Can$1.1 billion in compensation. Nunavut Government formed with indigenous public servants, Inuktitut one of the official languages.

There are strong parallels between the development of indigenous self-determination in Australia, New Zealand and Canada. The self-determination movement of the 'nations within nations', or the 'fourth world' as Batty (1996) and Ginsberg (1993, 357) describe them, has driven a determination to ensure the survival of language and culture. Self-

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[14] Source: Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australian 1994, Dixon 1980, Reynolds 1981, Michaels 1986, ATSIC 1999a; 1999b. ATSIC 1999c, 6-7)

[15] Source: Durie 1998, Hollings 1999, ATSIC 1999b pp16-17,

[16] Source: Amagoalik, 2000,np; ATSIC 1999b pp17-21, Bienvenue, 1983 pp30-43, Canada 2000a;2000b;2000c Denamay 1999, np; McGhee and Crowe 1999,np; Mohr 1996 pp89-102.

determination began during similar periods in each of the three countries and followed similar patterns of protests and calls for land rights and compensations. Even in Canada and New Zealand where treaties had been in force, there was recognition that these treaties had been unfair. Indigenous Australians not only have never had a treaty, but they have had the additional battle to overturn the concept of terra nullius through the High Court of Australia.

The development of indigenous broadcasting in Canada and New Zealand

The policy documents on Aboriginal broadcasting in Australia considered Canada as the most appropriate model for comparison, as indeed have policy makers in other subject areas. The indigenous populations of both countries have shared a similar colonial experience. (Batty 1996, 122; Bienvenue 1983, 30-43; Cohen 1996, 1; Meadows 1996,103-4.) Far northern Canada and central Australia both have remote areas, 40% of Canada's area is remote and 75% of Australia. 50% of the population of remote Canada and 80% of remote Australia is indigenous (Meadows, 1996,104).

Nick Ketchum from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was a major contributor to 'Out of the Silent Land' and wrote a chapter dedicated to a comparison with Canada (Batty 1996, 125, Australian, Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1984, letter of transmittal). While gathering information two members of the Task Force spent two weeks in Canada. There were links between Canada and Australia even prior to this. Philip Batty (1996,119-130), the European Deputy Director of CAAMA, recounts a visit of Josephi Padlyat, President if the Inuit Broadcasting Association, to remote Santa Teresa mission near Alice Springs in 1982. The visit was sponsored by the Public Broadcasting Association of Australia and organised by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. It proved unproductive as Mr Padlyat, who had just come from a sub-Arctic winter to the 40 C heat of Santa Teresa, and the local Arrente elder he had been meant to meet had nothing in common. Initial contact between indigenous Canadians and Australians was at first mediated by officials, specialists and academics. However, in 1985 Freda Glynn, the Aboriginal president of CAAMA and Philip Batty travelled to Canada and the United States to meet with indigenous broadcasters. It was from Canada that they gave evidence by telephone to the remote commercial television licence

hearings of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal. The Inuit Broadcasting Corporation also gave telephone evidence in support of CAAMA's bid. Batty and Glynn were awarded the McLuhan Teleglobe Canada award by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO in1993 in recognition of their contribution to indigenous broadcasting. (Batty 1996, 126-129.)

The Digital Dreaming review (ATSIC 1999b, 25-8) compares indigenous broadcasting in both Canada and New Zealand as does ATSIC's submission to the Productivity Commission on indigenous Communications Australia (1999b, 17). However the latter firmly states that the Canadian model is far more relevant to indigenous media in Australia than the New Zealand model.

In the following two comparisons with Canada and New Zealand, I will argue that, while Canada shares a lot with Australia in the development of indigenous media, there are also relevant clues in the development of the New Zealand model.

Indigenous broadcasting in Canada

Canadian broadcasts in indigenous languages occurred in Alaska as early as the 1930s when the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) encouraged broadcasting in language on shortwave radio in the 1960s. CBC extended its service to communities larger than 500 people above the sixtieth parallel in 1970 and created the Northern Service which broadcast in eight languages. Community broadcasting was also encouraged through the Office of Community Radio (ATSIC 1999b, 25-6, 1999c, 16-7; Crowe, Soubliere, and Coleman 1999). George Henry (in Te Mangai Paho 1994,6), President of Northern Native Broadcasting, pointed out that control of the media was vital for self-determination '...lines of authority almost always follow lines of communication and if someone else owns the lines of communication then they have power over you.'

In the example of the Wawatay Native Communication Society, Lavinia Mohr (1996,89-102) describes the development of indigenous media at Sandy Lake a Cree village 1500km north-west of Toronto. The community consisted of about 1500 people who

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were isolated for most of the year apart from the five weeks or so when an ice road froze and they were able to visit local relatives. The Cree at Sandy Lake relied on hunting and fishing as well as welfare. They signed a treaty in 1908 which gave up 31,000 square kilometres in return for Can$970, regular supplies of flour, sugar, tea and shot, fishing gear, a school and a reserve of 44 square kilometres. The arrest and suicide in prison of their chief in 1909 sent a strong message to the local people about the power of the coloniser.

Telecommunications first came in the form of HF radio phones but control of these lay with Europeans at the Hudson Bay Company stores. The local Chiefs sought their own service and formed the Wawatay (which means Northern lights) Native Communication Society. At first they published a newspaper and then purchased portable HF radios to use in emergencies while away hunting and trapping. As there was still no telephone service, they then set up community radio services which relayed information.

In the 1970s, when CBC was proposing to extend radio to communities over 500 people, many of the local communities were too small so they established their own community radio[17]. Mohr describes the community radio at Muskrat dam which was funded by local bingo. The community radio broadcast for limited hours, from 7 to 9 am, 11am to 1pm, and 4pm to 10pm, so as not to disrupt the community and ensure children went to school. They broadcast music, told traditional stories, sent messages and translated news broadcasts into local languages. When someone died, suitable music would be played all night. A Board of Directors of local elders controlled the radio service. The Wawatay radio network service was expanded and other transmitters built illegally. However, licences were finally granted for 25 transmitter sites in 1977. Wawatay was one of thirteen independent Native Communication Societies. More recently, they have expanded from print and community radio to community television. Currently they employ 200 indigenous staff and produce over 300 hours of programming each week in languages. They reach an estimated 37% of the indigenous community in 300 communities. (ATSIC 1999b, 26-7, 1999b17-18). In 1990 the Canadian Government funding to indigenous community broadcasting was severely cut. Wawatay survived with

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[17] CBC was initially established during the 1930s to counteract the cultural impact of radio from the United States (Chambers in Te Mangai Paho 1994,26.)

some provincial government funding, however 21 other groups either cut staff or ceased broadcasting (ATSIC, 1999b, 26; Mohr, 1996,102). Brenda Chambers (in Te Mangai Paho 1994, 26-31), General Manager, Northern Native Broadcasting, in Yukon argues that this has made them stronger in seeking other forms of funding. Currently they are selling footage of the scenery and wildlife through their own company which earns an average of Can$300,000 a year.

Satellite broadcasting came to remote Canada with the launch of the Anik B satellite system in 1973, twelve years before AUSSAT (Meadows 1996, 104). Canada became the first country to use geostationary satellites for domestic communications with the launch of Anik A satellite in 1972 (Hudson, 1997, 134). In 1975, CBC planned to accelerate their remote broadcasting plan to bring television and radio to all remote communities over 500 people.

> 'Inuit and community leaders were quick to realise that this electronic tidal wave of alien images and information would lead to the deterioration of Inuit language and culture, and could disrupt the fragile structure of traditional community life.' (Brisebois, 1994, 141.)

The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (TPC) lobbied government and regulatory bodies from 1975 to 1978 for control over northern television. As a result they were given access for two years to a transponder on the Anik B satellite. A rudimentary television production service similar to BRACS was installed in six locations and began broadcasting audio and video signals in 1980. Telephone links allowed for an interactive voice network to be used for communication and meetings which were difficult in sub-Arctic conditions. (Brisebois 1994, 142; Hudson 1997,134.) An experiment allowing indigenous broadcasting on mainstream television resulted in inappropriate program timing such as children's programming at 3am in the morning or a language program on Saturday evenings being constantly delayed by late hockey games (Chambers in Te Mangai Paho 1994, 26-31; Henry in Te Mangai Paho 1994,6-12).

The local concern about the impact of broadcasting on culture led to the Canadian regulator, the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission establishing a

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committee which made urgent recommendations to ensure that indigenous languages and culture was preserved. When a satellite service provider was licensed in 1981 one of its conditions was to assist northern indigenous broadcasters. The Government announced a specific policy in 1983 to preserve language and foster culture. This Northern Broadcasting Policy allowed grants to indigenous communities to gain access to existing broadcasting services or to establish their own radio networks. In 1988, after years of lobbying by the Native Communication Societies, the Government amended the Broadcasting Act to specifically recognise the cultural and language needs of indigenous people. Television Northern Canada was licensed in 1991 as a non-profit organisation. It broadcasts in fifteen indigenous languages plus English and French. It covers a region of 4.3 million square miles and has an audience of 100,000 of which 50% is indigenous. Surveys have found that the audience is learning language and traditional skills. In 1990 the Canadian Native Broadcasting Policy finally recognised community control of indigenous media. Television Northern Canada (TVNC) went to air in June 1992 and broadcasts from October to May, as many people move out on to the land to hunt from June to September. (Henry in Te Mangai Paho 1994, 6; Meadows 1996,113-15.) In 1997, the Aboriginal People's Television Network (APTN) proposed to broadcast 120 hours a week of high quality programming in languages as well as English and French. It will be distributed by cable and satellite throughout Canada with a view to promoting positive aspects of indigenous life to all Canadians. Initially few distributors carried the service so it has now been mandated and a small percentage of subscriber fees are collected to fund APTN. (ATSIC 1999c, 19-20).

Indigenous broadcasting in New Zealand

In New Zealand, there were strong links between the revival of Maori language and the establishment of indigenous media as a tool to achieve this. In 1986, a Treaty of Waitangi Tribunal ruling declared the Maori language (Te Reo Maori) to be a 'taonga', or valued possession, which was protected under the Treaty. One of the recommendations of this ruling was that the Crown should recognise and protect the language in broadcasting policy. The Maori Language Act was enacted in 1987 and recognised Maori as an official language. Language revival was encouraged by the establishment of a language immersion program in pre-schools, primary schools and then in high schools and

colleges. Supporting material was required for this and many teachers wrote their own readers and curriculum material. Newspapers were established in each iwi, or tribal area. (Durie 1998,61-7, Hollings 1999.)

Veteran Maori broadcaster Haari Williams considered broadcasting as a vital means of promoting Maori language:

> 'Radio and television are the main instruments of mass communication and have the capacity to reach every lounge room, common room, classroom, factory floor and motor car. There is a moral obligation for New Zealanders to make certain that Te Reo Maori remains a part of the communication process.' (in Durie 1998, 68)

In 1988 a Government plan to sell AM and FM radio frequencies was challenged in the Waitangi Tribunal with Maori claiming that these were also taonga (Joint Maori/Crown Working Group on Maori Broadcasting Policy 1996, 1-20; Te Mangai Paho 1995, 1-10). During this long, drawn out claim a national 'hui' or gathering was held on broadcasting and concluded:

> '...that Maori broadcasting required sufficient independent funding to maintain a television channel, a Maori radio network, a full Maori news service and a strong Maori presence in mainstream media. It also agreed that bilingual and bicultural policies should be vigorously pursued in the programming and management of Maori broadcasting bodies and that a Maori Broadcasting Commission should be established.' (Durie 1998,69.)

In 1993, with the sale of Radio New Zealand and TVNZ also challenged under the Treaty, the Government finally conceded and established Te Mangai Paho, the Maori broadcasting funding body, to promote Maori language and culture by making funds available to broadcasters and for programming. It is funded from a proportion of the Public Broadcasting Fee, New Zealand on Air and direct Government funding. The Government also reserved 30 AM/FM radio frequencies for Maori broadcasting and two

UHF frequencies for Maori television. (Durie 1998, 70; Hollings, 1999; New Zealand Ministry of Commerce 1994,1-12; Te Mangai Paho 1999a,10.)

Prior to the establishment of Te Mangai Paho there was only one iwi based local radio station, today there are 21 iwi radio stations set up as non-profit organisations. Currently they must broadcast at least nine hours a day and three hours of this must be in Maori with the aim that this increases to nine hours a day by 2004. (Durie 1998, 70; Hollings, 1999; Te Mangai Paho 1999a,8,9,18.) Te Mangai Paho also funds Radio Aotearoa which broadcasts in Maori language to Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. Radio Aotearoa has been criticised, as have some of the iwi stations, for only playing classic hits or rap music (ATSIC 1999c, 17; Joint Maori/Crown Working Group on Maori Broadcasting Policy 1996, 1-20). Te Mangai Paho funds a news program in Maori language 'Te Kerare' on mainstream Television One, which was moved from primetime television to a graveyard spot on Friday afternoons, and the news magazine program 'Marae' on Sunday mornings[18]. There is also an program based on archival footage called 'Huia'.(Te Mangai Paho 1995, 1-10; TV One 1999c).

Maori activist Derek Tini Fox established a radio news service Mana Maori Media as well as a magazine in both English and Te Reo Maori. (Durie 1998,61-7, Hollings 1999.) Regular Maori language bulletins have been broadcast on Radio New Zealand since 1942 but recently there has been a dispute about payment for this service between Radio New Zealand and the production agency Mana Maori Media. Te Mangai Paho provided funding up to $250,000 a year for a period but this was withdrawn in July 1999 as they had to focus their limited funding on iwi radio. Radio New Zealand claims to broadcast 250 hours a year on Maori issues. However, Mike Hollings, the CEO of Te Mangai Paho, still see these news broadcasts as important:

> 'Having Maori language on National Radio puts the language in the realm of
> normality, normalises the language as part of the linguistic landscape of New
> Zealand.' (Listener 31 July 1999,63.)

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[18] While watching New Zealand television I have observed that there is more use of Maori language than of indigenous languages in Australia. The television newsreaders often open the bulletin with a greeting in Maori and, in October 1999, an advertisement was being broadcast for an insurance company that had an excerpt about a Maori elder out fishing with a small boy with both speaking Maori language.

In 1996 Te Mangai Paho established the Star Network to distribute Maori programming to radio stations. It also funds and promotes Maori music CDs and videos including a highly popular aerobics video which is used to encourage indigenous fitness and is played in gyms around the country. (Hollings, 1999; Te Mangai Paho 1999a,13; 1999b.)

There has been an ongoing determination to establish a Maori television station. As early as 1984 there was an unsuccessful proposal for a Maori channel when the third television network became available. This was initially supported by the regulator but the licence was later granted to mainstream commercial broadcaster TV 3. An iwi television trust was then set up and there was also a proposal for Maori television with local 'breakouts' for iwi to insert programming similar to the BRACS system. Te Mangai Paho held a hui in September 1994 on television broadcasting and eventually the Aotearoa TV network was established in May 1996 funded by Te Mangai Paho for NZ$2.6 million. It employed 90 people including Maori, and broadcast to the Auckland region a mixture of news, documentary, cultural programming and comedy from 5pm to 10.30pm each day. It proved popular with both Maori and European audiences. However a political scandal, spurred on by the lack of a working majority of the New Zealand Government, led to a fraud investigation which, although it found no wrongdoing, ended in the closing of Aotearoa TV Network. (Durie 1998,70-4, Hollings 1999; Joint Maori/Crown Working Group on Maori Broadcasting Policy 1996, 1-20; New Zealand TV One 1999a; Te Mangai Paho 1996,np.)

Currently, there is a further challenge for a claim under the Treaty to the sale of the broadband mobile communications network (New Zealand Herald, 19/10/99, 1; TV One 1999b). It is planned to use a resulting $19 million per annum to fund a Maori television trust and broadcast 15 hours of programming a day, although even the Chief Executive of Te Mangai Paho concedes that to produce this amount of television is highly optimistic (Hollings, 1999).

Derek Fox (1992, 170-80; 1994, 13-15) has argued that Maori have been invisible in mainstream media and have played no major role in television or radio broadcasting in the last 30 years. In January 1995, Maori activists stormed the TVNZ newsroom delaying

the news for 20 minutes to complain about the lack of Maori coverage (Dyer 1996,1.) According to a TVNZ survey (Dancey in Te Mangai Paho 1994,44-5) Maori watch less television than the general population. Which, according to a Maori elder Aroha Anderson (in Te Mangai Paho 1994,49) is due to a lack of relevant programming '...our people are not watching [television] because it doesn't interest them or because it's not intellectually stimulating but because it hurts them.' It would be expected that Maori content on mainstream television and radio would be higher than in Australia and Canada as they are 10% of the New Zealand population as compared to the indigenous population of Australia at 2.1% and the native population of Canada at 1.9%. (Dancey in Te Mangai Paho 19994,44-5, McLennan and Madden 1999,1; Canada 2000a,np,)

The election of a Labour Coalition Government in November 1999 may prove good news for Maori broadcasting. Already the Prime Minister, Helen Clark, (1999) has announced a policy decision that Radio New Zealand and TV New Zealand will remain in public ownership and that particular attention will be paid to the development of Maori broadcasting to fulfil the Government's Treaty obligations.

FIGURE 5: INDIGENOUS BROADCASTING DEVELOPMENTS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN
AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA

	Australia[19]	New Zealand[20]	Canada[21]
Early developments	**1975** urban Aboriginal broadcasting commences on community radio. Remote area video experiments. **Late 1970s** use of CB radio and local newsletters. **Early 1980s** few remote Aboriginal communities receive television services via Intelsat.	**1942** News programs broadcast in Maori language on Radio New Zealand.	**1930s** early broadcasts in indigenous language in Alaska. **1960s** shortwave broadcasts in language on Canadian Broadcasting. Corporation (CBC). Native Communication Societies (NCS) established to encourage broadcasting and print.
Radio	**1980** CAAMA formed. **1982** remote community video experiments at Ernabella and Yuendemu. **1985** launch of AUSSAT. 8KIN receives licence. CAAMA bids for RCTS. **1987** ABC establishes Aboriginal Programs Unit. **1988** BRACS roll out brings broadcast TV and radio to 80 remote Aboriginal communities and allows them to produce their own programs. **1993** BRACS upgrade.	**1988** claim to Waitangi Tribunal for share of sale of radio spectrum to fund Maori broadcasting. **1990** national hui proposes a Maori broadcasting system. **1993** Te Mangai Paho established as a funding agency for broadcasting funds local iwi radio services plus Radio Aotearoa. Percentage of broadcasting must be in Maori language. **1996** National Maori radio service established.	**1970** CBC Northern service, 5 stations broadcasting in 8 languages. **1974** Office of Community radio established to encourage language broadcasts. NCS networks establish system similar to BRACS. **1978-1982** Anik B satellite systems launched. **1980** Canadian Radio-television Commission holds enquiry into impact of satellite on remote areas. **1983** Northern Broadcasting Policy to preserve language and culture.
Television	**1988** CAAMA/Imparja win RCTS TV licence.	**1984** Maori bid for third commercial TV licence fails. Two Maori language programs broadcast on national TV. **1996** Aotearoa television established but later closes after a political scandal in 1997.	**1990** the Canadian Native Broadcasting Policy finally recognised community control of indigenous media. **1991** Television Northern Canada (TVNC) for indigenous people receives licence. **Broadcasting Act** recognises right of indigenous population to own service.

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[19] Source: Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australian 1994, Dixon 1980, Reynolds 1981, Michaels 1986, ATSIC 1999a; 1999b.

[20] Source: Durie 1998, Hollings 1999, ATSIC 1999b pp16-17,

[21] Source: ATSIC 1999b pp17-21, Canada 2000a;200b;200c; Bienvenue, 1983 pp30-43, Mohr 1996 pp89-102.

	Australia	New Zealand	Canada
On-line services and future directions	**1992** Tanami Network online service commenced. National Indigenous Media and National Indigenous Radio Service established. **1999** Indigenous Communications Australia proposed by ATSIC.	**1999** Te Mangai Paho seeks further television funding from sale of HF radio spectrum.	**1997** Aboriginal Peoples Television Network proposed to expand TVNC to southern areas.

Summary

There was little Aboriginal media policy developed in Australia despite calls from Aboriginal organisations from the early 1980s. The impending launch of the satellite made policy makers examine the issue and a hasty policy review, 'Out of the Silent Land', was published in 1984. Its major recommendations were implemented in 1988 with the BRACS scheme which provided basic equipment to receive television and radio and carry out local production. The BRACS policy was criticised as a 'one size fits all' concept and for coming with insufficient training or ongoing funding. Also in 1988, despite an earlier view that television was not appropriate for Aboriginal broadcasting, CAAMA successfully applied for the Remote Commercial Television Licence and Imparja began broadcasting. The establishment of ATSIC in 1990 resulted in a broadcasting policy review and the inadequacies in the policy were addressed through the establishment of a national Aboriginal broadcasting organisation NIMAA, the BRACS Revitalisation System to improve equipment, better training and simpler licensing systems.

The indigenous populations of Australian, Canada and New Zealand have shared similar colonial experiences of forced assimilation with the intention that they lost both language and culture. By the mid 20th century the indigenous people in all three countries were fighting strongly for self-determination and to restore their language and culture. Indigenous controlled media has been a tool to achieve self-determination. There are similar patterns, in that indigenous media policy has mainly been driven from the grassroots rather than by governments. Systems that can be locally produced and inserted into main stream media are components in all cases as are broader pan-Aboriginal media

systems including television, although Canada has had more success in achieving funding than either Australia or New Zealand. The Maori population is in greater proportion in New Zealand at 10% of the population compared to the indigenous populations of Canada (1.98%) and Australia (2.1%). However, the indigenous people of Canada and New Zealand have had a distinct advantage in the fact that they have signed treaties with their colonising powers which can be aggressively pursued, if necessary, to ensure funding of their cultural maintenance and broadcasting proposals. Canada and New Zealand also have the rights of indigenous broadcasters recognised in their legislation whereas Australia currently only recognises indigenous broadcasters as a subset of community broadcasting (Meadows 1999,11). The higher percentage of Maori population could have possibly added political weight to their argument. However, Maori achievements in broadcasting seem less than the achievements in Australian and Canada For example they currently have no indigenous television service. The implementation of indigenous broadcasting reforms also appears to be linked to sympathetic governments. For the same reason, funding of projects is equally vulnerable when unsympathetic governments are in power.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE FIRST PHASE OF WARLPIRI COMMUNICATION: AN EARLY INTEREST IN THE MEDIA PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF BROADCASTING

Introduction

The Warlpiri interest in the media can best be described in three phases:

Phase One: an early interest in the media prior to the arrival of broadcasting;

Phase Two: where broadcasting, including the BRACS system, the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) radio and Imparja television, came into operation; and

Phase Three: the most recent phase where the Warlpiri have taken up the latest digital and on-line technology.

This Chapter examines the first phase prior to the introduction of broadcasting media and I will examine the other two phases in the next chapter.

In the years prior to the introduction of mass media with the launch of the AUSSAT satellite in 1985, the Warlpiri had actively embraced self-determination. They had regained freehold of much of their land and had developed a bilingual education program in their schools. They were also openly welcoming researchers as part of a dialogue but still defining themselves as the 'other' of European society. Much of the study of indigenous media in remote areas has focused on the early 1980s with the development of CAAMA, the arrival of Eric Michaels and the impending launch of the communication satellite. However, Aboriginal broadcasting did not suddenly happen at Yuendemu during this period. Rather it was a continuation of an ongoing interest of the Warlpiri in modern media. There were a number of drivers of this early interest in the media including participating in early anthropological films and sound recordings, observing European use of technology, the needs of the outstation movement, and the influence of Aboriginal art and bilingual education.

Early influences on broadcasting

The Warlpiri as the objects of the media: early anthropological studies.

From early in the 20th century the Warlpiri became aware of communication technology as the result of being the object of films and sound recordings themselves. During this period railways and the overland telegraph had already reduced some of the distance of communication, allowing Europeans to settle the remote inland and make contact with Aboriginal society[22]. There is early evidence that Aboriginal elders across Australia were concerned about the possible breakdown and loss of traditional culture with contact with white culture. Ceremonies were shared with neighbouring groups so that the knowledge could continue. Information was also shared with anthropologists such as Baldwin Spencer who during 1901 and 1902 spent time photographing and filming ceremonies and artefacts in Central Australia. Spencer made one of the first films of the Warlpiri fire ceremony (McKenzie, Sandall and Peterson 1977; Michaels 186,103; Spencer 1982,74-7). Alice Moyle recorded traditional Northern Territory songs for the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies in the early 1960s (Moyle 1964). She recalled the enthusiasm, and laughter, of the people she was recording once she had explained that the recordings would enable their grandchildren to learn the songs.[23] Anthropologists have always been welcome at Yuendemu[24] and several academics have noted that Yuendemu had become a centre for research since settlement in 1946 (Michaels 1986,14; Rowse 1990,174; Stotz 1993,6). In fact, Michaels includes research as a local institution along with the church, the school and the local council. He mentions that researchers and government visitors were actively used to the advantage of the Warlpiri:

> '...such people also represent an opportunity for effective outward
> communications of the community's conditions through publications, media and

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[22] One of the first recorded, and highly practical, uses of European communication technology by an Aboriginal group was the appropriation of porcelain insulators from the overland telegraph wire to use as spearheads (Reynolds 1981,134).

[23] Moyle also observed that, the last time she returned to the Northern Territory, the local people were making their own recordings and playing them back to her (Moyle 1999).

[24] I found my application for a permit for my fieldwork to be handled far more smoothly at Yuendemu, where they were more used to researchers, than my application to Ernabella.

direct access to government. The community attempts to appraise these opportunities and its chances to get their own perspective across.'

By the 1970s a new breed of ethnographic film makers were developing in the post-colonial era who wanted to work with indigenous people (Ginsburg 1993,357). Cecil Holmes from the Commonwealth Film Unit was aware of experiments in indigenous film making from Canada. He was of the view that Aboriginal people could 'leap across the gulf of illiteracy' by taking up filmmaking. He set about an experiment at Roper River as early as 1971 where he offered to show local people how to use equipment and lend them the equipment to make their own films. A young Aboriginal couple took up his offer and shot films of soccer, cultural events, a rodeo and a baptism. They also expressed a wish to make a film arguing for land rights. (Making Films at Roper River 1972,16-17.)

In 1972, Kim McKenzie and Roger Sandall filmed the Warlpiri's Warlukurlanga Fire ceremony (McKenzie, Sandall and Peterson 1977). The ceremony involves one skin group as kirda, or owners, who performed the ceremony and the other group of kurdulunga who managed the process. The ceremony involved setting up the ceremonial ground, painting designs on participants' bodies, on a large ceremonial pole and on the ground as well as several days of singing and dancing. The ceremony concluded with the kirda lighting of bunches of twigs and fires and showering sparks over the kurdulunga. Michaels (1987b, 58) comments:

> 'Visually and thematically this ceremony satisfies the most extreme European appetite for savage theater.'

This film, was approved by the community when edited in 1972 (Michaels 1987b, 57-8). Despite their consultation, it is still a very European style of ethnographic filmmaking. The ceremony, which lasted several days, is condensed into a twenty-minute format. Most focus is on the climactic ceremonial end when the fires are lit and sparks fly. Nicolas Peterson added a commentary in 1977, which Marcia Langton (1993,77) describes as 'David Attenborough like'. Peterson explained that the ceremony is a safety valve between the owners and managers over disputes and the behaviour of their female relatives. It also reaffirmed the ownership of land and would be repeated in a few years or

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months with the roles of owner and manager reversed. (McKenzie, Sandall and Peterson 1977.) It is interesting to observe the European staff only come to watch the Warlpiri at the end of the ceremony. The film is also a contrast to the first Warlpiri videoed ceremonies in the early 1980s (WMA 1985.), which will be described later.

This early exposure to film making, photography and sound recording may have made the Warlpiri more aware of the capabilities of media than other less studied communities.

European use of technology

Aboriginal people, since European contact, were aware of the potential of communications technology. However, prior to self-determination, communication technology lay firmly in European control. Since the mid-1950s, film nights at Yuendemu were run by the school or church in the communal dining hall. The films were selected by Europeans and were usually westerns, comedies or films with a social message. Michaels had heard anecdotal stories of Aboriginal people not being able to distinguish truth from fiction in these films and women giving a sorry (mourning) cry when the hero was being mauled by a lion. He also observed that film nights violated kinship taboos with too many people packed in one space and mothers-in-law too close to sons-in-law or young men too close to young women. (Michaels 1986, 37-38.)

Michaels (1986 13-35) described how the Warlpiri were limited in their access to communications during the early 1980s. This particularly applied to telephones and radio transmitters which were only available in emergencies from the police station, church and clinic: all of which were European controlled. European schoolteachers had access to a radiotelephone and had a CB (shortwave) radio system linking their homes and community facilities. Alice Springs was a long, hot drive away and to get there would require access to a vehicle, which were in short supply to Aboriginal people. Two mail flights were made to Yuendemu each week and the mail was sorted by the European postmistress. The Warlpiri had to wait for their mail but Europeans could walk in and collect theirs. The Warlpiri also had to have a European intermediary to use the phone, and personal incoming calls were almost impossible to receive. (Michaels 1986, 18-25.)

Michaels, together with Peter Toyne, the European adult educator, conducted a brief survey on communications in 1985 and later held a meeting. They found:

> 'Senior men emphasised their desire for telephones as a first priority. They saw telephones as enhancing their authority and ceremonial responsibilities, as opposed to electronic entertainment which was undermining it.' (Michaels 1986 33.)

Ironically, the media owners' original argument to the Federal Government in the 1970s about the need for a communications satellite was made on the basis that it would provide more effective telecommunications. (Batty 1999.) This promise was soon dropped by Telecom who by 1984 had moved to a policy of developing the Digital Radio Concentrator System (DRCS) which used terrestrial radio repeater towers. At the time it was estimated that this project, which would also service Yuendemu, was not due to be completed until 1990, a full five years after the introduction of the satellite. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1985, 53; Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984, 36-40.)

Communications and the influence of the outstation movement

The outstation, or homeland, movement was a key component of self-determination. Michaels (1986,26) recorded 13 permanent Warlpiri outstations when he worked at Yuendemu between 1983-85 and the Warlpiri also had an outstation council. However the outstation movement was not a total reversal to a traditional lifestyle, as some modern technology was being adapted for use in bush camps including four wheel drive vehicles, radio transmitters, windmills, bores for water, rifles and even aircraft. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs, 1981,np.) Not all western technology was suitable for harsh remote conditions and in 1980, the Centre for Appropriate Technology was established by the Alice Springs TAFE college. Among the technology developed by Aboriginal students in consultation with the communities and also sold to Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, South Australia, and Western Australia as well as to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands were:

- hand pumps for bore water that could be installed by hand and installed in a day;

- hand operated washing machines for blankets that would not be destroyed by the constant grinding of sand;

- chip heaters for hot water to replace solar panels that could clog with bore water or crack in the frost; and

- even wheelchairs for rugged conditions.

(Australia. Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1987,10-11.)

Good communication was also an important component of the outstation movement especially in emergencies. A key component of this was the use of four wheel drive vehicles, usually the rugged Toyota troopcarrier. Getrude Stotz (1993), in her PhD thesis, describes the use of four wheel drive vehicles at the Warlpiri outstation at Nguru. One Warlpiri couple had their own car and used it for family hunting trips, whereas the 'Toyotas', as the Warlpiri called all four wheel drive vehicles, were communally owned but controlled by senior men within the kirda/kurdungurlu relationship. If a senior man was too old to drive or did not wish to do so he would pass control of the vehicle to a younger male relative (Stotz 1993, 131,156-9,177.) Control of the vehicle also came with responsibilities, such as driving people to ceremonies, picking up children from school, and taking older people to medical appointments. Failure to do this, or the vehicle running out of petrol, could result in the right to be 'boss' of the vehicle being passed on to another senior man. (Stotz, 1993, 181-3.) On death, when property is usually destroyed in mortuary ceremonies, vehicles would be exchanged. Women did not have control of vehicles, although Stotz notes that in Tennant Creek the women's council owned a Toyota solely for the use of women. There was also some jealousy from communities that did not have land rights as they did not have access to vehicles. (Stotz 1993, 176-8.) Community ownership appears to be a much more useful model for Aboriginal communities than individual ownership, which could often produce jealousy or a feeling of lack of co-operation. Stotz (1993, 132, 181) describes how the men all worked to fix the communally owned vehicle if it broke down, whereas the couple who privately owned a vehicle were sometimes left without assistance when it broke down.

A number of communities in the central region had access to the HF (shortwave) radio network including the Warlpiri. This allowed for groups of people to chat to each other. In the early 1980s Warlpiri outstations were linked by radiotelephones using solar panels

for power (Michaels 1986,23,26; Warlpiri Media Association 1985d, 26-7). However, radiotelephones were slow and expensive and a call could take several hours to connect. The communities also missed being able to speak as a group (PY Media 1998a; 1999a; Turner 1990,43.)

Suitable technology was essential for the establishment of outstations. Communities were also actively seeking control of communication, particularly four wheel drive vehicles and HF radio, as an important component of the outstation/homeland movement. The new technology was adapted to fit traditional culture. For example seating patterns in and control of vehicles and group use of HF radio was preferred over the one-on-one communication by telephone.

Control of land and access permits

Land rights improved control over communications and allowed the Warlpiri to spread out onto traditional lands once again. The establishment of the Central Land Council (CLC) in 1977 allowed the Warlpiri to restrict non-Aboriginal access to their land as well as to negotiate from a position of strength. The CLC acted as a mediator and negotiator for land claims, arranged permits for access to Aboriginal lands and negotiated with mining companies and other commercial groups. It consisted of 79 councillors representing 58 Aboriginal groups and, in turn, it consulted with local councils. (Central Land Council 1999; Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia, 1994, 186-7.)

The permit system has been used to limit access to film on Aboriginal land (Langton 1993,69). Michaels (1987,63-78) describes an incident at Yuendemu in 1984 when the ABC came to film a documentary about the new Warlpiri television station and how eventually, despite a signed agreement, the Warlpiri had to threaten legal action before being allowed to review the final production.[25]

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[25] More recently the Warlpiri Media Association prevented Pauline Hanson and 60 Minutes visiting to film at Yuendemu. Film crews are also made to sign contracts ensuring community review of material. (Warlpiri Media Association 1999a www.indiginet.communications.au/warlpiri.)

Aboriginal art as a form of communication

In examining a developing interest in the media, it is interesting to make a brief examination of the development of Aboriginal art. There appears to have been a parallel between the development of Aboriginal communications and Aboriginal art. Marcia Langton (1993,9) points out that the 'arts' are an integral part of Aboriginal life:

> 'Observers have commented often on the extraordinary amount of time and resources that Aboriginal people devote to the arts and religious ceremonies. Visual and oral expressions have been very elaborate in Aboriginal societies in the social sense. Multi-lingualism, linguistic devices and codes, oral dance and music traditions and the visual arts were more elaborate than the material culture used in daily domestic life such as for hunting, gathering and preparing food, shelter and apparel.'

The multi-skilling of each Aboriginal person in a number of arts such as singing, story telling, dancing and painting may help explain their interest in a variety of broadcast media such as radio, video and internet rather than specialising in one aspect.

Aboriginal art has had an important role in building understanding between the Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal world. This was evident in the bark petition which the Yolngu people of Yirrkala in Arnhem Land prepared and presented to Federal Parliament to protest about the lack of consultation about bauxite mining by the Comalco company. (Australia. Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1981,np; Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia 1994,100-1.) Aboriginal art was often encouraged, in times prior to self-determination, by European administrators or teachers like Rex Battarbee who during the 1930s encouraged Albert Namatjira to paint his semi-indigenous/semi-European style landscapes at Hermansberg in Central Australia (Caruana 1993,106).

Papunya, to the south-west of Yuendemu, has been described by Michaels (1988, 153) as the 'mother lode of the Western Desert painting movement'. It was here in 1971 that European art teacher Geoffrey Bardon encouraged local elders to paint traditional designs on the school walls and later to paint on canvas and boards using acrylic paint. (Caruana 1993, 107-9, Michaels 1998, 153-4.) During his study of Warlpiri media, Michaels took a

brief interlude in 1983 to work with Warlpiri elders on an art project similar to that at Papunya which involved painting the school doors at Yuendemu. He published this experience in two articles: 'Western Desert Sandpainting and Postmodernism' (1987) and 'Bad Aboriginal Art' (1988). He stated: 'I began working with the old men on their painting as a respite from my research and the more politically confrontational work with the younger men'. He went on to describe the days spent doing the project as among the most pleasant he had spent at Yuendemu (Michaels 1988,156.) Michaels assisted the older men with their paints and made tea providing a clue that the elders may have seen this support role as more suitable for the younger researcher than working with the younger men on media which may have undermined the elders' authority.

The Warlpiri at Yuendemu were slower to take up painting than their neighbours at Papunya. Caruana (1993, 123-7) argues that this was to the Warlpiri's advantage as they were able to learn from the experiences of those communities already producing art, especially in protecting secret material from widespread dispersion, something the Papunya painters did not understand at first, and in ensuring market rates. The Warlpiri elders were aware of the experience at Papunya as some were related to people there. The new school principal at Yuendemu, Terry Davis, was supportive of Warlpiri language and culture and, in 1983, encouraged the senior men to paint the Yuendemu school doors with traditional designs. The elders agreed to do this with Paddy Japaljarri Stewart stating in an introduction to the book about the doors:

> 'We painted these Dreamings on the school doors because children should learn about our law. The children do not know them and might become like white people, which we do not want to happen.' (Warlukurlangu Artists 1992,3.)

There was also a wish that Europeans would also understand the importance of these paintings of the Dreamings. Each door was painted by groups of kin in a traditional design that was owned by that kinship group, kirda assisted by kurdulunga. All secret material was edited out and the paintings completed within a day as they would when making a traditional sandpainting.[26] (Michaels 1987e, 49-61; 1988,148 –57.)Women

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[26] Although Michaels claims that no advice was provided by Europeans, he did describe how he saw one of the more experienced artists use a Papunya dot style. He could not prevent himself from suggesting that the

artists were well represented at Yuendemu. Caruana believes this was because of encouragement by anthropologists Nancy Munn in the 1950s and 60s and Francoise Dussart during the 1980s. In the early 1980s a group of female elders painted a number of small canvases to sell for the price of two Toyotas so they could regain access to their traditional lands (Caruana, 1993,128).[27] After the completion of the Yuendemu doors, Warlpiri art gained national and international recognition with a number of paintings going to the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra.[28] In 1989 a group of Warlpiri men, including Francis Jupurrurla Kelly, who worked with Michaels as a video producer, travelled to Paris to install a sand painting called 'Yarla- Yam Dreaming' at the 'Magiciens de la Terre' exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou. (Caruana 1993,102-2, 128-9). The Warlukurlangu Artists Association was established at Yuendemu in 1983 to protect the rights of Warlpiri artists (Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia 1994,1155).

The Warlpiri developed their artwork for a number of reasons: to preserve culture, to teach the younger people and to earn money for specific items. Many of the same people involved in art, such as Francis Jupurrurla Kelly, were also involved in media production.

Communication and the influence of bilingual education

The school and adult education facility at Yuendemu were also an influence on media development. There was an early experiment based at the school at Yuendemu in 1975 using video equipment which was funded by the Whitlam Government's video access program. A number of films were made of sporting events and official visits. However the old black and white technology proved cumbersome and difficult to use in remote conditions. (Junga Yimi 1985, 1-3; Michaels 1986,38.) Michaels described the school at Yuendemu as the largest employer of Aborigines and Europeans. It had been bilingual

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artist keep to Warlpiri style of painting, proudly stating that the painting now hangs in the National Gallery in Canberra. (Michaels 1987e, 49-61; 1988,148 –57.)

[27] Michaels (1987, 54-5) also recounts that paintings were made to purchase vehicles but by men not women. Aboriginal art is often used as a 'cash crop' (Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia 1994,64) to buy essential transport or even health services. This year the international charity World Vision, in association with the community, has established a women's art project at Papunya where art supplies are provided and the traditional paintings sold to fund a healthcare worker to improve nutrition especially for babies (McCulloch-Uehlin1999, 13).

[28] These include 'Warlukurlangu Jukurpa - Fire Country Dreaming', 'Yurla Manungalaji Jukurpa-Dogwood Dreaming' and 'Yanjilypiri Jukurpa – Star Dreaming'.

since 1974 (Ceresa 1999, 1). By the 1980s, 200 students attended it although often sporadically due, according to Michaels, to lack of parental interest, other diversions and an irrelevant curriculum. There was also a small adult education facility with one TAFE teacher, Peter Toyne (who is now the Shadow education spokesman for the Northern Territory), and an Aboriginal assistant, Leonard Granites. (Michaels 1986,18-19) In an article in *Language in Aboriginal Australia* Toyne, together with American linguist Tim Shopen and two Warlpiri: Tess Napaljarri Ross and Christopher Japangardi Poulson, wrote about the importance of preserving language as a part of retaining Warlpiri identity. In the article they discuss the complexity of translating material. For instance, there was no concept of 'friendly' in Warlpiri so 'pulka' or 'close kin ties' had to be substituted. The adult education centre had already produced a video on the road law test in Warlpiri without having to borrow a single new English word. They were proposing a number of new videos, and supporting written material in Warlpiri on a number of subjects including establishing a small enterprise, European law, trade skills, community health, nutrition, dental care, hygiene, life skills and sport and recreation. They had developed a model for media production which involved establishing a group of 30 to 40 older men and women who could produce paintings, live performance and artefacts. There would also be a group of 10 to 15 younger people, who could use the video equipment to video the older people, and 2 to 3 literacy workers who were bilingual and could translate material (Poulson et al. 1982,7-12). Their model mixes traditional skills with video production skills. It predates Michaels' arrival at Yuendemu and indicates that a well thought out policy for video making was already being developed.

In the late 1970s, the school had established the Warlpiri Literature Production Centre with a printery to produce bilingual material. The local community funded this after the Northern Territory Government refused funding. The Literature Production Centre produced readers in Warlpiri for the school and a local newsletter. *Junga Yimi* or 'Our Story' was established in 1979 and published, in English and in Warlpiri. It included stories on health issues, business enterprises, community announcements and sport results, as well as black and white photos taken by Chris Poulson. In the 1970s, a number of other remote Aboriginal communities were also producing newsletters in language containing traditional stories, community notices and health messages to support

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bilingual literacy programs at the school. (Michaels 1986 18; Kantor 1999, Rose 1999,xxvii; Junga Yimi, 1979; Schmidt 1993, 62.)

The Warlpiri Literature Production Centre later incorporated video makers and artists. In 1985 it was renamed the Warlpiri Media Association at the instigation of Michaels and Toyne (Kantor, 1999; Junga Yimi, 1985; Michaels 1986, 19). The school at Yuendemu was a major driver for video making, it also attracted sympathetic Europeans to assist the Warlpiri with their communication.

The early locally produced videos

Prior to Michaels' arrival at Yuendemu, the Warlpiri were already actively publishing as well as producing artwork and videos. His arrival acted as a catalyst for further video production. Michaels had been granted a three-year fellowship with the Institute of Aboriginal Studies in 1982 to assess the impact of television on remote Aboriginal communities. He sought a place to do his fieldwork and visited CAAMA in Alice Springs where Philip Batty, the deputy director of CAAMA, suggested that Michaels work with CAAMA. Batty took Michaels to visit Yuendemu where Leonard Granites had already begun videoing meetings and sporting events. Michaels chose to work at Yuendemu once the locals had 'checked him over' moving there in August 1983 (Michaels and Granites 1984,17; 1986, xiv, 50; Batty 1996,124; 1999). From his fieldwork he sought to find an answer to the question:

> 'If Aborigines had invented television, what would that television be like …and how might it differ from the media system we are more familiar with?' (Michaels 1983, 52.)

Michaels brought with him two VCRs and two cameras. This supplemented the video equipment already available at the school. He remained peripheral to Warlpiri society for almost a year before being given a 'skin' name and the nickname of 'pitiyawu' which is the phonetic Warlpiri pronunciation of 'video'. In the initial period, Michaels obtained his information by working with Leonard Granites as his video assistant and also from the Warlpiri while repairing their videos. He carried out a brief survey with Peter Toyne,

the adult educator, which showed considerable dissatisfaction with the current communication system. In 1984 Leonard Granites left Yuendemu due to family reasons and handed his video assistant position over to Francis Kelly his classificatory brother-in-law. (Michaels and Granites 1984,17-18; 1986, 29-33, 50.)

The quantity of videos produced increased after the arrival of Michaels, probably due to the additional equipment that he had brought to the community. There also was the burgeoning use of video recorders. By October 1983 there were nine VCRs at Yuendemu creating a demand, not only for commercial tapes, but also for locally produced recordings. Nearly every kinship group had access to one of the nine video machines. Michaels observed that the Warlpiri were far more comfortable viewing in kinship groups rather than the larger, mixed groups at the European controlled film nights (Michaels and Granites 1984, 16-25)[29].

These first videos from Yuendemu covered a range of topics and provide an insight into what kind of television the Warlpiri were interested in.

Sporting events

Organised sports were first introduced to Yuendemu by Europeans to reduce community tension. Michaels saw a comparison between sporting events and traditional ceremonies in that people gathered together to compete and to resolve disputes at both (Michaels 1986, 25). The annual sports weekends at Yuendemu attracted people from throughout the region and at the 1973 weekend, 1200 visitors, some from as far away as Ernabella, attended the 11th sports weekend. They not only competed but also produced art and craft, held a coroboree and the senior people inspected sacred objects stored in the museum (Yuendemu Sports Weekend 1973, 6-9). The first video recording by Leonard Granites, prior to Michaels' arrival, was of the sports weekend. (Michaels 1986, 56.)

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[29] Although in another Northern Territory Aboriginal community Douglas Thompson (1985, 26-29) found the opposite. In Thompson's community, film nights were more accepted than video showings, as the elders controlled the film nights whereas the school ran video nights in crowded room in the school where it was too far for older people to walk to in the dark. This indicates that the control of elders and the viewing in smaller suitable kinship groups was probably of more importance than the actual medium being viewed.

Sport still remains popular at Yuendemu with soccer and AFL teams organised in teams based on kinship lines (O'Gallagher 1999; personal observation).

Samplers and promotional videos

By October 1983 Michaels had enlisted three staff members from the Adult Learning Centre, Violet Marshal, Dave Woods and Andrew Spencer, to become involved in video making. Together they produced two samplers of the video work at Yuendemu. Michaels took one of these videos, which had an introduction by Leonard Granites, to Alice Springs to show at the National Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting Association meeting which was attended by Aboriginal broadcasting and Government officials (Michaels and Warlpiri Media Association 1986; Warlpiri Media Association 1985c). At another conference Michaels was criticised by Aboriginal attendees after showing this video. They claimed that their communities did not have the resources that Yuendemu had and wanted to concentrate on health, employment, education and legal services. (Briscoe 1983,57-8.) Michaels also later showed the videos to a Department of Communications conference and they suggested that Yuendemu apply for a public television licence. Between November 1983 and July 1984 video production moved to the newly renovated Adult Education Centre. (Michaels 1986,50-1).

In March 1984, a group of Warlpiri travelled to Kintore to give evidence to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal's hearing on the remote commercial television service. Michaels and Francis Kelly videoed the evidence and Francis Kelly translated. In the video Darby Ross stated:

> 'Old fellas don't know what to do with the satellite, whether young people will be interested in ceremonies...we want land rights to keep away from European things...kids learn about European life when they are away at school and have to be taught Aboriginal ways.' (Warlpiri Media Association 1984a.)

Michaels gave evidence to the ABT hearing about the possible violation of traditional law on television by showing images of secret objects or people who have died. He cited the example of a program recorded by New Zealand television about secret objects from

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the Strehlow ethnographic collection while it was touring New Zealand, which was later shown in Australia. (Warlpiri Media Association 1984a)

A thirty minute video, 'Yuendemu Inserts', produced during this period, shows building of the new studios in progress and interviews with Michaels, Francis Kelly, the president of the Yuendemu Council, Andrew Spencer and Chris Poulson, the first President of Warlpiri Media Association. They all supported the need for locally produced television citing the need to show kids and others their culture and to communicate with other communities. One of the older men also mentioned that it would also be good to get sports from the satellite. (Warlpiri Media Association 1984b.)

While these videos are of poor technical quality, they were a powerful way of getting information about the Yuendemu experiment out to the wider community and to Government officials. They were particularly important as Yuendemu was in such a remote location that it was difficult to get messages to policy makers in Canberra. Michaels (1986, 51) was of the view that showing sample videos at the International Training Institute Seminar in Sydney during May 1985 was instrumental in obtaining the initial $25,000 equipment grant for Yuendemu from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Having worked at the Broadcasting Unit at the Department of Aboriginal Affairs during this period I would have to agree that the videos impressed both Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Department of Communications staff.[30]

Dancing and traditional crafts

Michaels was requested on a number of occasions by elders to film traditional dancing and traditional manufacture including making boomerangs, seed damper and paintings (Michaels 1986,57,66.) 'Nyirrpi Kalkawa' (Michaels and Warlpiri Media Association 1984) is a 62 minute video showing a trip to an ochre mine by an elder, another senior man and as senior woman who are accompanied by Michaels and two other Europeans.[31] The first 25 minutes of the video features their arrival by four-wheel drive and the old

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[30] Michaels' somewhat abrasive manner also came close to losing this funding as he was publicly critical of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, which was at the time sympathetic to the needs of Aboriginal broadcasters, at this conference and during face to face meetings that I attended.
[31] One of the Europeans is a French speaking woman, who is probably anthropologist Francoise Dussart.

man describing the landscape in Warlpiri, while the camera pans around. The elder then speaks to the camera in English about the significance of the site. Then, leaving the old man at the bottom of the hill, the others ascend to the ochre pit. After a long shot is made from the top of the hill, twenty-five minutes is spent videoing the digging, grinding and mixing ochre into balls with instructions in Warlpiri. The final ten minutes shows the descent down the hill, meeting up with the old man again, and driving back, then filming the children in the camp as Michaels purchases fuel.[32] The video is instructive and focuses very much on the significance of the landscape and the correct way of preparing the ochre. Throughout videoing the Europeans appear bored, with Michaels occasionally videoing the landscape and not the ochre process, while the other two assist with digging out ochre and seem to be taking far more than seems to be needed. The Warlpiri do not direct Michaels much apart from pointing out the landscape and preparing the ochre for the camera.

Traditional ceremonies

In 1983 Michaels was specifically asked by Warlpiri elders to film some dancing. He later found that these dances were associated with the Warlpiri Fire ceremony which the Warlpiri wished to revive as it had not been performed for many years. The Warlpiri wrote to Nicolas Peterson requesting a copy of the 1967 film by McKenzie and Sandall of the ceremony. Even though the film contained the images of some people who had died, the male elders agreed that it could be used for general viewing although the elder women disagreed with this and refused to watch it. The film was used as a basis to revive the ceremony in 1986. This was filmed by Michaels and Andrew Japaljarri Spencer who was kurdungurlu or manager as Francis Kelly could not film being kirda and having to participate. Michaels was not permitted to be present for the climax of the ceremony. The final video was approved by the elders and a copy given to a neighbouring community once some secret details had been edited out. Shortly after the video was made, one of the participating elders died so the video could no longer be shown and was archived during a period of mourning. (Michaels 1986,67-9; 1987b, 57-70.) A few years later filmmakers

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[32] Brief scenes of local children are a feature of a number of Warlpiri videos with the cameraman often distracted by their antics. In the video of the Coniston Massacre, Michaels argues that the presence of the children of the clan adds authority to that video. (Michaels and Kelly 1984, 26-34)

Rachel Perkins, daughter of Charles, and Ned Lander were asked by the Warlpiri to film another version of the Fire ceremony with the kirda/kurdungurlu roles reversed. (Langton 1993,78-9.)

In 1984, the Warlpiri Media Association (1984d) videoed a Purlapa, or men's public ceremony (Dussart 1988,51), at Chilla Well near Yuendemu. The cameraman is not identified. The video, produced by the Warlpiri themselves, is a strong contrast to ethnographic films such as that of McKenzie and Sandall. The video is just over three hours long and covers the setting up of the ceremonial grounds during the day and the night of dancing and singing. Footage of planning and talking is interspersed with shots of children playing and waving at the camera. There are also long panning shots of the landscape moving into close up for certain features. As the sun sets, fires are lit. There is no attempt to provide artificial light and the videoing continues by the light of the fires. Very little can be seen unless a dancer passes the fire in silhouette, although the singing and speaking can be heard clearly. The ceremony climaxes as the sun comes up and some of the action can be seen. This video is not technically slick, yet despite its long drawn out moments and lack of lighting for the night scenes, it captures the atmosphere of the ceremony far better than the twenty minute long McKenzie and Sandall film (McKenzie, Sandall and Peterson 1977). It focuses on the text that the Warlpiri see as important, including the speaking between songs and the slow discussions on how to set up the ceremonial ground.

History – putting the record straight: the video of the Coniston massacre.

Until the making of a video about the Coniston massacre, which occurred in 1929, the Warlpiri had only videoed events that were occurring anyway, such as dancing or crafts. During August 1984 the Community Development Employment Scheme (CDEP) funded six people to work on videos. In late 1984 Michaels (1986,51, 61) suggested to this group that they might want to make something specially for the camera. The next day Francis Kelly arrived with 26 relatives and suggested filming the events of the Coniston massacre. This was Francis Kelly's first attempt to make a video. (Michaels 1987b, 44.) The choice of subject is indicative of the importance of telling this story from the Warlpiri viewpoint.

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Lee Cataldi (1996,44-7) describes the Coniston massacre as a pivotal experience for the Warlpiri people in defining their relationship with European people. He considers that the story has taken on an almost traditional Jukurrpa or dreaming quality with one of the Warlpiri men responsible for the death of the dingo trapper hiding in a cave becoming a new cultural hero and the cave gaining the status of a sacred site. Michaels (1986,62), who was aware of a number of Warlpiri versions of the stories recounted by descendants of the murderers and the police tracker in books, on film and on television, has a similar view:

> 'As one hears these versions told repeatedly, one begins also to detect elements of dreaming construction entering the accounts, suggesting that these tales might become, in future generations, dreaming stories for the land around Coniston where they took place and, where perhaps, older stories were lost in the massacre.'

Certainly the story was considered to be significant enough to be recounted in Junga Yimi in 1982 by Tim Japangardi who was told it by an eyewitness in 1978. The Junga Yimi story describes how Frederick Brookes was digging out soakages and making a dam. He would talk to local Warlpiri women coming to get water. He eventually dragged two women from a camp and threatened Warlpiri men with a rifle, kidnapping Japangardi's mother and sleeping with her for three nights. When she returned, the old men sent her back and followed her. They then killed Brookes with an axe and hid his body in a rabbit burrow. Juparrula, another Warlpiri man working for Brookes, found his empty tent and informed the local police who came on horseback and found the body. The police party split into two groups and later shot a group of Warlpiri to the south and then another group by a waterhole. However the police party never found the two guilty men. (Japangardi 1982, np) Michaels (1987b, 41) says that the Warlpiri described this as the 'killing time' and estimated that 100 Warlpiri, possibly a whole clan who had gathered for a traditional ceremony, were killed in the punitive raids by Europeans:

> '...many, if not most, people at Yuendemu have relatives who were killed in these raids. Indeed from most of their accounts it appears that these included

many assembled for a ceremony, so it is possible that an entire land holding patrilodge was lost, and with it, the expertise for certain tracks in the area. This implies even greater social disruption than just the murder of many people and disruption which still seeks resolution...this event clearly spelled out to the Warlpiri their tactical disadvantage in the European invasion, the futility and costs of resistance.' (Michaels 1986,61.)

Michaels was fascinated by the social organisation of Kelly's video shoot, which he describes at length in his monograph 'For a Cultural Future: Francis Jupurrurla makes TV at Yuendemu.' (Michaels 1987b.) Michaels' background in anthropology assists in making sense of what otherwise would have seemed to have been a chaotic day. The kin group, which was about the size that would have traditionally hunted together, came with Kelly to enjoy a day out to hunt and picnic. Presenting the story to camera was a Japangardi elder with his two young sons and was kirda or owner of the story, while Kelly who worked behind the camera was in a kurdungurlu, or manager, relationship. The wider kinship group gave authority to telling the story although they did not participate. The video lasts for about 54 minutes. It is in Warlpiri and has four locations including the final scene where Francis Kelly joins Japangardi to interview him briefly. Michaels records that very little editing was done. Kelly directed the video while filming using traditional sign language such as that used in hunting. (Michaels and Kelly 1984, 26-34, 1986,62-5; 1987b, 39-52; Warlpiri Media Association 1984c.) For a first production, the video is technically very good, the camera work is smooth considering that domestic quality equipment being used.

At the beginning, Japangardi rises from the long grass as if by magic and walks to the camera where he is halted by Kelly to say his piece to camera in Warlpiri, he then walks away. In the second scene Japangardi is sitting on Brookes' grave, he tells more of the story before walking away and the camera zooms in to a close up of the writing on the gravestone. The next scene has the camera panning in a circle slowly over the landscape stopping at significant parts before returning to Japangardi who stands up and again walks to the camera before stopping to provide more narrative. He then walks to a waterhole where his reflection is filmed before walking out of shot again. The camera pans around the landscape again, focusing on a hill and back to the waterhole where

Kelly zooms into a close-up shot. The final scene has Japangardi pointing out objects in the landscape to his two sons. The camera pans around the landscape before returning to Japangardi who walks into view again and continues his narration. The camera moves to focus on a group of rocks then Japangardi appears from behind the rocks. He shows a cave in the rock to his sons, who incidentally are wet and must have been swimming. The boys climb into the cave and disappear from view. After some more narration, Kelly joins Japangardi to listen and to ask questions and Michaels takes over the camera. Both walk out of shot at the end.

While the style is reminiscent, as Michaels (1986,63) observed, of an Attenborough documentary, there is also a strong similarity to the traditional Warlpiri sand stories described by Munn (1973, 95-132). In these stories Dreaming ancestors would arise out of the landscape, and travel through a landscape pointing out its features before disappearing again into a waterhole or cave. Michaels (1986,63) also saw similarities with telling traditional stories to children and dancing in and out of a ceremonial ground. While Kelly was using a new medium in video, the style he used was traditional, as were some of his production methods, for example using sign language to direct from behind the camera.

Opening up the country

Another important genre for the early videos at Yuendemu were what Michaels (1986,68-9; 1987b, 26) called 'travel videos'. These videos were where the Warlpiri, now they had access to their lands again, made journeys lasting several weeks across the land, identifying sites and telling stories and singing the dreaming songs associated with the country:

> 'This use of video to "open up country" is of special significance to Aboriginal people, and has been developing for some time in association with land rights efforts.' (Michaels 1986, 69.)

Francis Kelly videoed several of these journeys which were very popular especially with the old people who were too frail to travel and who openly wept when they saw their country again on video. The videos were also used as evidence in land claims.

Community meetings

The establishment of Aboriginal organisations such as the Yuendemu Council and the Central Land Council, meant that representatives of the community were now travelling to meetings with Territory and Federal Government representatives. The people at Yuendemu had no idea about what happened at these meetings. Michaels (1086,69-71) describes how videos were used to progress community needs. The Yuendemu School Council was seeking greater control of education and was demanding that education be provided at outstations. The School Council drove to Alice Springs to meet with the Education Department. The meeting was videotaped so an accurate record could be provided to the community, as was a meeting next day at Yuendemu with the school superintendent. Over the next ten days the edited tapes of these meetings were distributed throughout the region as Yuendemu people travelled to nearby communities. Michaels estimated that 4,500 people saw them in this time despite the poor quality of the tapes. This dispute received some mainstream news coverage but this would not have been viewed in the communities who did not have broadcast television at that stage.

Another video of community meetings is one of a meeting between elders and the non-Aboriginal Chairman of the Northern Territory Liquor Commission about the community's decision to be alcohol free. The hour long video shows male elders and the Liquor Commission Chairman addressing the community from the back of the Yuendemu store and explaining how the banning of alcohol should reduce the problems of fights, knives and drunk driving. Most of the audience appears to be groups of women and children. (Warlpiri Media Association 1985a.)

Michaels (1986,72) concluded that:

> 'The taping of meetings enable the whole community to become involved in the decision making process, and makes their representatives accountable.'

CAAMA video and audio tapes

The Central Australian Aboriginal broadcasting Association (CAAMA) was established in Alice Springs in 1980. CAAMA also produced audio and video tapes in a number of central Australian languages including Warlpiri. Where there were no broadcasting systems CAAMA physically distributed these tapes to remote communities. (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984, 25; Michaels 1986,103, 119-122; Turner 1998, 165.)

Commercial videos: their distribution and cost

During the early 1980s the Warlpiri had no access to broadcast media but, as can be seen from their video productions, had a considerable interest in watching videos. Commercial videos had been hired since the early 1980s from Alice Springs. Some European store owners were reluctant to hire to Aborigines as tapes were shared with other kin, due to personal obligations, and seldom returned on time. The European wife of a local station manager ran a local video club with some Aboriginal members but most tapes were owned by individuals and pre-recorded and exchanged between groups. The Warlpiri owned nine video players, which gave access to each of the extended family groups. The video machines were traded between relations and, like control of vehicles, brought both prestige and obligation. Like vehicles, VCRs were exchanged on the death of an owner rather than destroyed. Michaels found that, while Europeans considered that Aborigines would only like action videos, the Warlpiri themselves enjoyed other genres such as slapstick comedy, wildlife documentaries and even musicals like 'Grease'. Most of all, the Warlpiri liked the videos that they had produced themselves. (Michaels and Granites 1984, 16-25; Michaels 1986, 39-46)

Michaels did not agree that the effects theory of media studies was appropriate for cross-cultural studies, for example that Aborigines would be strongly influenced by watching videos with violent or romantic content. He was aware that the Warlpiri reading of the text of videos was very different to that of Europeans:

'Very early in the fieldwork, it became clear that European interpretation of videos was radically different from Aboriginal interpretation at Yuendemu. We laughed at different places, got upset at different scenes, and afterwards told different stories about what we had seen.' (Michaels 1986, 46)

Michaels and Leonard Granites estimated in 1984 that the financial cost to the Warlpiri of using videos was high. Their estimate, including purchase of equipment, video hire, maintenance and replacement of equipment, which was easily damaged in the desert environment, was $18,450 a year for each of the nine video systems. The domestic quality equipment was too sophisticated for Warlpiri needs with timers and television tuners, both of which were unusable with no broadcast television. As a result Leonard Granites suggested that a local narrowcast television station from which tapes could be broadcast to each television would be far more cost effective and it would also provide a buffer against the introduction of mainstream broadcasting when it arrived. (Michaels and Granites 1984, 20-25; Michaels 1986, 44-5) In February 1985 the Yuendemu social club donated $8,000 from profits from the community store to build and equip a low-powered television station.

The station broadcast limited hours during the day and some evenings. It showed live interviews, activities from the school and pre-recorded material and was operated by one person who would announce the program and then get up to switch the camera to a recorded item. As the service was broadcast at irregular hours, word of impending broadcasts would be spread by both word of mouth and the playing of music for 30 minutes prior to commencement. A video tape of the early transmissions at Yuendemu is reminiscent of community radio broadcasts: schoolchildren were encouraged by their teacher to hold up their paintings to the camera one by one, and community announcements and sports results were read in Warlpiri. The Yuendemu community, together with that at Ernabella, contacted the Department of Communications to seek a licence and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs for funding. The licence decision was delayed until after the Government response to 'Out of the Silent Land' although, in 1985, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs provided $25,000 equipment funding to Yuendemu and a lesser amount to Ernabella. (ATSIC 1999b 19-20; Michaels 1986, 74-7; 1987a 70; 1987b, 9; PY Media 1999a; 1999c; Turner 1990, 45; Warlpiri Media

Association 1985b, 1-2, 1985c.) The Task Force (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984, 30) described this early method of obtaining funding as a 'catch and kill your own' method.

A comparison with early communication development at Ernabella

In the 1970s at Ernabella the Pitjantjatjara Council purchased a high frequency (HF) shortwave radio to communicate between communities and outstations. These 'Pitchat' sessions using the Royal Flying Doctor frequency. Up to seven people could chat at a time. News was broadcast early in the morning before the solar interference and discussions would follow, including arranging ceremonies and linking families. The meetings of the Pitjantjatjara Council were also broadcast. The sessions continued from 1977 until land rights were granted in 1981 and then interest dropped off, although some outstations bought their own HF systems and installed them in their vehicles (Ashby, 1999, PY Media 1998a; 1999; Turner 1990, 43-5.) Experiments in locally produced videos were being made at Ernabella from 1983 driven by the enthusiasm of Ron Lister, Rex Guthrie and Bill Edwards. Ernabella Video Television (EVTV) produced seventeen videos in their first year and they covered similar themes to those at Yuendemu. The first production was a video on bush medicine followed by a filming of dancing and ceremony in 'Seven Sisters Dreaming', videos were made about woodcarving and art, sports, gospel conventions and NAIDOC celebrations. Cross-country expeditions to re-enact dreaming stories were particularly emotional experiences for older people. The recording of 'inma' men's and women's ceremonies created a surge of interest in video making and even secret ceremonies were recorded for instruction and archived in a safe place.(Ashby, 1999; PY Media 1999a; Turner 1990, 44-5.) In a similar way to Yuendemu the funding for the early broadcasts at Ernabella came from the community. They claim to have developed the world's cheapest community television station at a cost of $1,000 raised from a 5c surcharge on soft drink sales, although they also had an equipment grant from the Australian Film Commission in 1984. EVTV went to air through narrowcasting in April 1985 at the same time as Yuendemu, although EVTV claims a test transmission in late 1984 was the first. At Ernabella, the elders decided only to broadcast on four week nights from 6pm to 10pm so as not to interrupt school or bush food gathering activities. It was these experiments at Yuendemu and Ernabella that was to impact on indigenous broadcasting policy.

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FIGURE 6: PHASE ONE PRE-BROADCASTING: AN EARLY INTEREST IN THE MEDIA
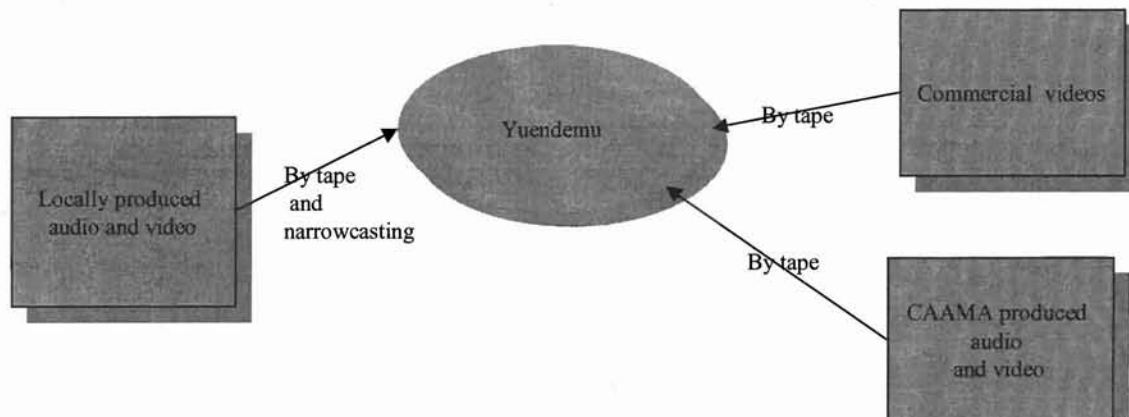
Summary

Prior to the arrival of broadcasting, the Warlpiri at Yuendemu, and the Pitjantjatjara at Ernabella, had adapted modern communication technology to meet their needs. The use of modern communication technology did not develop in isolation but grew in parallel to other activities that arose from self-determination such as Aboriginal art, bilingual education and the outstation movements. All these movements sought to preserve culture and language and teach younger people. The Warlpiri also actively used the sympathetic European workers who worked in education, art or video to achieve their aims. Unlike European-imposed entertainment, such as film nights, the Warlpiri had established comfortable viewing systems based on extended kinship groups and a video exchange system that fitted their patterns of reciprocity. Where there was not suitable material, they had produced their own videos on subjects that were of interest to them. These included sporting events, promotional videos, dancing and crafts, their versions of historic occurrences, country visits and community meetings. These videos were circulated among the community and commercial videos were hired for entertainment. The cost of watching commercial videos on the nine local video recorders was high, as equipment easily broke down and repair and video hire costs were high. The Warlpiri then sought a

more efficient method by narrowcasting both the videos that they had made and live programming through their own local television station. Although they had used European expertise, none of this system had been developed with Government assistance.

Rather than resist modern communication technology the Warlpiri were very interested in it even prior to the arrival of broadcasting. Michaels (1987, 91) described the Warlpiri's uptake of the new technology:

> 'By the summer of 1985, the glow of the cathode ray tube had replaced the glow of campfires in many remote Aboriginal settlements. There could be no question of motivation. Of all the introduced western technologies, only rifles and four-wheel drives have received such acceptance.'

CHAPTER SIX: THE SECOND AND THIRD PHASES OF WARLPIRI COMMUNICATION: THE ARRIVAL OF BRACS, CAAMA AND IMPARJA AND DIGITAL BROADCASTING AND ONLINE SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Despite the establishment of a media model that suited the cultural needs of the Warlpiri at Yuendemu, much of the benefits from this model could be undone by the introduction of mainstream media with the launch of AUSSAT in August 1985. Prior to the satellite, the Warlpiri were not totally isolated from broadcast media. They were aware of the existence of broadcasting systems as they travelled into Alice Springs or visited relatives in other communities which received ABC television from the older Intelsat system (which was soon to be replaced by AUSSAT). In 1987 reception equipment was installed at Yuendemu under the Broadcasting in Aboriginal Remote Communities Scheme bringing for the first time ABC television and radio services, as well as a commercial television service a year later, via the satellite. Even without the satellite launch, broadcasting would have arrived at Yuendemu via the HF shower radio broadcasting system. This system bounced short wave radio signals off the ionosphere and covered areas of up to 800 km in diameter. It was proving an effective and cost efficient means of expanding ABC radio services to remote areas from 1985 onwards. (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984,27; Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1985,41.)

This Chapter looks at the next two phases of Warlpiri communication:

Phase Two: where broadcasting, including the BRACS system, the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) radio and Imparja television, came into operation; and

Phase Three: the most recent phase where the Warlpiri have taken up the latest digital and on-line technology.

The Aboriginal broadcasting policy setting

In his research, published as the 'Aboriginal Invention of Television', Michaels (1986, xvi-xvii) describes three possible models for the introduction of television to remote Aboriginal communities (he noted that in some cases all three models could be combined):

The cultural maintenance model. This model was essentially the narrowcast television system already developed at Yuendemu and Ernabella. It was based on communications designed to meet the community's needs with local production in language and small-scale media. Michaels believed that mass media services were not appropriate.

The pan-Aboriginal model. This was the centralised production of Aboriginal media under Aboriginal control. However, it would reflect a homogenised Aboriginal culture with no local input or local language content. This was closest to the model proposed by the Task Force in their report 'Out of the Silent Land'. Michaels was of the view that this model would be high quality and, therefore, would not use the locally produced material. He saw it as politicised and being promoted by some Aborigines who believed that a traditional lifestyle was a hindrance to development.

The assimilation model. This model would deliver mainstream media from the major metropolitan areas. Aborigines would be offered traineeships at the level of their proportion of the population and some Aboriginal actors would appear in some television programming. Michaels was scathing of this mainstream model:

> 'Then showing the evening news, Sesame Street, A Country Practice or even Dallas will provide the opportunities to familiarise and educate Aboriginal people in modern ways.' (Michaels 1986, xvii.)

The policy in 'Out of the Silent Land' (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984, vi-xiii) lay somewhere between the first and second models. The Task Force recommended that relevant programming be developed

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by the ABC, Aboriginal production houses working with the ABC and Film Australia and the facility be provided for local communities to either switch off or insert their own programming:

> 'Where Aborigines choose to receive radio and television services, they should have the facility to switch off, intervene as required, and originate programs of direct relevance to them.' (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984, vii.)

Michaels (1986, 113-117) criticised 'Out of the Silent Land' for being a 'top down' model. He claimed it lacked consultation, ignored local television production and the needs of outstations, and never considered that an Aboriginal organisation would actually want access to a satellite uplink to do their own broadcasting. He was also cynical about the ability and commitment of the ABC and other broadcasters to deliver suitable programming. Nor could he see how a 'centre-periphery' model proposed by the Task Force, even if it originated from Alice Springs, could apply to linguistic and cultural diversity. The Task Force also saw radio as a more appropriate medium than television whereas Michaels was far more interested in video and television. (Michaels 1985,69-72).

Meanwhile, the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal (ABT) had commenced its enquiry into the three Remote Commercial Television Service licences in 1984. The Minister for Communications' decision that these would be separate services and not retransmitted from capital cities was to have an impact on the broadcasting policy for remote Australia. This meant that the new licence holders would have to have regard to the specific needs of remote communities, including Aboriginal communities, and not simply retransmit capital city services. (Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1985, xxvi, Harrison 1985,25.) The ABT took evidence from a number of Aboriginal organisations and also held a hearing at Kintore (Michaels 1986, 51).

Broadcast media was to arrive at Yuendemu in three different ways: at first through CAAMA radio 8KIN using HF radio shower, then through the Broadcasting in Remote

Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) which also brought ABC radio and television, and finally through Imparja television.

Phase Two: Broadcasting- CAAMA, BRACS and Imparja television

A Radio Service: the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA)

CAAMA was established in Alice Springs in 1980 and was the first indigenous media association. Within Michaels' models it lies within the definition of 'pan Aboriginal' being a centralised agency broadcasting to a number of Aboriginal communities. Initially the Warlpiri would have heard CAAMA while visiting either Alice Springs or the three communities that had received landline transmissions from 1984. CAAMA's original broadcast was a half hour program on local ABC radio in Alice Springs. Later, they broadcast up to 30 hours a week on local community broadcaster 8CCC in English as well as Arrente, Warlpiri, Pitjantjatjara, Luritja and Pintubi. (Australia. Task Force on Aboriginal and Islander Broadcasting and Communications 1984, 25; Michaels 1986,103, 119-122; Turner 1998, 165) Philip Batty recounts that CAAMA was established in 1980 after a community meeting and, at the time, Alice Springs was a focal point for newly forming indigenous organisations[33]. (Batty 1999; Michaels 1986, 119-12.) There were tensions between CAAMA and 8CCC, which had links with the Northern Territory Government, so in 1984 CAAMA successfully applied to the ABT for its own public radio licence and 8KIN began broadcasting to Alice Springs and to Ali Curang, Hermansberg and Santa Theresa by landline. In 1986 the ABC agreed to let CAAMA channel share on its HF shower transmissions bringing radio for the first time to Yuendemu and other remote areas. (Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1986,101;CAAMA, 1999; Meadows 1992, 35; Michaels 1986, 119-122; Molnar 1996,79.)

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[33] Batty moved to central Australia in 1977 to be an art teacher at Papunya, a position which he considered somewhat superfluous to a community which had been producing quality artwork since 1971. Instead he assisted in setting up outstations and wrote submissions for the community. He met up with John Macumba, founding member of CAAMA, and they worked together until Macumba left and was replaced in 1986 by Freda Glynn as CAAMA President. (Batty1999.)

Prior to the establishment of BRACS, CAAMA produced its own programs in language including Warlpiri. These were distributed to communities by audio tape. Michaels (1986, 119-122; 1987a, 63-4) observed that CAAMA redesigned its studios to make them more flexible and suitable for traditional people to use. For example they had outdoor areas where a number of people could congregate. CAAMA assisted its Aboriginal broadcasters who were picked up from town camps each day and driven to the station to broadcast in language. The Warlpiri Media Association had links with CAAMA from its early days as it was a founding member and continues to be a member today.

Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities scheme (BRACS)

In 1988, the Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) provided equipment to 80 remote Aboriginal communities including Yuendemu. The package of equipment, provided through Telecom, brought ABC radio and television to Yuendemu for the first time. The original concept of Aboriginal communities being able to turn off mainstream broadcasting and insert their own programming was first suggested in 'Out of the Silent Land'. BRACS also built on the broader Federal Government policy of the Remote and Underserviced Community Scheme (RUCS) which subsidised satellite reception and rebroadcasting equipment via the Intelsat system to all remote communities of a certain size. (Venner 1988, 40.) Following the tabling of the 'Out of the Silent Land' report, this original concept was taken further once knowledge of the original experiments in narrowcast television at Ernabella and Yuendemu became more widely known. This followed the showing of the Warlpiri Media Association videos to Government agencies and at conferences.

BRACS was essentially the 'cultural maintenance' model described by Michaels (1986, xvi-xvii). Despite the strong argument of the importance of self determination and the need for community consultation, resulting from the community designed Yuendemu and Ernabella video experiments, the BRACS rollout was what Philip Batty (1993, 22-24) has called a 'one size fits all' policy. The Warlpiri Media Association already had well established studios and had just upgraded its video machines and installed a more advanced Avid editing suite, so probably did not find much of the BRACS equipment useful. (ATSIC 1991, 26-8; 1992,8-10; Corker 1989, 43-4; Meadows 1992,3, 36; Turner

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1998, 7-9,49; Venner 1988, 37-43.) Another problem that BRACS policy failed to recognise was that many of the television sets and antennas could not receive UHF so new ones had to be purchased. Also the narrowcast services at Yuendemu used VHF transmissions which could be received 10km further than the UHF transmissions from BRACS. (Turner 1998, 45.)

Unlike other BRACS communities, the Warlpiri at Yuendemu did however have the advantage of understanding how the BRACS equipment worked and how programs could be inserted. An evaluation of the BRACS process by ATSIC in 1992, found that there were inadequacies in the original BRACS distribution:

> 'The flaw of the logic is that, while the equipment is only one of several essential conditions for control of the media, it is only one of several essential conditions. Complex equipment is of little use without skilled operators and actual control by the community over the content of the broadcasts.' (ATSIC 1992, 10.)

Despite their broadcasting knowledge, the Yuendemu community suffered the same problems as other BRACS communities from the lack of training and lack of funding for ongoing maintenance and payment of wages for BRACS employees. There was heavy reliance on funding of BRACS operators through the Community Employment Development Scheme (CDEP). (Reinhart 1999; Turner 1998, 16-18.)

BRACS did provide the Warlpiri with a formalised opportunity to continue their narrowcast service of locally produced material and to make ABC, and later commercial, services available but it was certainly not designed to meet their more advanced needs as an established broadcaster.

A Remote Commercial Television Service: Imparja television

CAAMA, EVTV and the Warlpiri Media Association had given evidence about the dangers to traditional culture from mainstream television to the initial ABT hearings on the Remote Commercial Television Service at Kintore in 1984. This was one of the few occasions that a Federal Government body had gone to consult with remote Aboriginal

communities. As already noted, these hearings were videoed by the Warlpiri Media Association and circulated among Aboriginal communities (Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1985,43; Warlpiri Media Association 1984a). In its first report to the Minister for Communications in June 1985 the ABT took into consideration submissions from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, CAAMA and Warlpiri Media Association, as well as individual Aborigines, who had given evidence. The ABT also took information about Aboriginal needs from the Task Force report. CAAMA was concerned about the likelihood that the Remote Commercial Television Service (RCTS) licence holder would take little notice of Aboriginal needs. So, in a courageous move for a community radio broadcaster, CAAMA applied for the central zone RCTS licence in November 1984. (Imparja 1998, 5.) Brian Walsh (1985,74), who assisted CAAMA with the licence application, described the resulting licence inquiry as 'the most difficult in the ABT's history' as both applicants, CAAMA and the commercial television licence holder from Darwin, were so different.

The ABT held further hearings in Alice Springs in August 1985. Both Philip Batty and Freda Glynn gave evidence on behalf of CAAMA via satellite from Canada, where they were visiting indigenous broadcasters, together with Rosemary Kuptana, the President of the Canadian Indigenous Broadcasting Corporation. Batty was of the view that the evidence from the IBC strongly influenced the Tribunal. The Tribunal also heard evidence from Francis Kelly, from the Warlpiri Media Association, who described the narrowcast service at Yuendemu and showed the video sampler. Simon McKenzie Tjiyanga, Wally Dunn and Ginger Wikilyiri from Ernabella Community television gave evidence, using a translator, about the Ernabella television project. They expressed concerns about advertising content particularly for alcohol and unhealthy expensive food.(Australian Broadcasting Tribunal 1986,12-14, 103, 188; Batty 1996, 126-8.)

Imparja was successful in its licence application and its first test broadcast was of a cricket test match on 2 January 1988. The television station was officially opened on 15 June 1988 with a screening of the ABC produced series about Aboriginal women, 'Women of the Sun', and the Aboriginal film, 'Lousy Little Sixpence'. Initially, Imparja reached an audience of 62,000, with its satellite transmissions using retransmission sites at Ceduna, Coober Pedy, Leigh Creek and Woomera in South Australia and Alice

Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Bathurst Island in the Northern Territory. By 1989, Imparja's audience had grown to 100,000, with the addition of BRACS communities, self-help groups and direct-to-home viewers. Aboriginal programming was subcontracted to CAAMA to produce and they produced 'Urrepye' a weekly program in language and 'Nganampa' a magazine program. The Imparja Board also decided to ban the advertising and promotion of alcohol as alcohol abuse was a major issue in remote communities. Funding remained a problem, as ultimately neither the Northern Territory Government nor the South Australia Government came up with their promised funding. Unlike the RCTS services in Western Australia and Queensland, there was no state or territory subsidy for satellite costs. In 1990, ATSIC subsidised the payments and covered the existing debt despite the service also being received by non-Aboriginal as well as Aboriginal communities. (Imparja 1998, 7-8; Meadows 1992, 30-1.)

It must be recognised that, as a shareholder, the Warlpiri had control over Imparja with Warlpiri Media Association being represented on the Imparja Board by Francis Kelly. Being a shareholder gave the Warlpiri more control than had Imparja had been a normal commercial television service. For example, it enabled them to restrict alcohol advertising.

By the time BRACS was installed in 1988, the Yuendemu community was producing its own local television and radio programs allowing for cultural maintenance. The Warlpiri Media Association had also struggled to ensure a second, culturally protective layer by ensuring that Yuendemu received a pan-Aboriginal service from the commercial television station Imparja and CAAMA's 8KIN radio service, both of which provided some programming in the Warlpiri and related languages.

A comparison to the Introduction of Broadcast Media to other Aboriginal Communities

The Warlpiri had considerable control over the introduction of broadcasting to their community unlike some other remote Aboriginal communities. Walsh (1983, 72-4) estimated, in 1983, that more remote Aboriginal communities had access to television via

the Intelsat system than did not have access. By 1985 Venner (1988, 39) records that 27 remote Aboriginal communities were receiving television via Intelsat. The introduction of satellite re-broadcasting systems during the early 1980s seemed to be a shambles in remote areas. Both Aboriginal and European communities were being sold inappropriate equipment that would not work once Intelsat was replaced by AUSSAT. Between September and October 1984, Michaels and Francis (Michaels 1986, 79-91) visited five Northern Territory Aboriginal communities to look at their broadcasting systems and to show some videos prepared by themselves and CAAMA. Lajamanu (Hooker Creek) was similar in size to Yuendemu and also had some Warlpiri in its population. They, too had made some videos at the school and a video history had been commissioned but not yet finished. In 1984, the European store manager had bought an Intelsat satellite receiving dish for $24,000 without consulting the community. The reception of television was mainly for the European community and under the control of the store manager. Michaels and Kelly retransmitted some of their pre-recorded tapes and some local recordings with some success, with the store manager promising to purchase some production equipment for the community.

Yirrkala, in the far north of the Northern Territory, was close to the mining town of Nhulunbuy and had access to ABC television since 1977 and commercial television since 1984. They readily mixed both video tapes and television. Michaels was interested to see that this had had little cultural impact:

> 'Yirrkala presents an interesting case in that it is clear that eight years of daily ABC access and recent experience with commercial TV have not dramatically decimated the community or is culture. Certainly, mining development has had a more dramatic impact. Even so I heard no complaints from the Aboriginal population about their TV service excepting those who had reception difficulties.' (Michaels 1986,84)

Michaels and Kelly also visited an unnamed mining town with a mainly European population where a local ham radio operator transmitted Michaels' tapes to the Aboriginal community. At Ali Curang they found some friction in the local Aboriginal community which consisted of four different language groups. The community had

access to telephones as they were near the highway but no bilingual education program at the school. The local school principal had purchased a satellite receiving dish as he considered that television had an important role in teaching children English and was concerned '…that when the children left school for the day, they entered an entirely non-English speaking environment. Television transmission was introduced to correct this.' (Michaels 1986,86.) At Santa Theresa, 60 km south east of Alice Springs, the community already received CAAMA radio from Alice Springs and also a television project developed by the Church and in its control. Michaels also mentions Ernabella, which he did not visit but he was aware of their television project. The two sets of video makers had met at the ABT's licence hearing at Kintore and the two had joined together to make a licence application to the Department of Communications.

Overall from his visits, Michaels found that television equipment had been mainly installed by Europeans without consultation with Aboriginal communities, that the technology remained in control of Europeans and often Aboriginal funds had been used to purchase the equipment. When his tapes had been shown they were met with enthusiasm and some larger communities already had production equipment. He felt that many communities had retransmission facilities, which could be used straightaway for video projects and narrowcasting. (Michaels 1986,90-1.) The Warlpiri at Yuendemu had been more fortunate in that they had retained control of broadcasting and had access to the technical expertise of people like Eric Michaels. They had also been influential in the establishment of the pan-Aboriginal broadcasting services of CAAMA and Imparja.

FIGURE 7: PHASE TWO BROADCASTING: CAAMA, BRACS AND IMPARJA TELEVISION
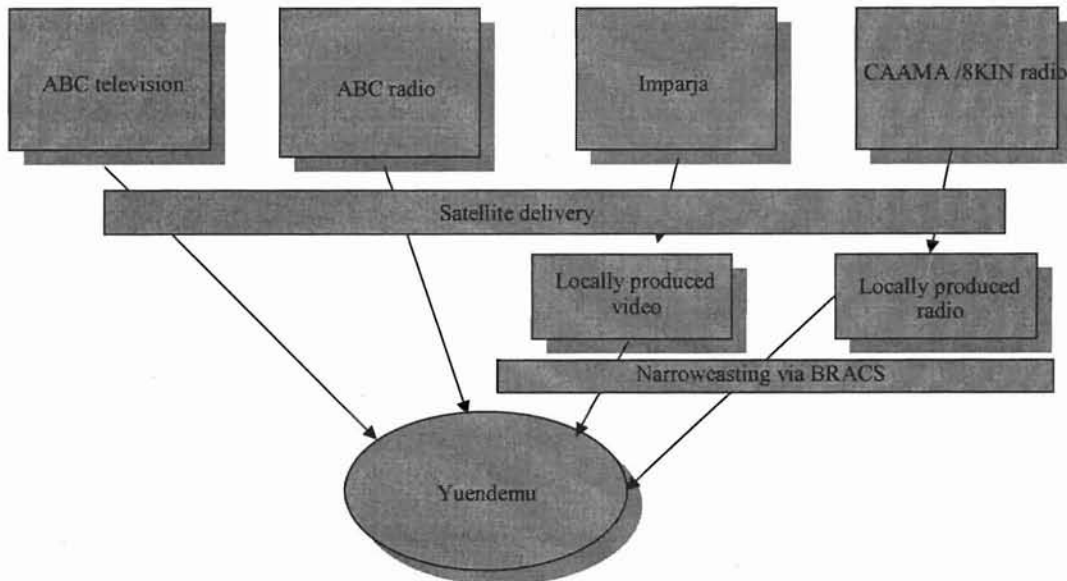
Phase Three: Current and future developments - digital broadcasting and on-line services.

The original introduction of broadcast media to Yuendemu had been poorly planned, with BRACS duplicating much of their existing equipment and little ongoing funding available. However it did allow the Warlpiri to continue their local narrowcasting and production services and improved their radio broadcasting facilities. The determination of the Warlpiri Media Association and other Aboriginal organisations drove the establishment of a pan-Aboriginal radio service through CAAMA and a commercial television service through Imparja both of which broadcast some language and were Aboriginal controlled. But had the Warlpiri and Pitjantjatjara retained an interest in broadcasting or did interest die out with the coming of mainstream services? I was interested to discover what had happened to the original experiments when I visited Yuendemu in May and June 1999.

BRACS

In 1993, ATSIC recognised that the original BRACS policy had some major flaws and proposed three major remedies: the BRACS Revitalisation Strategy, appropriate training and the establishment of the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia (NIMAA). This time, policy making was done in consultation with the communities and the BRACS Revitalisation Strategy (BRS) was tailored to community needs. By 1992 there were eight regional media associations including the Warlpiri Media Association and PY Media. Greater funding went to the media associations who were the worst equipped, and funding was in proportion to the size of the area they each serviced. Warlpiri Media Association got their BRS funding commencing from 1994/95 and totalling $557,452 and PY Media received a total of $630,361 commencing a year earlier. (Turner 1998, 26-7.)

The Warlpiri Media Association now services eight BRACS communities in an area 1200km across, providing technical services and training. The BRACS services are at Yuendemu, Willowra, Alekarenge (Ali Curung), Nturiya (Ti Tree), Nyirripi, Pmara Jutunta, Walungurru (Kintore), and Yuelamu. The BRS funding has enabled them to upgrade their studios to digital equipment, which is now compatible with that of CAAMA, and the radio studio building has been upgraded and is now air conditioned. The digital radio equipment is simpler to use than the previous analogue equipment and this has opened up the use of the studios to more people. Currently, new studios for video making and for live music recording are being built. The latter will save local bands having to travel to Alice Springs to be recorded at CAAMA and has much cheaper hourly rates. The soundtrack for the recent video production, 'Bush Mechanics', was recorded locally by a local band. (Kantor, 1999; Reinhardt 1999, Turner 98, 183-98.)

The Warlpiri Media Association bases its BRACS strategic plan on that of the Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Media Association (TAIMA) (Kantor 1999) and has the goals to:
- increase information and coverage of issues to the indigenous community;
- increase wider community understanding of indigenous culture, history, needs and concerns; increase pride of indigenous people in all aspects of their lives;

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- provide an audio and visual outlet for creative endeavour of indigenous peoples of Australia;

- actively participate in the economic development of the indigenous people through communication, employment and the advancement of health, housing and social justice; and

- provide employment and training for indigenous people particularly in the field of communication (including ensuring contracts with non-indigenous people require the training of indigenous staff).

BRACS radio services were well received. However, when I visited Yuendemu the BRACS radio station was not broadcasting as a funeral or 'sorry business' was taking place, which involved the participation of Valerie Martin, the Warlpiri BRACS producer and a number of others. In the meantime, 8KIN radio was being received from Alice Springs. However a couple of young people came in to play CDs and some editing was being done on a school children's program. Recently community announcements were made about domestic violence, immunisation and ATSIC elections (WMA 1999c, np).

Videos and local television

After the original burst of video making at Yuendemu in the early to mid–1980s, video making became less popular with the onset of television. This was possibly due to a number of reasons. Firstly, many of the early videos were similar in style to radio, for example sport results and community announcements, and this style could easily be replaced by local radio. The early videos had an entertainment value which was replaced by mainstream television. The cultural material had been recorded in the first rush and there was little need to repeat the content of these videos once the material had been preserved. The priority given to the archival projects that are being carried out indicate the value the Warlpiri place on this early material. The Warlpiri Media Association were reviewing their original video and audio tapes and putting them on a database. They were also listing those people who appeared on them in case they have to be restricted due to a death. They had applied unsuccessfully to the National Library of Australia for funding to archive these tapes which currently are stored in an un-airconditioned cupboard covered in dust. (Kantor 1999.)

There had been a lull between 1993 and 1996 in live-to-air television at Yuendemu but community television has now been restored and production resumed. Programs currently include one hour of news called 'Nagalipanyangu Yimi Warlarlja' (Us and our stories), land rights discussions, health videos, an old people's program, country visits and sports. During the late 1980s Warlpiri Media Association produced a children's series similar to Sesame Street called 'Manyu Wana' (Just for fun) produced by David Batty (Philip's brother) which was sold to SBS television. A new series is now being produced at the school by Declan Gallagher. (Gallagher, 1999; Kantor; 1999; Reinhardt 1999; WMA 1999c.) The digital equipment provided through BRS now means that producing videos is easier as the digital equipment is easier to handle and the editing on computers much simpler. Auto focus cameras were useful particularly for those with eye disease, something that is prevalent in many Aboriginal communities. (Ashby 1999.)

The recent videos are of much better quality than the earlier productions. Michaels (1987, 95-6) feared that if Aboriginal video makers were taught formal production methods, the meaning of their videos would be lost. Yet recent productions show that there can be a balance between providing videos which are meaningful to the community and good quality production. At Yuendemu, as already mentioned, there have been similar recent productions of ceremony, traditional crafts, health messages and old people's needs. One of their best known recent productions is 'Bush Mechanics' (Warlpiri Media Association 1998; Kelly and Martin; 1999) a thirty minute video, that won an Australian Film Institute award in 1999 and went to air on ABC television in November 1999. It was produced by Francis Kelly (who had had a break from broadcasting and video making and currently is a painting foreman at Yuendemu) and non-Aboriginal film-maker David Batty. The video is in both Warlpiri and English and describes how Jack Ross, a Warlpiri elder, first saw vehicle tracks. The video includes practical tips on how to repair a vehicle in remote Australia. It is humorous as it describes how to fix a flat tyre by filling it with spinifex, how it is easy to replace brake fluid with washing powder diluted in water and how pieces of wood can be fashioned to replace broken parts. On a more serious note, it shows how difficult it is to maintain a vehicle in desert conditions and why vehicles are left near the road when abandoned. This is a common criticism from non-Aboriginal

people but is practical for the Warlpiri who can readily access the vehicle for parts, as they are needed.

It must not be forgotten that BRACS has two other important roles in addition to providing radio and television produced in the community. The first is to provide the broadcast signal for mainstream services: ABC radio and television, Imparja and 8KIN and recently SBS television. This is an important role for the BRACS co-ordinator. The BRACS homepage, on the Warlpiri Media Association website states:

> 'Local residents have shown a tendency to believe we are here simply to make sure they get the weather reports, David March, Sale of the Century and Absolutely Fabulous beamed to their camps.' (WMA 1999c, np.)

As well as providing local services and mainstream broadcasting, BRACS still retains its original important role of turning off all incoming media if necessary. Michaels (1986,133) considered that this community control at Yuendemu replaced household control of television viewing in European homes:

> 'It may be more appropriate to think of the community as a whole as a household, and regard the retransmitter feed as the channel selector from which authorised people select programming from different channels and off-air services appropriate to the community.'

This facility was only used twice in the first half of 1999 at Yuendemu. In the first case, the local council decided to turn off all television so that people would attend an important community meeting on domestic violence. The other occasion was when Valerie Martin, the Yuendemu BRACS co-ordinator, became aware on a visit to Alice Springs that Imparja had not used a correctly edited version of a ceremony which showed secret men's material. She alerted Yuendemu and the Imparja signal was briefly turned off, preventing the offending material going to air. (Kantor 1999.) The facility to block out mainstream broadcasts, although used infrequently, remains an important insurance for Aboriginal communities to retain control of broadcast material.

The BRACS revitalisation has done much to make broadcasting of professional quality and easier to produce, making video production more accessible to local communities.

Appropriate Training

All the BRACS workers I interviewed stressed the importance of appropriate training. The Warlpiri Media Association was travelling out to communities to train people where they learnt on their own equipment. Valerie Martin, their BRACS co-ordinator, had completed the Batchelor certificate course (Molnar 1999b 131). The Warlpiri Media Association recognised the need to train as many people as possible to allow for the time taken up by ceremonial and family obligations and people losing interest and moving on. (Reinhardt 1999.)

Pan-Aboriginal Services

CAAMA

When the local BRACS radio service is not available the Warlpiri receive 8KIN, CAAMA's radio service from Alice Springs. Today CAAMA not only runs radio station 8KIN, it is a production house for television and video recordings, has a multi-track studio to record bands and operates two commercial shops selling indigenous merchandise. Their equipment is sophisticated, with four digital studios, one of which is the on air studio and the others are used for recording programs and the occasional live program, such as a performance by a band. A 300 disk CD rack is used for computerised programming. (CAAMA 1997; Mitchell 1999.) However, like many commercial radio stations, this has reduced the number of people required to keep the station on air and, therefore, has reduced employment opportunities

8KIN has six staff, four male and two female, plus additional trainees under CDEP. It broadcasts on AM, FM, HF shortwave and by Satellite. Listeners have picked it up in China, Germany, Switzerland and Ireland , thereby extending the recognition of Aboriginal broadcasting. Its charter requires it to broadcast 25 to 30 hours per week in language and to promote culture. It currently broadcasts in seven Aboriginal languages: Eastern and Western Arrente, Pitjantjatjara, Warlpiri, Pintubi, Luritja and Amerwherre.

Each Saturday evening, 8KIN broadcasts the two hour long 'Greenbush Show' as an outside broadcast from the local prison. Prisoners make requests, although only in English so as not to impose a security risk, and it is an essential link between prisoners and their families. In 1991, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody recognised the need for improved indigenous communication through media as a means of reducing deaths (Meadows 1999, 5.) Programs such as the 'Greenbush Show' and the prison program on 4AAA in Brisbane (Meadows 2000,7) are means of addressing this need. 8KIN is also an important means of communicating current issues out to the communities and the media officers of the local land councils and legal services put together a current affairs show, which is also networked through the National Indigenous Radio Service (NIRS) (CAAMA 1999a; 1999b, np;Mitchell 1999).

George Henna, the BRACS co-ordinator at CAAMA in Alice Springs produces the daily BRACS program on 8KIN and the weekly BRACS television program for Imparja. He finds it sometimes frustrating to find regular material from BRACS communities as the local co-ordinator is often caught up with ceremonial or other obligations. CAAMA is also a central hub servicing 5 BRACS communities at Arryonga, Santa Theresa, Ntaria, Hermansberg and Papunya and also has a Codec landline from PY Media at Umuwa. The communities still enjoy making videos and record football and other sport and non-secret ceremonies. Recording material is much easier using digital equipment which is compatible with the 8KIN equipment (Henna 1999; Mitchell 1999; Turner 1998, 165-69.)

CAAMA has a number of subsidiaries as spin-offs from their radio production. One is a production house, which was established in 1988, and produces video and film programs, commercials, music clips, and public information announcements. It also owns CAAMA music, a sound production facility, which provides a 24 track sound production unit to record Aboriginal music. CAAMA's charter requires it to promote Aboriginal music which it has done with great success with Aboriginal bands, such as Yothu Yindi, gaining national and international recognition. CAAMA shops were set up originally to sell locally recorded music but now also sell a wide range of goods including arts and crafts, children's books and toys and literature, all with an Aboriginal theme. One shop is located in the Alice Springs town centre and the other at Alice Springs airport. (CAAMA

1999b.) These facilities are available for regional Aboriginal communities including the Warlpiri.

CAAMA also responds to possible new markets and, following the loss of the AFL Football Program on Imparja, it has produced its own radio program on the AFL each Friday night for which it takes sponsorship. It also meets community needs by taking live AFL broadcasts through NIRS from Brisbane. (Henna 1999)

CAAMA does not go to the expense of commissioning audience rating services so it is difficult to gauge listenership. However, 8KIN appeared to be playing in most Aboriginal and some non-Aboriginal communities that I visited[34]. At Yuendemu the BRACS manager considered that nearly everyone in the community had radios, especially in their cars, and they listened to 8KIN and local BRACS radio (Kantor 1999). A survey of indigenous radio station 4AAA in Brisbane, conducted by Roy Morgan Research in 1995, found that 60% of Brisbane's indigenous population listened regularly and that radio was a primary source of information (Meadows 2000,8).

Its central location in a town and broad representation meant that CAAMA became a focus of Government consultation with Aboriginal broadcasters giving CAAMA, and the Warlpiri Media Association which is still a shareholder, considerable influence. 8KIN provides a pan-Aboriginal service to Yuendemu which not only includes some broadcasting in Warlpiri but also provides access to additional Aboriginal programming via CAAMA productions and the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia. Programs such as the 'Greenbush' program link the Warlpiri at Yuendemu with other community members. CAAMA also provides employment opportunities for local Aboriginal people and recording and promotional opportunities for Aboriginal musicians.

Distribution services: NIRS and TAPE

The National Indigenous Media Association of Australia runs the National Indigenous Radio Service (NIRS) which links all Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Community

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[34] One tourist accommodation manager told me their visitors preferred the music format of 8KIN to the ABC radio service.

Scheme (BRACS) broadcasters and the other licensed Aboriginal stations to a central point in their Brisbane studios. Programs are sent from the Aboriginal Broadcasters down codec line, by tape or are taken directly from the Satellite. The material is edited into programs and rebroadcast through the Satellite, so any indigenous radio station can take material off the satellite feed. Special events are also recorded and rebroadcast through the network such as the NAIDOC Week concert 'Stompen Ground' from Broome in July 1998. An agreement has recently been made with the AFL to rebroadcast AFL matches through the network as it is a popular league with Aboriginal communities especially in the North. The AFL has agreed to waive the licence fee for this service and NIRS plans to have Aboriginal commentary. In 1997 the Fulbright lecture in Darwin[35] was recorded and sent out nationally and even through the Maori Network in New Zealand (www.sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/fullbright.2000)

From the end of August 1998, the NIRS service began broadcasting digitally on the new Satellite service, greatly improving its broadcast quality which was previously on the old B-MAC satellite system and only in mono. The quality of the original signal is important as the quality deteriorates by passing through the BRACS system before being re-broadcast to the local community and radio tuners are often low quality small transistors. The new satellite service will allow NIRS to be broadcast directly to anyone who has a pay TV satellite dish (a further 200,000 people including many remote homesteads). NIRS will be one of the radio channels available at no extra cost to pay TV subscribers. These radio channels include classical, rock, adult contemporary and jazz. (Pyne 1999.)

NIRS also sells radio advertising through the system. They usually contract one or more indigenous broadcasters to produce the advertisement or community announcement and translate it if necessary. The client then buys airtime through a media placement agency. This ensures that most of the advertisers' money goes directly to the communities. They are also seeking sponsorship for major events such as the AFL broadcasts. NIRS considers that there is an advantage in getting messages to Aboriginal communities this way as the BRACS broadcaster often has the respect of the community as a good

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[35] 'Indigenous Cultures in an Inter-connected World.' University of New England in conjunction with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory www.sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/fullbright

communicator who can be trusted. As many translations are done as possible, even within language groups, as variations in local dialects are very important to the communities involved as they feel the message has been tailored for their needs. This also creates work in Aboriginal communities such as Yuendemu. (Pyne 1999). ATSIC (1999b, 87) recently argued that the Federal Government should commit 2.5% of its advertising budget to indigenous media, in a similar way to its commitment of 10% of its advertising budget to ethnic media.

The Aboriginal Program Exchange (TAPE), which is based in Melbourne, also a runs a distribution service, distributing a weekly tape of material provided by Aboriginal broadcasters. Community radio broadcasters also take material from this exchange. (ATSIC 1999c, 12)

Television services
Imparja

The major television service provider to Yuendemu is Imparja. By 1998 Imparja's estimated audience had increased to 189,000, 38% of which was Aboriginal. Its service area is one third of Australia, or three million sq km, which is possibly the largest service area for a commercial television service in the world This area has recently expanded as Imparja has aggregated with the Queensland remote television broadcaster Central Seven. (Hill, 1999; Imparja 1998, McFarland 1999.) This aggregation has considerable risks for Imparja and remote Aboriginal communities like Yuendemu as, for the first time, these communities are now receiving a commercial television service over which they have no control. While aggregation has expanded Imparja's audience reach, it has also provided Imparja with a major competitor. This was evident in May and June 1999 as Imparja had lost the rights to broadcast the AFL football and was being criticised, by both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people, for not informing its viewers of this. Several Aboriginal communities were realigning their satellite dishes to receive Central Seven instead of Imparja as an interim measure and people were turning up at the Imparja studios to watch the AFL on the monitors even though it could not be broadcast. Imparja were also being slow in linking up new viewers in Queensland who, in turn, wanted immediate access to the rugby league program which Imparja had and Central Seven had

lost the rights to. (ABC 1999a). Nor has Central Seven television any indigenous content according to its Television Guide (Centralian Avocate 1999, np).

Imparja has been criticised for not achieving its promises of Aboriginal programming and being a drain on resources for Aboriginal broadcasting (Batty 1999; Downut, 1991,39-40; Ginsburg 1995, 277). Much of the funding for Imparja is for satellite transponder costs and the amount is comparable to the State funding for the two other remote television services. The criticism for lack of Aboriginal content also seems unfair as Imparja commits 41% of its programming budget to Aboriginal content, but the costs of all local production is much higher than buying in programs. (ATSIC 1999b, 78) Imparja produces the magazine program, 'Nganampa', and the BRACS program is broadcast for half an hour each Sunday morning. Both programs are in Aboriginal languages. 'Yamba's Playtime' goes to air each weekday at 4pm for an hour and consists of a character dressed as the traditional honey ant providing quality children's programming including health and education messages. The Yamba character has become popular with children, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, and it is a marketable item in the CAAMA shops. ICAM, the SBS indigenous program goes to air on Imparja every Monday night. Currently indigenous content amounts to a total of 5% of its total programming. (ATSIC 1999b, 78; 1999c, 13; Centralian Avocate 1999, np; Imparja 1998, 8-20; McFarland 1999.)

As an Aboriginal owned, commercial enterprise Imparja is highly successful and now has a 50% Aboriginal staffing level, provides a training ground and is owned by local Aboriginal organisations. It employs and trains Aboriginal people, not only in the media, but also in administrative areas. (McFarland 1999; Molnar 1999) It shows Aboriginal faces on the television with Aboriginal newsreaders, weather presenters and even Aboriginal actors in some local advertisements. Imparja, like 8KIN, provides a pan-Aboriginal service to Yuendemu, over which the Warlpiri have some control as an Imparja shareholder.

SBS/ABC

The second television service received at Yuendemu is the national broadcaster, the ABC. The ABC has had an Aboriginal Production Unit since 1987 and regularly produces programs on indigenous issues such as the magazine program 'Blackout' and 'Message stick: Apekathe' as well as 'Kam Yam' in Creole and the indigenous music program 'Songlines' on ABC television. Each year it commissions a series of Aboriginal documentaries. This year the Warlpiri Media Association's 'Bush Mechanics' video was one of these. ABC radio produces two programs on indigenous issues: 'Speaking out' and 'Awaye'. (ATSIC 1999b, 12; www.abc.com.au; Ginsburg 1995,280-1; Meadows 1992,32.) Generally in news and current affairs programming the ABC is more likely to cover indigenous issues and take a balanced view.

Since 1995, SBS television has broadcast ICAM, the Indigenous Cultural Affairs Program, which is funded by ATSIC and has just celebrated its 100th episode. ICAM is also broadcast on Imparja. (ATSIC, 1991, 38-46; 1999b, 12; Ginsburg 1995,280-1; SBS 1999)

Today, while both broadcasters provide quality programs on indigenous issues on both radio and television it is not in the quantity provided by the Aboriginal broadcasters, such as CAAMA, Imparja and local BRACS broadcasters. This could explain the popularity in Aboriginal communities of Imparja over ABC television, with the exception of news. SBS is now becoming more available to remote communities via the satellite and may need to review its indigenous content or it may solely become a signal upon which BRACS is 'piggybacked'. Both SBS and the ABC are culturally sensitive in their indigenous programming and always display a warning that the material may contain names and images of people who have passed away.

Television, video and radio audiences

Tom Kantor (1999), the BRACS manager at Yuendemu, estimates that nearly everyone watches television and most listen to radio, especially in their cars. One in four own a

tape cassette and play music tapes. Mainly they listen to 8KIN radio and watch Imparja television. However, Kantor observed that they sometimes watched ABC television news. Non-Aboriginal people at Yuendemu on the other hand tended to listen to ABC radio and watch ABC television. There are no accurate surveys of remote area television and radio audiences, as Imparja does not subscribe to rating surveys because of their expense (McFarland 1999). However, they may now have to carry out surveys, as they will no longer be the sole commercial television service with aggregation bringing the remote Queensland service Central Queensland Television to the region.

In 1992, Marika Moisseeff (1999, 1-11, 171-8) carried out a study of Davenport, an Aboriginal community near Port Augusta in South Australia, including a survey of television viewing and video patterns. There are similarities between the broadcasting services of Davenport and Yuendemu, with the exception that Davenport also received a commercial television service from Adelaide. Moisseeff found that Imparja was the most popular television service (45%) and the ABC the least (9%). An age breakdown indicated Imparja was very popular with the younger age groups (10 to 16 age group - 76% and 17-24 - 53%). Moisseeff thought this was possibly because of the music clips of Aboriginal bands such as Yothu Yindi. The over 40s preferred the commercial television service (44%). The hours of television viewing were on average 3.7 hours weekdays and 4.4 hours weekends. The lowest hours viewed were by those over 55, many of whom had eye and ear impairments. Indigenous Australians suffer ten times the eye disease of non-indigenous Australians as a result of trachoma, cataracts and diabetes (Taylor 1997,8). The highest viewing rates were for 25 to 39 year olds at five hours weekdays and six and a half hours at weekends which Moisseeff thought was possibly due to a high rate of unemployment:

> 'Davenport residents mentioned on a number of occasions that they watched television mostly because they were bored and did not have much else to do.' (Moisseeff 1999, 173.)

This amounts to a considerable amount of viewing in comparison with the mainstream Australian population, which has an average of 2 hours 44 minutes television viewing a

day, with a maximum of almost 3 hours a day in June and a minimum of 2 hours 20 minutes in December (Dale 2000, 15.)

On top of television viewing, the Davenport population also watched an average of over two videos a week, with the highest average of 3.7 videos a week, in the 10 to 16 year old age group. Ten was the greatest number of videos watched in a week by one person. The most popular type of television programs and videos were cartoons (80%), soap operas (73%), comedy (71%), westerns (66%), action/adventure (64%), news (62%), music (61%), horror (60%) and sport (53%). In an age breakdown cartoons were the most popular genre with the under 10 year olds and those over 55 preferring westerns, action/adventure and news. There was also a gender difference with women preferring soap operas and romance and men cartoons, westerns, comedy and sport. (Moisseeff 1999, 171-8.)

Anecdotal evidence from Yuendemu and Moisseeff's study indicates that television and video viewing is a major pastime for remote Aboriginal communities. The production of local television and videos has recently seen a revival. However, it may be difficult to get locally produced material to air as it can take courage to turn off the mainstream signal, while the community is enjoying a program, in order to insert local programming. This is even more so in communities where the BRACS video maker is young and does not have the status of age. At Yuendemu they were overcoming this by getting the local BRACS television signal to override the newly installed SBS television service which was the least popular television station. (Kantor 1999; Reinhardt 1999.)

Aboriginal newspapers

It has been pointed out by Michael Rose (1996, xxxvii) that the use of newspapers is often a forgotten area of Aboriginal media studies as there has been a history of newspaper reporting even in early colonial times. Land Rights News was first published by the Land Councils in 1976 and more recently the Koori Mail, a national weekly of Aboriginal news, has been published out of Lismore since 1991. (Koori Mail 1999b, Hartley and McKee 1996,137) It is difficult to gauge whether these papers are currently read in remote communities although they were both available in newsagents in Alice

Springs and at local roadhouses. Low levels of literacy and difficulty in obtaining Aboriginal or mainstream newspapers in remote areas would imply that readership would be low. Moisseeff's (1999, 167) survey included television viewing and reading patterns. Her research found that 53% of the Aboriginal population read the local newspaper the *Transcontinental* (which attempted to report Aboriginal issues) and 42% read the Adelaide based *Advertiser*. Moisseeff makes no mention of Aboriginal newspapers like the Koori Mail.

Future directions

Multi-media services: the Tanami Network and websites.

The Warlpiri Media Association has not remained static and remains a strategic driving force for future innovation in Aboriginal communication.

The Tanami on-line network was developed at Yuendemu in 1992 as an initiative of Peter Toyne. Four communities at Yuendemu, Willowra, Kintore and Lajamanu control the Network. It provides videoconferencing links via satellite with the aim to improve ceremonial and family links, to assist with the marketing and sale of arts and crafts, to improve adult education, provide health services, including diagnostics, and even to provide a method of verifying community detention orders. (ATSIC 1999c, 13; Leigh 1994,xl.) It has been used in land rights negotiations between Aboriginal communities as a means of establishing negotiations on neutral ground rather than have one party travel to someone else's land (Huber 1998,np). The Tanami Network was funded by Networking the Nation (the Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (RTIF)) which was set up from the partial sale of Telstra. It is now linking with the Outback Digital Network which extends into the Kimberley and Northern Queensland. The Tanami Network had accrued a debt of $250,000, due to the high cost of satellite use, but this has now been reduced by selling airtime to government and other users and has made a small profit since 1993/94. (ATSIC 1999c, 13; Michaels 1995, np; Phillips, 1997,np; Pyne 1999, Reinhardt 1999.) The Digital Dreaming report (ATSIC 1999b, 54-5) recognises that the cost of on-line services to Aboriginal communities, much of which is via satellite, needs to be reduced.

In 1996 the Australian Film Commission funded a project, 'The Bush Track meets the Information Superhighway', to introduce 12 indigenous communities to the Internet, the design of websites and the use of CD-Roms for archival purposes. At the conclusion of the project, communities identified a number of issues that need to be addressed including training, computer resources, improved connectivity and an Australia-wide on-line strategy for indigenous people in custody. (ATSIC 1999b, 48.) QANTM Indiginet Multimedia was established in 1996 and is owned by Cameron Goold. Its aim is to assist indigenous communities to set up their own on-line communication with the hope of meeting the needs of young Aboriginal people, many of whom are unemployed, as well as those in prison. Warlpiri Media Association set up their website [www.indiginet.communications.au/warlpiri] using QANTM Indiginet's services. They also received a grant from the National Library of Australia which allowed the employment of a local Warlpiri man, Donovan Rice, to be a co-ordinator and provided five on-line computers. Donovan Rice and BRACS manager Tom Kantor built the site. Warlpiri Media Association sees advantage in linking BRACS and on-line services. (Kantor 1999;Pyne 1999, ATSIC 1999b, 80; www.indiginet.qantm.communications.au;) There is potential for sales, especially Aboriginal art, on-line which is currently being done from Alice Springs by an Aboriginal company DesArt. Their umbrella website www.aboriginalaustralia.com was developed by Aboriginal groups and sells artwork internationally. It has recently been listed on the stock exchange. (Altman 2000, 5.)

There is considerable potential for on-line communication, although video conferencing seems to be more popular than emailing. This could possibly be for the same reason that CB (shortwave) radio was preferred to telephones as people could speak in a group to another group of people. Also video conferencing does not require literacy and can be conducted in language. Multimedia allows the outside world to be informed about what is happening at Yuendemu. However, it also allows young people access to the outside world via the Internet. The ATSIC review 'Digital Dreaming' (1999b, 48) notes that multi-media such as this is attractive to young people but it is important that elders are also involved to assess the benefits for their communities.

The Digital age: satellite and terrestrial broadcasting

Between 1998 and 1999, the remote area broadcasters, ABC, SBS, Imparja and the two other commercial licensees, had to cope with the conversion of the satellite from analogue to digital mode. Once again this was done without consultation. It also involved a cost to BRACS operators in replacing existing satellite dishes with an Integrated Receiver decoder. ATSIC have noted that the Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) offered a $2500 subsidy for professional IRD upgrade including BRACS. However, this is nowhere near the possible full cost of up to $4,000 each. While the digital service has had a few advantages such as allowing the NRS to distribute programs, it has also degraded the service in some places. For example the reception area is better defined and a few communities, such as those Aboriginal communities on the Western Australia border have lost their reception of Imparja. (ATSIC 1999b, 56-7; Australia. Productivity Commission 1999, 104-5) The technology has also allowed a second commercial television channel, Central Seven, to be received from Queensland with no consideration about whether its programming is suitable.

The timing of digital terrestrial broadcasting for remote areas has not yet been finalised, although the Productivity Commission states that analogue services will cease broadcasting in cities by January 2008 and regional areas by January 2011. Once again this will be a cost to remote Aboriginal communities who will have to replace television receivers or receive no service. (Australia. Productivity Commission 1999,105, 137.) ATSIC admits that there is no current planning for the upcoming national change to digital terrestrial broadcasting as its priorities are currently completing the BRACS revitalisation and planning for Indigenous Communications Australia (Harris 1999). NIMAA did discuss the upgrade at their last meeting in March 1999 (Koori Mail 1999a, 20-1.) This service could ultimately benefit Aboriginal communities by providing the distribution of their proposed ICA on the ABC or SBS's multi-channel but the overall impact of digital broadcasting need to be examined. Once again a major technological change is being made with no pre planning for the special needs of Aboriginal communities.

Indigenous Communications Australia: a National indigenous radio and television service

In May 1999, the Warlpiri Media Association developed a proposal to establish as centralised tape exchange for a national indigenous television channel which will use the second, and currently unused, Imparja digital channel. Unlike BRACS, it will have a dedicated channel and not override another television service. This proposal followed a meeting of regional BRACS co-ordinators in Alice Springs during April 1999 which discussed the difficulties in getting sufficient distribution for BRACS videos. These locally produced videos were often not considered of high enough quality for broadcast on Imparja's commercial television service, although comment was made by BRACS co-ordinators that commercial television stations always seemed ready to accept poor quality home videos for use in programs such as 'Funniest Home Videos'. This service would commence broadcasting one hour a day and build up to four hours each day. It could be of specific use for community service announcements, especially for Federal agencies such as the Department of Health and Aged Care, or even available for use by commercial broadcasters. The model proposed was similar to that of NRS for radio with a centralised co-ordinator of tapes at NIMAA. Funding was being sought from CAAMA/Imparja in kind, through the BRACS Revitalisation Strategy and the state and territory governments. The advantages would be an upgraded focus on BRACS. It would assist Imparja's charter to provide indigenous programming, it would provide a BRACS video position at CAAMA, as well as better distribution and production opportunities and better information dissemination. (Henna 1999, Kantor 1999; Warlpiri Media Association 1999b.)

This proposal was the seed for the latest policy proposal from ATSIC to the Productivity Commission's inquiry into broadcasting which proposed the establishment of Indigenous Communications Australia.

FIGURE 8: PHASE THREE:
 CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS - DIGITAL BROADCASTING AND ON-LINE
 SERVICES
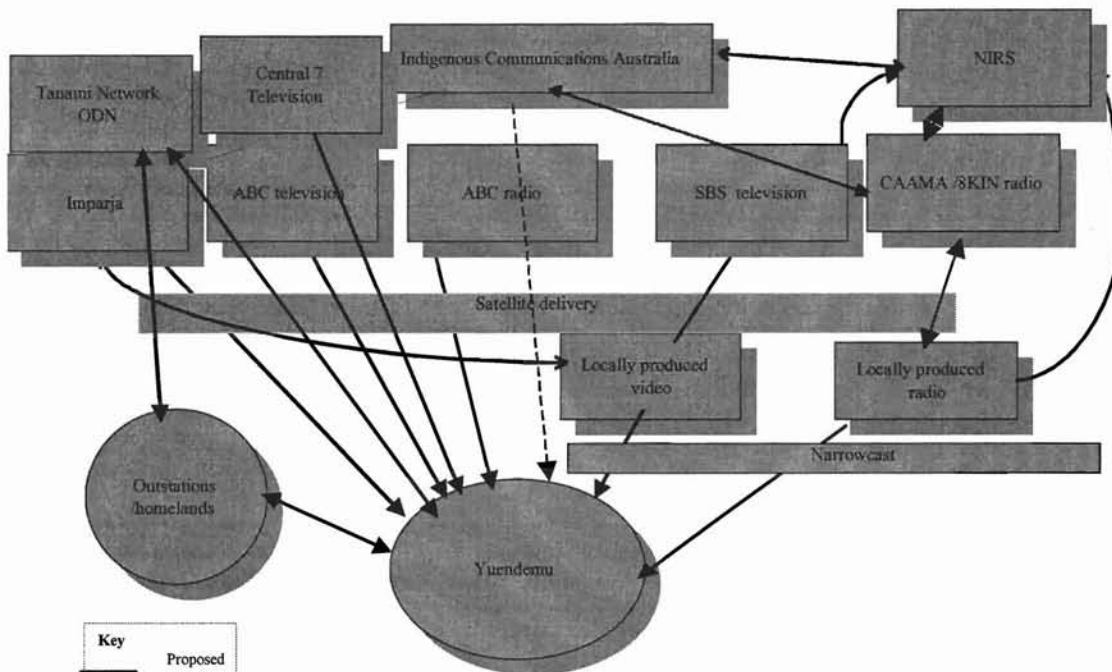
Current telecommunications

The original arguments from media owners to the Federal Government in support of the
launch of the communications satellite in the mid-1980s was to improve
telecommunications for remote Australia (Staley, 1985,10). As we have already seen, the
satellite proposal proved too expensive for Telstra and ultimately a terrestrial Digital
Radio Concentrator System (DRCS) service was installed. At Yuendemu I was interested
to see whether telecommunications had improved over the period since the introduction
of this service. The answer is there has been very little improvement, if at all. While
individual Warlpiri now have access to their own phones and no longer have to go
through a European gatekeeper, they have problems paying bills and are often cut off.
The telephone service breaks down regularly and there are delays in getting service
engineers out to such a remote area to fix the service. There is also only one public
telephone in Yuendemu and there are often queues for it, when it is working. (Kantor

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1999.) There is hope that digital and on-line systems could at least establish a local telephone service at Yuendemu as well as other services, such as electronic banking. (Kantor 1999.)

A comparison with the latest communication developments at Ernabella

At PY Media at Umuwa the Pitjantjatjara had also had their studios upgraded and were busy. The new facilities were proving popular. They were also seeing a revival in video production following the BRACS revitalisation. 5NPY was established as a local radio station in May 1998. The 5NPY radio signal is sent to CAAMA in Alice Springs on a 10khz telephone line then, using the Imparja satellite signal, it is beamed back to the community where even the homeland/outstations can receive the service with a decoder. It broadcasts throughout the day and is relayed to Pukatja (Ernabella) Fregon, Mimili, Iwantja, Amata, Docker River plus a number of homelands. In addition to 5NPY the communities can receive by the satellite Imparja, ABC television, 5DDD (a commercial station), 8KIN and NIRS. They currently have three computers installed which can upload CDs, community service announcements and pre-recorded voice. The computers can be used to schedule programs and to cut and paste programs for editing. They are trying to ensure that their equipment can be networked as much as possible so they have the same equipment as CAAMA and Imparja. PY media has mobile units with satellite dishes which are sent out to cover ceremonies and sporting events on video, which are rebroadcast live. This can give an advantage for BRACS operators using it as they can also use the vehicle for hunting and fulfil their ceremonial obligations by providing food. It does occasionally mean that the BRACS vehicle returns covered in blood! (Ashby 1999)

PY Media (Ashby 1999) has developed a production method where a committee decides on whether a video is produced and ultimately has control over the final product. Chris Ashby, the video/television co-ordinator, works with a number of Aboriginal camera operators and producers. There is local Aboriginal control over what is filmed, how it is filmed and the final edit. Recent videos include a documentary of aged care needs where a group of local elder women make their case for better shelter and facilities for the aged while sitting under a tarpaulin in the rain. The end result in making a case for better funding for aged care is far more effective than any written submission. Other social

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issue videos have included judicial processes by the Department of Corrective Services, the dangers of petrol sniffing, a video for the Women's Council and a debate on the local mining proposal. (Ashby 1999) Two recent videos of ceremonies have been made by PY Media (1998; 1999c). The first is 'Tjukurpa Tjitji Tjuta' (traditional stories for children). It is a mixture of traditional song and dance and instruction on craft, such as how to find witjidi grubs, grind ochre and paint. Songs and dances are overlaid with footage of the traditional crafts. The other is 'Inma Pulka' (Big Ceremony) (PY Media 1999b) and is of a series of traditional ceremonies from Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands. The inma are filmed at night and sensitively lit by 'red head' lights, vehicle headlights and the camp fires to give the impression that the lighting is only by firelight. The discussion between songs was edited out, at the request of participants, and there is a focus on the dances being performed and on the children being shown how to dance. The Inma Mamu, or ghost ceremony, has a superimposed image that gives a ghostly effect. A third video, which was sent in from Western Australia while I was there, consisted of five to six hours of tape. It was being sent back for the community to decide which parts were important before it was edited. (Ashby 1999.) The videos are a source of pride for the people at Umuwa, who obviously enjoyed being videoed. While I was in the studios, two elder women came in with a group of children to look at the editing being done and the children laughed and sang along with the songs as they watched themselves and their friends on video.

PY Media had completed its primary archive project and moved over 3,000 hours of the original EVTV video tapes to the South Australian Museum, with the exception of secret men's and women's material which was stored separately in safes at Ernabella. They are now seeking funding to catalogue and preserve the material on DVD as well as to make it available through other BRACS broadcasters. (Ashby 1999, PY Media 1999b.)

Announcers on 5NPY are paid a basic rate of $300 per week through the Community Development Employment Scheme (CDEP) with top up amounts for specific projects. A further $750 is paid by CAAMA for a completed BRACS show which is rebroadcast. The music is chosen by the announcer and administrator and is mainly adult contemporary, with some country and western plus Aboriginal music occasionally. Much of the audio from the video recordings is stripped off and edited for radio use in

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language, for example the Inma ceremonies. All the community service announcements are in Aboriginal languages. (Ashby 1999.) Sport is also a very important component of radio broadcasting and while I was at 5NPY, Dale Nelson, the radio announcer, was arranging to interview a Sydney Swans member and had interviewed players from the Adelaide Crows by telephone. The walls were covered with photographs of Aboriginal players from the Crows who had visited Umuwa with their Grand Final cup. (Nelson 1999.)

PY Media have stopped using Batchelor College for training as, even in Alice Springs, people were getting distracted from the course. They have now contracted 5UV, the community radio station from Adelaide and one of the first to provide community access for Aboriginal broadcasters, to come to the community to train offering a short course for BRACS operators up to a conventional radio certificate course. While I was at Umuwa Nikki Page, from 5UV, was training school students in radio operation. (Ashby 1999, Page 1999.) With more young people trained the continuation of BRACS broadcasting is more likely.

PY Media had their website [pymedia.in_sa.gov.au} built at no charge by David Taffler, an experienced webmaster from the US. It is hosted on the website of the South Australia Government. (Ashby 1999.) PY Media is currently negotiating with Telstra's Networking Australia but the service is expensive and there is limited opportunity to share the service in remote Australia - for instance they are already competing with Centrelink, the prison service and Online Digital Network to share in order to reduce costs.

The Pitjantjatjara were slightly better off with telecommunications as they had a conventional telephone line installed to most of their larger communities using roadside poles earlier than the DRTS service. This older system is still fragile and is not fully automatic, relying on an old PABX exchange system. (Ashby 1999.)

Having developed an interest in modern communication technology at the same time as the Warlpiri, the Pitjantjatjara have also retained a strong interest with upgraded radio and video facilities, and a website. However, unlike the Warlpiri, their interest had waned

for a number of years and is only now being revived. Their radio service, 5NPY is more formalised than the BRACS service at Yuendemu and broadcasts for longer hours.

Summary

As can be seen from figures six to eight (Phases One, Two and Three) the Warlpiri media model has grown more complex over the period of this study. Today the Warlpiri receive a wider range of media through more distribution methods. They are also more interactive providing their locally produced material to a broader audience through CAAMA, Imparja, NIRS and the Tanami network. Warlpiri access to media at Yuendemu has grown considerably from the early days of production with cassette tape and video camera. It is now a centre of media excellence where local video productions have received AFI awards. There is a local radio service, live music is recorded, and innovative developments such on-line services are being made. The Warlpiri Media Association has also been influential in the development of pan-Aboriginal broadcasting services at CAAMA and Imparja, where it is a shareholder, and in the development of national representative bodies such as NIMAA. The Warlpiri Media Association retains control the access of mainstream broadcast services, which can be turned off, and it also ensures that fair conditions are met when media organisations wish to visit Yuendemu and neighbouring areas.

The three phases of media development have seen the expansion of service provision. Firstly from physically transporting tapes, then to local narrowcasting, then the provision of pan-Aboriginal service through CAAMA and Imparja, mainstream services via the ABC and SBS, and, most recently, from a second commercial service Central Seven and on-line services. Rather than just producing local material for its own use, the Warlpiri Media Association circulates its programming nationally via CAAMA, Imparja and NIRS. Despite Michaels' views that imported programming could be rejected, the Warlpiri appear to be enjoying the services provided.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RESEARCH QUESTION FINDINGS

Introduction

The following were the original policy objectives from 'Out of the Silent Land':

- Broadcasting and telecommunication policies should recognise the responsibility to protect and promote Aboriginal cultural identity.
- Aborigines be able to control the programming received in remote communities in order to reduce the impact on their culture.
- Resources would be provided to these communities to establish their own program making for both television and radio.
- Aborigines should receive suitable training to achieve this.
- Regional broadcasting should be encouraged through organisations such as CAAMA and other regional broadcasters.
- Commercial and ABC programming should be relevant to an Aboriginal audience and reflect their concerns.

In 1999 the broadcasting policy of ATSIC is not that different to these original aspirations. Today's policy aims at equity, cultural maintenance, efficiency, employment opportunities and communities participation (ATSIC 1999d, 5.)

So have these original policy objectives been achieved and what has been learnt from the following research questions.

Why did the Warlpiri at Yuendemu actively embrace the new communication technology?

There is no single, simple reason why the Warlpiri have found modern communications technology so useful. In fact there are a variety of reasons why the Warlpiri embraced the new media. Rogers (1995; 120-9) argued that, for people to take up a new technology it must be to their advantage. Some of the reasons lie in the Warlpiri's need for improved communications to preserve culture and language as well as to entertain, and that it was a

suitable communication medium for people with low literacy levels. Much of its success also lies in the fact that the modern communication technology appeals, for different reasons, not just to one age group but across a whole range of ages. The introduction of modern communication technology was made smoother because of skilled people, improved technology, and funding all being available at the right time.

The need to restore traditional communications.

As we have seen, colonisation had broken down the traditional communication patterns and the use of modern technology was a means to restore communication with other Aboriginal groups. Improved communication was an important component of the self-determination movement. The interest in 'air rights' was linked to other components of Aboriginal self-determination in the early 1980s such as land rights, the outstation movement and the use of other technology, such as four wheel drives and two way radios, which were required to ensure that the outstation movement worked effectively. While enthusiasm for the use of BRACS has waxed and waned a little at Yuendemu, there is a link with the need to communicate change. For instance a current land claim for the Mount Doreen cattle station for the Warlpiri and mining negotiations for the Pitjantjatjara are reviving and increasing use of the communication systems. Discussions about the recent Reeves review of the Northern Territory Land Rights Act caused concern in the communities, because of a proposal to replace the permit system with general trespass laws. This would have seriously watered down the control Aboriginal people had over who could visit their community, including access by unsympathetic media. CAAMA and the Warlpiri Media Association prepared material on public meetings about the review and ultimately the House of Representatives Committee issued a video of its findings, as well as a 170 page report including visuals, pictures and the use of Aboriginal dialects. The report concluded that no changes should be made without the support of Aboriginal communities. (Ashby 1999; Contractor 1999,3; Reinhart 1999.)

Adapting the new technology into existing cultural systems.

The Warlpiri have used the modern communication technology as they were keen to maintain a powerful form of communication to promote their culture which fitted into

existing cultural patterns. The first major video made by the Warlpiri of their fire ceremony used traditional kinship patterns with one group producing the video and the other taking part, very much like the Warlpiri traditional fire ceremony where one clan would support the other clan who conducted the ceremony.

The Warlpiri also used their videos to make a political statement, for example recounting their version of the Coniston massacre. They also had control over the images, imposing restrictions on viewing, for instance after a death of someone in the video. When I was at Yuendemu, someone had recently died and sorry business was taking place and many people were caught up in ceremonial obligations. While no one was broadcasting at the time a radio service was still being provided as the signal had been switched to take 8KIN directly from Alice Springs.

Control of mainstream media -the technology can be turned off.

It must not be overlooked that one of the original features of BRACS was that it could switch off mainstream media. One reason that the Warlpiri at Yuendemu were keen to take up the modern communication technology and insert their own programming through the BRACS service was that they wished to maintain control over television viewing as they had already done with video use. Michaels (1986,17) pointed out, in his original research, that the Warlpiri viewed videos and television in extended family groups. Therefore, it was more appropriate that the ability to switch off unsuitable television lay with the broader community than with the western model of parents being able to control children's viewing on a household-by-household basis. The Task Force considered that some communities might reject electronic media entirely. This rejection does not seem to have happened and switching off the service only seems to occur on rare occasions. As already noted, at Yuendemu there have been two occasions in 1999 where the service has been turned off: once for a community meeting on domestic violence and another when Imparja inadvertently broadcast secret, sacred material (Kantor 1999). However, the insurance of being able to switch off a service still remains and can be used in the future, for example should the new commercial television service from Central Seven prove inappropriate.

A suitable medium to communicate messages

Michaels (1987, 81-96) observed that in western society literacy was seen as beneficial and television anti-social, while in Aboriginal society this was often the opposite. He noted that senior people complained that school was making children not listen to the elders. Although some middle-aged Warlpiri were objecting to bilingual education as they felt, as they could only read in English not Warlpiri, it may be reducing their authority over children. Michaels also considered that the Warlpiri deliberately resisted literacy as a form of resistance to European culture and missionaries. He, therefore, saw the Warlpiri as non-literate rather than illiterate and rejected McLuhan's unilinear model of the development of communications:

'...we have come to regard the Western world media development sequence as somehow natural: from orality to literacy, print, film and now electronics. But Aboriginal and other "developing" people do not conform to this sequence, and produce very different media histories.' (Michaels 1987f, 81-2.)

Molnar (1995,171) also agrees that radio and video have enabled indigenous Australians to ' skip the print generation' and that radio and video are best suited for oral cultures.

Literacy skills still remain low in Aboriginal communities (Ceresa 1996,1). ATSIC (1999c 6) recognises that some older Aboriginal people will never become fluent, let alone literate, in English. 4% of indigenous Australians do not speak any English (McLennan and Madden, 1999, 138). Poor eyesight in the older population would make literacy in Aboriginal languages or English redundant. Education continues to be resisted in many Aboriginal communities, although is more likely to be accepted where there is bilingual teaching (Toyne 1999). However, bilingual education is facing an uphill battle with little Aboriginal language reading material available and this has to compete with glossy, full colour material in English (Schmidt 1993,16). Current debate in the Northern Territory has seen the Chief Minister calling for indigenous people to adopt western education and society whereas elders argue that traditional knowledge and culture should go 'hand in hand' (Burke 1999; Yunnupingu 1999.) Aborigines have a history of face-to-face communications, so being able to see or hear something gives it far more credence.

For example, Michaels (1986, 60) recounts a dispute over a basketball video which had been edited and the audience objected as they counted less baskets in the video than they recalled had actually been scored.

Video and radio may be the only way important information can be conveyed to Aboriginal audience with low literacy skills and failing eyesight. Even with literacy and language skills, the message may have greater credence in language from someone they recognise and trust.

Economic outcomes

Remote Aboriginal communities have very few employment or commercial opportunities. Indigenous Australians have an unemployment rate of 23% compared to 9% in the broader population (McLennan and Madden 1999,141). Indigenous media services are an excellent training ground for employment and this is now recognised by ATSIC in its Broadcasting policy (ATSIC 1999d, 5). Many of the broadcasters and video makers are employed through the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) Scheme where Aboriginal Community Councils pool social security payments and pay it out as wages in return for community work (Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia, 1994, p184). CDEP employees learn Internet, radio and video skills as well as archiving and cataloguing. They also learn computer skills on editing equipment which, as it is visual, may be a more appropriate way for people with low literacy skills to learn to use computers than through wordprocessing (Ashby, 1999).

Music recording has been an important extension to indigenous broadcasting. The establishment of CAAMA in the 1980s provided studios for indigenous musicians to record their music for the first time. 8KIN and other stations gave them airplay. Now more mainstream stations, such as Triple J, provide airtime but it is estimated (WAAMA 1999,np) that 95% of Aboriginal music is only played on Aboriginal media. Many Aboriginal bands have had national and international success, even with a proportion of their songs not being in English. In east Arnhem Land Yothu Yindi have now built a major recording facility, which they hope will provide a secondary education to local

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Aboriginal young people who are avoiding school. The facility is funded by sponsorship and receives no Government funding (Laurie 1999, 15-19.)

The Warlpiri Media Association has just installed a new recording studio so that local bands do not have to travel to Alice Springs to record. Local musicians featured in, and were used to provide music for, their new video production Bush Mechanics (Warlpiri Media Association 1998). Being recorded means bands can get airplay and also access to income through the Australian Performing Rights Association (APRA) which distributes royalties from performing rights on media and in public places. Without Aboriginal media they would not get much airplay and therefore less income from royalties (WAAMA, 1999.)

New multi-media services are providing marketing opportunities for remote Aboriginal communities through the viewing and sales of Aboriginal art, craft and videos on the Internet as well as the Tanami Network. This can bring sales directly into the community without the need to use intermediaries, who are often non-Aboriginal.

Entertainment value

Amongst all the policy and academic arguments about the impact of media on Aboriginal communities one of the most overlooked issues is that, like other Australians, Aborigines enjoy mainstream media for its entertainment value. Once again there was an implied paternalism in the policy for Aboriginal broadcasting that was similar to the attitude about children's television viewing that television should have an educational role and not just be for fun. Moisseeff's (1999) study in South Australia shows that Aboriginal people enjoy a wide range of television programming and videos. Nicolas Peterson, a senior anthropologist at the Australian National University who has worked for the Warlpiri at Yuendemu may times, has observed that boredom is a major problem in Aboriginal communities with high unemployment (Peterson 1998). Television can alleviate this boredom. Michaels (1986,132) also recognised that the outstation movement was less likely to be successful if young people did not have access to the entertainment value of television and radio. The Warlpiri seemed to be enjoying mainstream television content and listening to music on tapes and radio. Sport was

enormously popular and at the early ABT enquiry at Kintore an elder added to his evidence that the satellite would also bring sport. A real concern for Imparja was that Aboriginal viewers were switching from Imparja to the Central Seven service purely for the AFL.

The Warlpiri adapted the modern communication technology and fitted it onto existing cultural practices as it met an urgent need to improve communications with self-determination and provided employment and entertainment. It enabled them to preserve culture, including the ability to turn off mainstream media if necessary, and to communicate effectively in a community with low levels of literacy. Yet however strong the will to develop indigenous broadcasting systems, it may not be possible without a suitable infrastructure. The Warlpiri were fortunate to have access to this infrastructure at the right time. Other indigenous broadcasters, such as the Maori, have had less success despite a strong political will to set up their own broadcasting.

The role of sympathetic Europeans: the right people at the right time

Much of the success of Warlpiri Media Association is due to having access to the right people at the right time. From the early 1970s the previous paternalistic attitudes were changing and sympathetic Europeans were actively working to help remote communities move towards autonomy. Many of these Europeans were schoolteachers; for example it was the local schoolteacher who encouraged the first artwork at Papunya. Eric Michaels (1986, 73) was himself a catalyst in encouraging video use at Yuendemu and the role of Europeans was something he recognised:

> 'It may be that the reason media was developed in some places and not others is an artefact of the resources which were made available and the information which could be supplied. At Yuendemu and Ernabella, Europeans served as conduits especially for funding, equipment and some training. Elsewhere these resources were not available and video production, planning and control of transmission were more limited.' (Michaels 1986, 91.)

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Michaels was able to lend the equipment and teach the skills. He was also later instrumental in encouraging the policy makers to provide equipment grants by taking the early Yuendemu videos to conferences and meetings and acting as an ambassador for the Warlpiri Media Association. Although Michaels was also '...well known for biting the hand that fed him' (Leigh 1994,xxvii) often rubbing Aboriginal bureaucrats, and even CAAMA itself, up the wrong way (Hinkson 1995,52). Prior to Michaels there were a number of other enthusiastic and sympathetic Europeans who were able to provide media services to the Warlpiri such as Philip and David Batty and Peter Toyne.

> 'The reason why communities like Ernabella and Yuendemu and others in North Queensland decided to 'engage' with television technology is because they were prepared to collaborate with [European] individuals and town based organisations for funding and assistance.' (Batty 1993, 22-24.)

The running of media organisations is complex, requiring, not just technical skills, but the ability to write reports and argue complex issues such as licensing requirements. This was particularly evident during the licence application by Imparja which, with assistance from people like Brian Walsh, was far more professional than those of other licence applicants with plenty of professional resources[36]. As has already been seen, the lack of funding over the years has required the constant writing of proposals for new funding from a wide range of sources. This is usually done by non-Aboriginal employees.

It could be argued that Aboriginal media is currently being driven by Europeans. It could even be argued that these Europeans were the 'change agents' from Rogers' diffusion model of change. However, rather than the European workers influencing Warlpiri views, the Warlpiri were using the Europeans as their own 'change agents' or ambassadors in driving changed attitudes in mainstream policy. Film maker Michael Leigh (1994,xlii) puts it succinctly:

> 'This efflorescence of indigenous production in all media, including the electronic, gathers momentum not because of well intentioned whitefellas like Eric [Michaels] or myself, no matter how much we think we influence policy and

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[36] I reviewed all licence applications while working for Department of Aboriginal Affairs in 1985.

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the rest, but because blacks themselves demanded to be heard and showed intelligence, wit and seriousness of their own representations that they would not and could not be ignored.'

The structure of Aboriginal media organisations also ensures that there is considerable control by elders through media associations or local councils who employ these Europeans. Ultimately there is the intention to transfer these skills to Aboriginal people. This can be seen from the Warlpiri Media Association's strategic plan, which is based on that of another media organisation (TAIMA 1998), which has a requirement that non-Aboriginal contractors share skills with Aboriginal workers. No mainstream media owners carry out their own paperwork, maintenance or day to day operations. Rather they employ others to do so while retaining overall control. The Warlpiri may employ Europeans but they ultimately retain control through their overarching councils.

Aboriginal organisations

The proclamation in 1977 of *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act* allowed Aborigines to establish infrastructure for culturally appropriate ownership of property, accept money and manage their own affairs (Rowley 1978,208-22.) Because if its high concentration of Aboriginal population, Alice Springs became a regional centre for these organisations such as the Central Land Council, the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Land Council and CAAMA (Batty 1999). These organisations also became influential intermediaries between individual remote communities and policy makers. They were also large enough to be influential in their lobbying. They also had sufficient control to restrict communications through the land permit system and negotiate on behalf of the communities about who could visit. It has been argued that the Warlpiri Media Association and PY Media have been more stable broadcasters because they are physically closer to their communities. Some of the problems other regional media associations have had may be linked to the wide areas they have to serve from regional cities such as TEABBA from Darwin and RIMAQ from Townsville (Turner 1999, 97-8, 201-3).

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However, with no news media or no media with Aboriginal content, the local communities had to trust these organisations to represent their views. It was no accident that one of the earliest videos at Yuendemu was of a meeting about the school which Michaels (1986, 69-71) observed that this was distributed widely and the entire proceedings watched by an estimated 45,000 people. The videos allowed the communities to check on their representatives and ensured their accountability. Community meetings are still videoed, as has been shown by the recent Reeves review into Land Councils where not only the local meetings were videoed but also the outcome of the Parliamentary hearings in Canberra.

The development of indigenous broadcasting policy has become smoother and better targeted with the establishment of NIMAA in 1993, which allowed indigenous broadcasting to speak with one voice. It also provided an important centralised radio programming service through the National Indigenous Radio Service and allowed for the exchange of good ideas between remote broadcasters, prompting enthusiasm for indigenous broadcasting. As Neil Moorish, from the Western Australia Aboriginal Media Association (WAAMA), said after a visit to NIMAA:

> 'I want rolls of that stuff they call optic fibre. I want a satellite dish, I want the Internet and World Wide Web, and I want people to be in tune with the rest of Australia as computer literate people. If they can do it at Yuendemu they can do it in Perth, Western Australia.' (Moorish 1996,118.)

Suitable technology was available

In the early days of Aboriginal broadcasting, film cameras, reel-to-reel tapes and editing equipment were both expensive and difficult to use, especially in remote dusty conditions. As we have seen, an early experiment with betacam at Yuendemu in the 1970s was not successful, as the equipment was difficult to handle or use for editing (Michaels 1986,38). By the 1980s video cameras became available for domestic use as did cassette audiotape recorders. This made the technology easier to use although the end product was not always professional or of broadcast quality. The recent roll out of digital equipment has further simplified matters as editing can be done to broadcast quality on

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computers. In the early days, the Warlpiri avoided editing as it was complex and under the control of one person. Now groups can observe the process on computer and achieve the ends they want or look at a variety of options before making a final decision on an edit. Digital cameras are also lighter to hold and have advantages such as automatic focusing, a particular advantage where many local people have eye disease (Ashby 1999). Uniform equipment has also made training simpler and one trainer can service a number of BRACS communities (Henna 1999).

The availability of funding

Broadcasting does not come cheaply and Aboriginal broadcasting, particularly BRACS, has always been chronically short of funding. Throughout the development of the Warlpiri Media Association there has been one consistent problem: funding has been piecemeal and comes from a variety of sources. The initial grants for video making and radio from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in 1985 was from a small amount of remaining funds at the end of the financial year. The Bicentenary fund in 1987/88 paid for the original BRACS roll out and there was Federal Government funding for the BRACS Revitalisation Strategy in 1993. Even when specific funding for broadcasting was made available, some other remote Aboriginal communities chose to divert funding to more pressing issues, such as health (Bentley 1994,139-40). I was aware that, while I was looking at some high technology digital equipment at Yuendemu, a mainline sewer was just being extended to the side of town I was staying at. It is not equitable that Aboriginal communities have to make this choice as mainstream Australia does not have to make a choice between media and health services.

Under the current Howard Coalition Government, funding for Aboriginal issues has been harder to come by, unless it is for core services such as housing and health (Hill 1999). Funding for the Tanami Network came from 'Networking the Nation' as a result of the Telstra sale. This funding was aimed at benefiting all of remote Australia whether non-Aboriginal or Aboriginal[37]. Currently, funding from the current Government for

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[37] While the funding from the RTIF has been a useful source for the Warlpiri they may also be disadvantaged in the long term by the privatisation of Telstra, as Telstra or future service providers may reduce services for remote areas.

Aboriginal broadcasting appears to be coming from non-social policy areas. One former BRACS technician observed that this is possibly because technocrats do not get caught up in policy issues (Wyatt 1999). However funding has focused very much on providing one-off, capital equipment rather than ongoing salaries for trainers and co-ordinators (Reinhart 1999). Funding for salaries has only been available, in the main, through the 'work for the dole', Community Development Employment Program. Ironically the obtaining of funding may have been due to the fact that it has been piecemeal and from a wide range of sources. In the draft report of Digital Dreaming (Molnar 1999b,np) the Warlpiri Media Association strongly argues that BRACS funding be moved from regional councils, from where it was being diverted to other areas, to a centralised source of funding such as a NIMAA. However, a central source of funding, if it ever eventuated in a new organisation such as Indigenous Communications Australia, could be a risk. Indigenous broadcasters in Canada found their funding suddenly cut off. One source of funding can more easily be turned off than a variety of sources.

It should be recognised that ATSIC funds both Imparja and BRACS, yet these services provide television and radio facilities to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Unlike the remote commercial television services in Queensland and Western Australia, which are subsidised by their state governments, the Northern Territory Government does not subsidise their service. Essentially funding for Aboriginal communities is subsidising all viewers of Imparja and those non-Aborigines who live in BRACS communities. The draft recommendation of the Productivity Commission to allow grant-specific indigenous broadcasting licensing that will permit advertising may ease funding, but it is unlikely that indigenous broadcasting would ever have a totally independent source of funding from revenue or subscriptions.

Appropriate training

All the BRACS communities that I visited recognised that there was a need to retain enough trained broadcasters for the BRACS system simply so it could continue on a regular basis. Often the one or two operators in smaller communities would get caught up in ceremonial or family obligations, or sometimes just lose interest and move on to something else. Payment through the CDEP was an important incentive. Also training

programs were being redesigned to allow training within the community so that people were not disrupted by being sent either to Batchelor College or a regional centre. This also provided the advantage of training people on the exact equipment they would use. Warlpiri Media Association, CAAMA and PY Media all went out to train operators in the communities. PY Media was using trainers from 5UV in Adelaide and specifically focused on teaching school children broadcasting skills, to ensure a broad base of skilled operators in the future.

Are some forms of technology (for instance telecommunications, radio or television) preferred over others.

The early policy view was that radio was the most appropriate medium for Aboriginal media as it was simple and cost effective. While this remains true to a certain extent, since the early days of broadcasting the Warlpiri, have made little differentiation between the type of media, switching from one to the other depending on the need. For instance, radio is useful as an information source and can broadcast in a variety of languages whereas video is used more to record ceremonies or sporting events. On-line services can provide important face-to-face communication and a link to other distant communities.

Locally produced radio continues to be popular. At Yuendemu, most houses and nearly all cars have a radio (Kantor, 1999). Radio is a technologically simpler medium than video for people to learn skills and it can provide more continuous and regular employment than video making which tends be more sporadic (Ashby, 1999). There has been comment that Aboriginal radio only plays music and the same criticism has been made of Maori radio. While this is the case, and the communities no doubt enjoy the entertainment value of radio and its important role in promoting Aboriginal music, speaking only when it is necessary is a component of traditional Aboriginal speaking patterns. Meadows (1994, 142) has also noted that long pauses occur in Inuit programming. Important community messages are still conveyed on the radio but, unlike European radio, there is no ongoing chatter to fill up spaces. While mainstream radio stations have a 'dead air' signal to warn the announcer of any silences, this is not a feature of Aboriginal radio where silences are an important component of speech.

While videos are not made as much as in the early days they are currently experiencing a revival as is local television broadcasting. This is due to the new equipment provided through the BRACS revitalisation which is simpler to use and can make professional quality programs. These videos can give powerful messages such as the health education videos on AIDS and scabies produced by the Warlpiri Media Association. The potential of these new videos was one of the forces behind the proposal to establish a national television network through NIMAA. With local production, indigenous community members are far more likely to see themselves on television than the broader population[38] (Meadows 1994 ,143.).

There continues to be support from elders for producing videos of ceremonies to preserve culture. Sporting events are very popular and are recorded locally. Programs on local and national AFL football and soccer are essential viewing. Generally the Warlpiri watch Imparja but also have an interest in ABC television news. At Yuendemu, they are taking SBS so that local programs can override SBS's service and not interrupt the ABC.

Lack of telephone services still remains an issue. The original satellite service was meant to bring telephony to remote communities, but the satellite telephone system proved too expensive. Telstra has now rolled out a terrestrial service (line of sight towers) but few homes have phones or, if they do, may be cut off due to lack of payment. There is only one public telephone at Yuendemu for the whole community. There is hope that the new Internet service may at least provide free local calls and an improved telephone service (Kantor, 1999).

Generally the Warlpiri and the Pitjantjatjara do not seem to differentiate between the different types of media. The same people often work across the internet, video and BRACS radio. Langton (1993,9) attributes this to the fact that even in pre-contact times, Aboriginal society was a multi-media one. This multi-media use has often confused policy makers who have liked to categorise media using European models of radio, television, film making and on-line media. While today's policy makers try to grapple

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[38] When I was at in the video studios at Umuwa people watching the editing of the videos were enthusiastically pointing out the people they knew.

with the complexities of convergence of the media, the Warlpiri have always seemed content with viewing their media within a single framework.

Despite the use of many types of media the Warlpiri still adhere to oral and visual communications fitting communications into traditional patterns of verbal or face-to-face contact. The written word is avoided, even with on-line services videoconferencing is preferred over email, and literacy skills remain low.

All media seems to be popular with the Warlpiri. However, it must be remembered that Aboriginal radio and television are not specialist services for them but mainstream services providing information in their language. The media services such as ABC, SBS and other commercial services, except for their occasional Aboriginal content, are an additional alternative service.

Have traditional culture/social practices been damaged or enhanced by the new technology?

Obviously, the Warlpiri are not living the life today that they were in pre-contact time. However, their use of modern communication technology fits Altman's (1987) theory of adaption to fit into existing cultural patterns and there is evidence that the Warlpiri have preserved culture and language by adapting European technology, including electronic media and four wheel drive vehicles, into their own cultural models. There is strong evidence that much of the success of BRACS and the driving force behind CAAMA and Imparja was due to the support of elders. Other European innovations, such as literacy and education, have foundered because elders often view them as undermining their authority. Elders immediately saw the advantage of video and radio in preserving culture and language. As Nooley Preston (1996, 109), an elder who broadcasts in the Kimberley has said:

> 'We're going to keep our language strong in radio so we can teach the new generations today. If I passed away, who's goin' to teach our children?'

Michaels recorded that some of the first videos were of ceremonies and of journey to traditional country where the land was 'opened' up and songs sung again. Tony Downut

(1991, 39-40) recounts travelling 600 km to the Western Australia border with a group of 60 people from Ernabella videoing the country and the songs related to the country. These videos were later broadcast on BRACS. He recalls 'Their use of video was starting to mirror and extend the traditional exchange of Inma [ceremony] from community to community over vast distances.' (Downut 1991,44.)

Both Warlpiri and Pitjantjatjara elders watched these videos with emotion. While the Ernabella videos have now safely been catalogued and archived with the secret men's and women's ceremonies kept in a safe at Ernabella, the Yuendemu tapes are yet to be archived properly and considerable priority must be given to ensuring appropriate archiving and preservation with the agreement of the community before they are permanently damaged. The tapes are an insurance policy for the elders that remaining culture is protected from the cultural destruction that occurred during the stolen generations. Elders in other remote communities, which have not previously used BRACS video, are now actively asking for cultural material to be recorded (Deger, 1999).

As we have seen, Warlpiri culture traditionally defines roles between men and women and the old and the young. At first glance it would seem that young adults, but not teenagers, are broadcasters, however they do not control the media as this control lies with elders. The Warlpiri Media Association makes decisions on programming and its members are male and female elders in the community. Similar decisions are made by the Pitjantjatjara Council at Umuwa (Ashby, 1999). There also appears a reasonable gender mix between broadcasters, in fact the principal broadcaster at Yuendemu is a woman. Aboriginal women are also making a breakthrough in the area of radio engineering and more are being trained (Pyne 1998) however this still is very much a male domain as is the medium of video making. Children are interested in videos.[39] The ongoing interest of children and young people gives hope for the continuation of BRACS in the future, especially as both the Warlpiri and Pitjantjatjara schools were becoming more involved in BRACS training. Radio broadcasting appears to appeal to all ages and both men and women, a factor that Molnar (1996,82) has also observed at CAAMA radio 8KIN.

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[39] At Umuwa, I observed two women elders bringing in a group of children to the video editing suite where the children excitedly watched a recently edited video on local ceremonies which featured the children learning the dances and songs.

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BRACS has done much to preserve culture especially language. In 1999, 79% of Aboriginal people in central Australia were still speaking an indigenous language at home (McLennan and Madden 1999,138.) Warlpiri and Pitjantjatjara remain two of the 20 relatively healthy Aboriginal languages and linguist Annette Schmidt (1993, v,14.133) agrees that television, radio and video can play a central role in maintaining language. James Bentley was the co-ordinator and administrator at the Warlpiri Media Association from 1990-92 and he considered that language and positive role models were a key achievement of BRACS:

> ' The importance of community broadcasting is broadcasting is manifold. Satellite delivered broadcasting is in English and the heroes and heroines are non-Aboriginal. Community based broadcasting promotes the use of language and sees friends and relatives as positive role models on television. Community based programming works in with the school's programs, producing video and radio that is locally relevant , particularly in a locality based culture.' (Bentley 1994,139-40.)

Nearly all programming is in the local languages. This is even more important as the bilingual education program is currently being reviewed by the Northern Territory Government (Toyne1999).

It must be noted that the early concern over satellite broadcasting implied that Aboriginal culture was not strong enough to 'resist' the dominant European culture (O'Gallagher, 1999.) This view builds on the colonial paternalistic view which implied that Aborigines were childlike, easily influenced and unable to make their own decisions and it has strong parallels with the debate over who should control children's viewing. The Warlpiri have proved themselves strong, not only in resisting the onslaught of European culture, but also in adapting the new media to strengthen their own culture. Even in the early 1980s there was a clue to the resilience of Aboriginal culture as Michaels (1988,84) recognised that traditional culture at Yirrkala had not been affected despite eight years of ABC television and one year of commercial television.

Has two way communications between the white Australian Community and Aboriginal communities been enhanced?

Information is of great interest to communities who were disenfranchised prior to the arrival of broadcasting as they were often unable to see what was happening in the wider community through regular mainstream news services. This was especially true in that they could not observe what their elected representatives were doing or saying. A recent Federal Court case in Canberra on whether genocide is part of Australian law has been videoed for distribution back to remote communities. (Campbell 1999.) However, a good indigenous controlled news and current affairs service on Aboriginal issues is still lacking. There is no electronic media equivalent of the national newspaper Koori Mail.

Community service announcements are regularly broadcast on radio and are one major way to share news and information including health education campaigns. Governments have used this facility to communicate with remote Aboriginal communities, with varying levels of success. In some cases campaigns have failed, as they have not consulted broadly enough (Australia, Department of Health, Housing and Community Services, 1993). The National Indigenous Radio Service sells radio time through its system and contracting one or more broadcasters to produce the advertisement or community announcement and translate it if necessary. The client then buys airtime through a media placement agency such as AIS or I&G. This ensures that most of the advertisers money goes directly to the communities. Imparja selects the best of remote video recordings to broadcast on its half hour BRACS program each Sunday morning. Video productions like 'Bush Mechanics' (Warlpiri Media Association, 1998) produced in 1998 have been sold to the ABC. 'Bush Mechanics' was broadcast as part of the National Indigenous Documentary Series in November 1999 and it also won an Australian Film Institute award. Special events, such as the NAIDOC Week events each July, are recorded and rebroadcast through the NIRS network. An agreement has recently been made with the AFL to rebroadcast matches through the network (Mitchell, 1999). Bentley (1994,139-40) points out that the use of BRACS has also provided the Warlpiri with an insight into how the media works.

There is evidence that local Europeans in remote communities are recognising Aboriginal viewpoints as they listen to local radio programs (Farrer 1996, 113). Molnar (1995, 174) is of the view that indigenous produced media content gives non-indigenous Australians an insight into the diversity of indigenous culture and lifestyles missing in the mainstream media. Several Northern Territory tourist facilities were rebroadcasting 8KIN from the satellite in preference to mainstream services; one motel manager told me that it was because tourists preferred the music mix to that of the ABC.

Information flow into Aboriginal communities has improved over pre-broadcasting days. They, in turn have become more visible through websites and the Tanami Network, not only to the rest of Australia, but to the world. It is easier to communicate with remote communities now without having to travel there physically and this, hopefully, will increase business transactions as well as provide better health services, for example through remote diagnostics.

There is some evidence that European Australians are gaining a better understanding of Aboriginal issues but, apart from some good quality programming on SBS and ABC television and radio[40], Aboriginal people remain very much invisible to mainstream Australia. The SBS and ABC programs often promote positive indigenous issues which may divert attention from some of the real problems facing indigenous Australians. The one exception is Imparja, where Aboriginal people feature on the news, weather, children's programming and in advertisements. There is a strong argument that the formation of a national indigenous television service, through the Indigenous Communications Australia proposal currently in front of the Productivity Commission, would do much to inform mainstream Australia and ensure that Aboriginal people do not remain invisible. This would be in a similar vein to the success of SBS in not only providing a service to ethnic Australians but also promoting ethnic issues to mainstream Australia and to the newly established Aboriginal People's Television Network in Canada.

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[40] This is possibly due to the greater amount of documentary programs on ABC (11.2% of programming) and SBS (11.6%) compared with networks 7 (0.8%). 9 (3%) and 10 (0.5%) (ABC 1999b, np)

Finally, what have Aboriginal communities learnt about our culture through electronic media? Certainly they are better able to receive news services and prefer the ABC for this service. However, it is a little embarrassing that remote Aboriginal communities may be forming an opinion about European Australia by watching 'Hey Hey it's Saturday' or 'Australia's Funniest Home Videos'.

Summary

The Warlpiri have adapted modern communication technology into culturally appropriate models that allow the community to restrict mainstream services, if necessary, and also produce local material that meets local needs. The BRACS service is essentially the cultural maintenance model for Aboriginal broadcasting suggested by Michaels (1986, xvi-xvii.) The Warlpiri have also built a further protective layer for cultural maintenance above this by retaining control, through their shareholding, of the pan-Aboriginal broadcasting system of CAAMA and Imparja. All this has been achieved, especially in the early years, with minimal assistance from policy makers and a lack of an ongoing source of funding. However, this protective layer is developing some holes through the recent introduction of Central Seven television from Queensland, which has no Aboriginal content, and possibly through the Internet should young people obtain unsupervised access to the Web without the control of elders.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

As we have seen, during the early 1980s two remote Aboriginal communities in central Australia, the Warlpiri at Yuendemu and the Pitjantjatjara at Ernabella, began their own experiments in local television and radio production. This was even before launch of the AUSSAT satellite in 1985 which brought broadcast television and radio to remote Australia for the first time. These experiments occurred at a time when remote Aboriginal communities were seeking self determination after decades, and even centuries, of restrictive colonisation where their traditional communication patterns had been restricted by forced settlement and the stolen generations. The traditional communications patterns, or songlines, allowed the flow of information and intellectual property of ceremonies and songs, across Australia.

The study has found that, since the original experiments, the Warlpiri people have enthusiastically used modern communication technology including radio, video making, locally produced television, and more recently on-line services. Comparing the development of communications usage by indigenous people in New Zealand and Canada, as well as the Pitjantjatjara people at Ernabella in the far north of South Australia, this study has found a number of common reasons why modern communications technology has been enthusiastically used by indigenous people as they seek self-determination. This enthusiasm would seem unusual considering much of the theory about change and indigenous societies, based on anthropological and developmental paradigms, speculates that indigenous societies resist change programs such as literacy, education and new technology.

The Warlpiri have <u>adapted</u> rather than <u>adopted</u> the new technology. That is, according to Altman's (1987) theory they have adapted modern communications technology into existing cultural patterns to strengthen their language and culture rather than to replace traditional practices and social structures. For example, they have recorded cultural events and traditional practices on video to archive as insurance against any future attempt to destroy their culture such as occurred in the past with the stolen generations. Radio and television is broadcast daily in their own language and Yuendemu is now the

centre of a network to local communities established along traditional communications lines. The Warlpiri Media Association is one of eight remote media networks that, in turn, link to form a national network via the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia.

The Warlpiri have also enjoyed television and radio for its entertainment value, including sport, and there is evidence that they watch far more television and video than mainstream Australian viewers do. Electronic communication has also brought employment opportunities and the ability to market Aboriginal products. Today, the Warlpiri remain a driving force in Aboriginal communications with the development of the Tanami on-line network and a proposal for a national television network.

It can be seen that the Warlpiri actively embraced the new communication technology for a number of reasons. Warlpiri media has done much to preserve culture, improve information flow, support health education campaigns, increase employment opportunities and provide entertainment. It is also flexible enough to fit in with Warlpiri traditions. The facility to ultimately turn the media off provides a reassuring control, although it is used rarely. There has also been an element of luck in the fact that it has continued to receive funding from a variety of sources over the years.

In response to the question about whether some forms of technology (for instance telecommunications, radio or television) were preferred over others, the Warlpiri have never really made a differentiation between the types of media, using the medium that is most effective for their needs at the time. They have moved between audio and video as well as adopting music production and on-line media with enthusiasm. This is an interesting comparison with non-Indigenous media owners and policy makers who are currently struggling with the recent complexities of convergence as the various forms of media: radio, television, and on line services move toward each other. There also seems to be less specialisation in each of the media possibly reflecting the many skills the Warlpiri have in traditional life where everyone participates in art, song, ceremony and hunting or gathering.

While the Warlpiri no longer live their original traditional lifestyle, they have maintained strong links to traditional social structure, language and ceremony. Their traditional culture and social practices have been mainly enhanced by modern communication technology which has helped restore, and possibly improve, traditional communications. Radio has contributed to the preservation and continuation of the use of language. Video has preserved many ceremonies that may otherwise have been under threat, in one case restoring a ceremony that had been partially forgotten.

The use of modern media could have undermined the social structure of Warlpiri society yet there is strong evidence that elders ultimately still control broadcasting through the Warlpiri Media Association even though younger adults broadcast and Europeans are employed. In fact, it is unlikely that Aboriginal media would have been a success at Yuendemu or Ernabella without the support of the elders. This support is strengthening now that Warlpiri people who were originally involved in the development of the Warlpiri Media Association have, themselves, grown older and are now influential elders in the community.

Two way communications between the white Australian community and Aboriginal communities has been enhanced. The Warlpiri are influential as 'media proprietors' with shares in CAAMA and Imparja and are also represented on the National Indigenous Media Association. Imparja and CAAMA now broadcast over a satellite footprint that covers all remote South Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland. The remote European community is exposed to some limited indigenous broadcasting though Imparja, especially its popular children program *Yamba's Playtime* which is broadcast in English with indigenous presenters. This could be strengthened through the acceptance of a national indigenous television network.

The broadcasters at Yuendemu, and at Ernabella, were early drivers for Aboriginal media as they considered that cultural maintenance was a high priority. While they may have been pioneers, today the Warlpiri are not alone as successful indigenous broadcasters. Other remote Aboriginal communities were having to grapple with other issues and were not as well advanced in an understanding of media when the BRACS roll out first occurred. However, most other communities have since followed in the footsteps of the

Ernabella and Yuendemu experiments. ATSIC's report 'Digital Dreaming: a National Review of Indigenous Media and Communications' (ATSIC 1999b) has found that each year over 1000 hours of indigenous radio is broadcast. There are a total of 94 indigenous licences - eighty in remote communities and ten in metropolitan and regional areas, one commercial and three speciality narrowcast. Currently there are ten aspirant licensees and up to thirty more coming up. Many remote communities did not take up the option of BRACS as they had other more pressing priorities such as health or land rights.

Most of the original policy objectives in 'Out of the Silent Land' have been achieved over the years, although probably due more to the determination of Aboriginal broadcasters than any assistance from Government. The outcomes have been that Aboriginal communities control their programming and produce local programming not only at a local level but also through the control of pan-Aboriginal broadcasting at CAAMA and Imparja; culture and language have been preserved; since the BRACS revitalisation, suitable training and equipment has been available; and CAAMA and other regional broadcasting associations have grown to a national network under the national body NIMAA.

The promotion of Aboriginal cultural identity has been achieved to a lesser extent as has the provision of relevant commercial and ABC programming. With the exception of Imparja, there is virtually no Aboriginal programming on commercial television or radio. The ABC and SBS produce a limited amount and nothing to the extent envisaged by the original Task Force. The Aboriginal control of Imparja was fortunate as the damage to culture from other mainstream media may have been considerable, especially in issues such as alcohol advertising. However, although Imparja covers the Northern Territory, South Australia, Queensland, western New South Wales and a small amount of eastern Western Australia, it cannot be received in all remote areas. There is, therefore, a strong argument in favour of a national indigenous television service, not only to reach remote Aboriginal communities but also to provide an acceptable service for Aboriginal people living in regional areas and cities who have been overlooked in indigenous broadcasting policy making. This may be overcome by the proposal for Indigenous Communications Australia.

Lessons to be learnt in policy development for indigenous communities

One question raised by the answers to the research questions is what can policy makers learn from the introduction and development of indigenous media policy that can be used to develop policy with indigenous people on other issues? Particularly, as has already been noted, literacy and health policy programs have not been as successful in Aboriginal communities as has the use of modern communication technology.

The following table lists the official policy developments on the left and the broadcasting developments that originated in the communities on the right.

FIGURE 9: POLICY DEVELOPMENT OF ABORIGINAL MEDIA

[41]Official policy developments	Indigenous broadcasting developments
Phase One Pre-broadcasting: an early interest in the media	
1970s Community broadcasting licences allowed some urban and regional Aboriginal broadcasting.	**1975** urban Aboriginal broadcasting commences on community radio. Remote area video experiments.
1977 Australian Broadcasting Tribunal established. Aboriginal Organisations and Councils permitted Land Rights legislation.	**Late 1970s** use of CB radio and local newsletters.
	Early 1980s few remote Aboriginal communities receive television services via Intelsat.
	1980 CAAMA formed and begins broadcasting and producing video and audio tapes. NAC Calls for Aboriginal broadcasting policy.
1984 'Out of the Silent Land'report tabled.	**1982** remote community video experiments at Ernabella and Yuendemu.
Phase Two Broadcasting: CAAMA, BRACS and Imparja television	
1985 launch of AUSSAT. Remote Commercial Television service hearings begin by ABT.	**1985** 8KIN receives licence. CAAMA bids for RCTS.
1987 ABC establishes Aboriginal Programs Unit.	
1988 BRACS roll out brings broadcast TV and radio to 80 remote Aboriginal communities and allows them to produce their own programs.	**1988** CAAMA/Imparja wins TV licence.
1989 Updated policy paper remains unpublished. **1990** ATSIC formed.	
1992 new policy paper circulated for comment by ATSIC **Broadcasting Services Act** recognised indigenous broadcasting only as a sub-component of community broadcasting. **ABT** replaced by self-regulation and Australian Broadcasting Authority.	**1992** Tanami Network online service commenced. National Indigenous Media and National Indigenous Radio Service established.
Phase Three: Current and future developments - digital broadcasting and on-line services.	
1993 BRACS revitalisation. Government endorses National Indigenous Media Association role to provide policy and funding advice to Government.	
1999 Indigenous Communications Australia proposed by ATSIC. Digital broadcasting policy released Productivity Commission inquiry into Broadcasting.	**1999** BRACS operators propose a national Television Service.

As we can see from the right hand column of the table above, at the early stages much of

the driving force for indigenous media development came from the community.

Community broadcasting was established in urban areas, local narrowcasting services

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[41] Source: Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australian 1994, Dixon 1980, Reynolds 1981, Michaels 1986, ATSIC 1999a; 1999b.

were developed in remote areas, CAAMA commenced and there was a call as early as 1980 for a policy from the National Aboriginal Council. The official policy developments during this period were not specifically related to broadcasting. They were the establishment of legislation permitting the establishment of Aboriginal organisations and councils, which allowed for organisations such as land councils, CAAMA and Warlpiri Media Association to be established, and land rights, which enabled the development of self determination. Also the establishment of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal was later going to influence the licensing of the Remote Commercial Television Service. On the whole, policy was being driven by technology, innovations were occurring at the community level and the policy makers hurried to catch up with a hasty four-month review in 1984 which resulted in the 'Out of the Silent Land' report.

By the second phase, Aboriginal broadcasters were still driving the policy and official policy makers were trying to catch up. Imparja had been successful in obtaining the RCTS licence for the central zone, with support from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs being added to the original application. The BRACS roll out was carried out in response to the original experiments at Yuendemu and Ernabella but was developed as a 'one size fits all' manner that was not appropriate for the communities. The opportune timing of the Bicentenary allowed both BRACS broadcasters and Imparja to obtain funding. Policy lagged in the late 1980s with no agreement being achieved between the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Communications on a policy review.

The replacement of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs with ATSIC in 1990 saw a revival of policy development. ATSIC, with its elected representatives, seemed to be more in touch with indigenous needs and a formal evaluation of the BRACS system and new policy was developed. It is from this stage onwards, as we can see from the move from the right hand column to the left hand one, that centralised policy development begins in earnest. The new policy recommended improved training, established the BRACS Revitalisation Strategy and endorsed the establishment of NIMAA, as a nationally representative body that could advise ATSIC on indigenous media issues. ATSIC (1993,17) also expressed concern that there would be no redress for programming on mainstream media with the replacement of ABT with a self-regulatory system.

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Despite a more centralised policy process, innovations such as the Tanami Network and suggestions for a national television network are still being driven from the community. The difference, today, being that ATSIC and NIMAA are available to provide support and negotiate funding for the good ideas generated in the communities. This appears to be a more appropriate role than the imposing policy from the top down model of the former Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

There is a strong argument that successful policy development can only be achieved with meaningful input from the community, whether the community is indigenous or non-indigenous. Michaels (1986, 117) supported a bottom up approach to policy development rather than it being imposed from the top down. He was also against pan-Aboriginal models which he saw as a colonial construct and was very much against elected bodies and Aboriginal bureaucrats, whom he saw as 'Uncle Toms' who were trying to break down traditional culture. While there has been considerable criticism of ATSIC and its failure to achieve improvements in health, education and employment, it was only with the establishment of ATSIC, and NIMAA as its advisory body, that Aboriginal broadcasting policy progressed in a manner that met, rather than guessed at, community needs. A similar progress in broadcasting policy can be seen in Canada after the establishment of the Inuit Tapirisat as an elected body in 1971. The meandering fortunes of Maori broadcasting in New Zealand could be linked to the fact that their elected representatives hold Maori seats in the main Parliament, rather than in a separate body. Their broadcasting, especially the establishment of a Maori television service, has been caught up in the recent complexity of mainstream politics resulting from New Zealand's new electoral system.

Policy cannot be considered in a vacuum, it has to be placed in a political context of the Government of the day. Suprisingly, many of the legislative benefits for Aboriginal people, such as the 1967 referendum and the 1976 Aboriginal Land Rights Act, occurred during the period of conservative Governments. The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, which assisted Aboriginal broadcasting through its licensing processes, was established under a conservative Government and abolished under a Labor one. One consistency, however, has been the total lack of support, in policy making or finances, from the Northern Territory Government for Aboriginal broadcasting. In fact the Northern

Territory Government actively opposed the licensing of Imparja. Even a recent submission from the Northern Territory Government, to the Productivity Commission (Northern Territory. Office of Communications, Science and Advanced Technology 1999, 5-8) barely mentions Aboriginal needs, apart from recognising that there needs to be planning for remote communities generally for terrestrial digital television and that the BRACS systems may need to be replaced by direct-to-home services.

Scope for further research

A comparison between health and media policies

Another question raised by this research is why indigenous media development has been more successful than the introduction of effective indigenous health policies. While there have been some successes in indigenous health for example between 1985 and 1992 rates of cardiovascular disease in Aboriginal men has declined by 19% and infant mortality has declined from 20 times higher than that of the mainstream community to three times the rate. (Australia. Department of Health and Family Services nd,1) In general, however, life expectancy is still 17 years less than non-indigenous Australians and there are high rates of long term health problems such as asthma and diabetes (Deeble 1998,vii; McLennan and Madden 1999, 4-6). Much of the ill health is due to the lack of 'health hardware' such as poor water, sanitation, sewerage, housing and lack of electricity (Torzillo and Kerr 1997, 337-8) as well as general levels of poverty (Australia. Department of Health and Family services nd, 2.) Poor indigenous health has always been the focus of the media and often a visit by a politician to a remote community or a media exposé would generate suitable outrage.

The National Aboriginal Health Strategy was issued in 1989. This document recognised the importance of placing health policy within the context of culture and that the community had to accept the policy which must be culturally appropriate. (National Aboriginal Health Working Party 1989, vi-xxxv.) An evaluation of this review by ATSIC in 1994 found no evidence that this strategy was ever implemented, possibly due to lack of funding by State, Territory and Federal governments. ATSIC did reiterate its support for the Strategy. (ATSIC 1994, 1-5.) There had been successes in locally designed health systems. One of these was by the Pitjantjatjara who had established the Nganampa Health

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Council in 1983. The Nganampa Health Council conducted a review using local fieldworkers and recognising the time it would take and that they had to allow for ceremonial obligations. There had been a long history of unsuccessful design of ablution blocks so the Council developed ones that were culturally appropriate and could be cared for by a group of people. For example an ablution block was added to the local craft centre where people went daily and washing machines were housed next to the community clinic. (Torzillo and Kerr 1997, 339-44.)

There are currently 60 Aboriginal Health Services and they have been supporters of culturally aware health services (National Health and Medical Research Council 1996, 13). The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation was established in the early 1990s and has lobbied for improvements such as better access to pharmaceuticals for remote and regional Aborigines (Hunter 1999,11-12.) The lack of success in indigenous health improvements may be due to the fact that, while there are 1300 indigenous health workers (Australia. Department of Health and Aged Care, nd), there are very few indigenous doctors. Therefore doctors are highly likely to be non-indigenous and possibly in a position of power rather than under the control of the local Aboriginal council.

None of the recent policy documents recommend improved use of indigenous media. The Warlpiri and Pitjantjatjara video and radio material produced with health messages appears to have had a major impact in informing the community, especially those who are older and may never be fluent in English let alone literate. While the present Government is focussing on core issues such as Aboriginal health and literacy, rather than broadcasting, it should look at savings in health that could be achieved through using indigenous media as an educational medium. There has been considerable success in the Pacific in improving health education through radio (Molnar 1999a).

There is considerable scope for further research in this area to compare the successes in the uptake of modern communication technology compared with uptake of modern health practices.

Indigenous media in non-remote areas

Much of the research on indigenous media has focussed on remote areas and a neglected area of indigenous media research is still urban and even regional Australia. This remote focus is possibly an outcome of anthropological research in 'traditional' Aboriginal communities including the need to preserve language and culture. Whereas Aboriginal people are a larger proportion of the overall population in northern and central Australia, three quarters of the indigenous population actually live in urban areas, (McLennan and Madden 1999,14-15.)

The communication needs of the majority of indigenous people living in urban and regional Australia is an area of study that needs to be examined further. Especially as links are slowly being restored for the stolen generations of indigenous people taken from their communities. Media could play an important role in rebuilding some knowledge of lost culture. The proposed national Indigenous Communications Australia service could have a major impact on urban and regional indigenous people in improving communication between groups and particularly in creating understanding about indigenous Australians by non-indigenous Australians. Research into any improvements in understanding as result of such a service could prove interesting results.

The future of indigenous broadcasting

From their simple beginning with domestic quality video cameras and cassette recorders, today the Warlpiri at Yuendemu are at the hub of a local media service that links them to six of their local communities. In turn, the Warlpiri Media Association is linked with eight other Aboriginal media associations through CAAMA and Imparja. Each of these other media associations is also linked to other local communities, usually along mutually understandable language lines, restoring the communication channels or dreaming tracks lost through colonisation. The traditional communication lines have been expanded as each regional group links nationally through the National Indigenous Media Association and there are further linked with other indigenous media groups in Canada, the USA, the Pacific and New Zealand.

Throughout this period, Federal Government policy, while often well meaning, has not always benefited the Warlpiri. In general, achievements have been made when driven from the bottom up from the community at Yuendemu. The Warlpiri have actively used European 'gatekeepers' to lobby to progress their broadcasting needs. Improvements have occurred since the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in 1990 which is better placed through its representatives to listen to community needs. Policy developments that were not directly aimed at Aboriginal broadcasting policy, such as the support of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act in 1976 and the Community Development Employment Scheme, have often contributed more to the development of Aboriginal broadcasting than has intentional policy.

Indigenous broadcasting in Australia, New Zealand and Canada does remain vulnerable due to lack of funding. In fact much of its success has been due to the variety of sources that funding has come from. The national broadcaster Indigenous Communications Australia, recently proposed by the National Indigenous Media Association, would recognise the important role of indigenous media in Australia. However, it may also be a risk if it is the sole source of funding which can easily be turned off at depending on the whim of the Federal Government of the day.

The Warlpiri has actively adapted electronic technology because it is to their advantage. It has preserved language and culture; it has restored and possibly improved traditional communications; it appeals to all age groups, especially the elders who have retained control over broadcasts; it provides employment and has possibilities for earning income and, as the rest of Australia, it provides entertainment.

The future of indigenous broadcasting, and in particular the Warlpiri Media Association, is more difficult to predict. Under the current Government it is unlikely to receive further funding for cultural purposes alone (Hill 1999). However its role in health promotion could be a strong selling point.

Indigenous broadcasting is not a linear evolutionary model from oral tradition to print to electronic media. Rather, Aboriginal communities have adapted the new technology into

their traditional practices to re-establish some of their traditional communications or songlines and to establish a link with non-Aboriginal Australia. As Jim Remedio (1996, 109), Chairperson of the National Indigenous Media Association, pointed out:

> 'Most important, is to provide the medium for the messenger, to pass on the voice of our people in our stories, in our songs, our images, now that technology has caught up with our voice. This is something to remember; technology has finally caught up with what we've been saying all these years and it has enabled our story to be heard across the land, around our nation, all over the world. Until now our voices have been unheard in the wilderness and no-one was listening.'

APPENDIX 1: Questions covered in unstructured interviews

Q1. How would you describe yourself or your organisation?

Q2. Can you describe what you or your organisation does?

Q3. In your opinion has Aboriginal broadcasting been a success? If so why or if not why not?

Q4. In your view has broadcasting affected traditional culture?

Q5. Are men and women equally involved in Aboriginal broadcasting?

Q6. What links do you have with other organisations and what are they?

APPENDIX 2: Brief biographical details on interviewees

Ashby, Chris   **1999**   **Personal interview 4/5/99. Co-ordinator PY Media, Umuwa, SA.**

Chris Ashby is co-ordinator of PY Media, the video component of BRACS at Umuwa in South Australia. He has a background as an illustrator, photographer and commercial video maker in the UK and in Australia.

Batty, Philip   **1999**   **Telephone interview 15/3/99 Co-founder of CAAMA.**

Philip Batty was the 'white half' of the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association in 1979. He worked with John Macumba until 1991 and then with Freda Glynn. He is currently completing a PhD on Aboriginal Broadcasting at the University of South Australia. He is particularly interested in how it grew out of Government concerns, the relationships between himself as a whitefella and the Aboriginal communities, and cultural studies.

Deger, Jennifer   **1999**   **Personal interview 8/3/99. Sydney.**

Deger has been a working journalist for the ABC and has worked on the television program 'Towards 2000'. Her first degree is in journalism but she has now moved to anthropology as a discipline. She is currently completing a PhD on BRACS at Macquarie University. She has worked as a BRACS co-ordinator at Gapiwiyak 200 km west of Gove in the Northern Territory. She did her fieldwork there for two years after travelling around Australia to find a suitable site to study BRACS and Aboriginal Broadcasting. She has been to Ernabella and Yuendemu.

Harris, Greg   **1999**   **Personal Interview 20/12/99 Canberra**

Greg Harris is the Assistant Manager Broadcasting, Languages and Culture Program ATSIC. He divides his time between Broadcasting policy and Homelands policy at ATSIC.

Henna, George   **1999**   **Telephone Interview 29/4/99. Alice Springs**

George Henna is the BRACS Co-ordinator for CAAMA and has skills both in radio and video production. He spends a lot of time in the communities training BRACS operators.

Hill, Lisa   **1999**   **Telephone interview 1/4/99. Canberra**

Lisa Hill worked in the AIATSIS Broadcasting Policy Unit.

Hinkson, Melinda   **1999**   **Personal interviews. 23/2/99. Melbourne. 5/8/99 Canberra**

Melinda Hinkson is an anthropologist who recently completed her PhD thesis at Latrobe University on the Tanami Network, a video conferencing and Internet network established by the Warlpiri Media Association. She worked at Yuendemu from 1995 to 1997, including a period with the WMA establishing a CD-ROM project. She is currently a research fellow at AIATSIS.

Hollings, Mike   **1999**   **Personal interview. 14/10/99 Wellington.**

Mike Hollings is the Maori Chief Executive Officer of Te Mangai Paho, the Maori Broadcasting funding agency.

Huber, Lee   **1998**   **Personal interview15/5/98. Manager I&G Communications. Sydney**

Lee Huber is the manager of communications company I & G Communications that specialises in ethnic and indigenous communications.

Kantor, Tom   **1999**   **Personal Interview 28/4/99. Yuendemu.**

Tom Kantor is BRACS Manager, Warlpiri Media Association.

McFarland, Greg   **1999**   **Personal Interview.23/4/99 Alice Springs**

Greg McFarland is the human resource manager for Imparja.

Mitchell, Clint   **1999**   **Personal Interview 27/4/99. Alice Springs.**

Clint is the administrator of CAAMA/8KIN radio. He comes from Townsville where he was an ABC Aboriginal trainee. He has been with CAAMA for ten years.

Molnar, Helen   **1999**   **Personal communication 30/6/99**

Dr Helen Molnar has taught media at RMIT, specialising in radio and Aboriginal media. Together with Peter Westerway, former Secretary of the Department of Communications, she has recently completed a review of Aboriginal Broadcasting as a consultant for ATSIC. She is co-authoring a book with Michael Meadows, now at Griffith University, on Aboriginal Broadcasting. She was a community broadcaster on 3RRR.

Nelson, Dale   **1999**   **Personal interview 5/5/99. Umuwa**

Dale Nelson is one of the CDEP paid broadcasters on 5NPY at Umuwa.

O'Gallagher, Declan   **1999**   **Personal interview 27/4/99. Yuendemu .**

Declan has been commissioned by the Yuendemu school and Warlpiri Media to make a
further episode of the children's program Manyu Wana. Declan has produced the first of
the new series and is now starting on the second. He has a broadcasting and video making
background. He has been in Yuendemu about six months and spent there a year
previously.

Page, Nikki   **1999**   **Personal interview 4/5/99. Umuwa, SA.**

Nikki Page is a radio broadcaster who has now moved into training. She works for 5UV
the community radio station in Adelaide.

Peterson, Nicolas   **1998**   **Personal Interview 21/12/98.**
                                              Canberra.

Dr Nicolas Peterson is a senior anthropologist at the Australian National University who
has worked with and for the Warlpiri. He did the commentary on the original Warlpiri
Fire Ceremony film.

Pyne, Gerry   **1998**   **Personal interview 19/7/98. Brisbane.**

Gerry Pyne began broadcasting in the early 1980s at 3CC in Bendigo on community
radio and then spent eight years at 5UV in Adelaide. He has been two years with NIRS.
He is currently the Manager of the National Indigenous Radio Service in Brisbane.

Reinhart, Ronnie   **1999**   **Personal interview. 27/4/99 Yuendemu**

Ronnie Reinhart has been BRACS Co-ordinator at the Warlpiri Media Association since
1998. He is a graduate of the Film and Television School at Swinbourne. He worked on
commercial productions, video clips and advertisements before joining WMA.

Stotz, Gertrude   **1999**   **Personal interview 5/5/99. Umuwa.**

Gertrude Stotz is employed as an anthropologist by the Pitjantjatjara Council.Her
doctoral thesis on the use of Toyotas by the Warlpiri is about to be published in an
anthology on the anthropology of the motor car.

Wyatt, Evan   **1999**   **Personal interview 8/3/99. Sydney**

Evan Wyatt was President of 6NEW, community radio at Mount Newman WA, in the
late 1970s early 1980s. He has set up BRACS systems in many remote areas including
the Kimberley, Central Australia and Ernabella. He has worked as a technician and while
working for TEABBA developed a cost effective, easily repairable BRACS unit that is
now used by TEABBA, Warlpiri Media Association and PY Media (Turner 1998, 47).

Total of 18 interviewees: 11 male, 5 female; 11 non-indigenous and 5 indigenous.

APPENDIX 3 Warlpiri Men's and Women's ritual lifecycle according to Francoise Dussart

(Dussart 1988, 88)

Event/name/age	
Female	**Male**
Pre-natal: Conception site. Acquisition of spirits.	
0 –5 Birth to end of breast feeding Called by personal European name or *warungka* meaning unthoughtful/mad or not yet articulate	
5 - 12 Children are given an Aboriginal name Girl's initiation. Growth and children's health rituals. *kamina* (girl)	**5 - 12** Children are given an Aboriginal name Participation in men's Purlapa ceremonies. Growth and children's health rituals. *wirraya* (boy)
12- 15 Participants in certain joint and *yawulyu* ceremonies. *mardukuja* (woman after onset of menstruation)	**12 - 15** Circumcision Circumcised youth (Warlpiri term cannot be used by women)
15- 30 Marriage Motherhood Participants in certain joint and *yawulya* ceremonies *mardukuja* (woman after onset of menstruation) *karnta* (wife with one or several children)	**15 - 17** Initiation *mariliyarra* (youth who participates in *kankarlu* and *kajirri* ceremonies) **17-20** Subincision participation in men's and certain joint rituals *wati* (man) *yampirri-wangu* (unmarried youth)
30 -35 First circumcised son. Yawulya ceremonies and joint rituals *rduju* (woman)	**20 - 35** Marriage, fatherhood Men's and joint rituals *yupukarra* (married man)
35 - 50 + Subincised son Menopause, widowhood, remarriage. Most active participation in ritual life *muturna* (older woman)	**35 - 50 +** Most active participation in ritual life *ngarra* or *purlka* (grey haired men)
70+ Older people becoming senile called *warungka* and considered as close to death and close to the acquisition of status of ancestor.	
Death Funeral ceremonies and post funeral ceremony. Acquisition of the status of ancestral being.	

Francoise Dussart (1988) worked as an anthropologist at Yuendemu in 1983 studying women's ceremonies. She found that ritual life was still active and that men and women gained status and knowledge with age as they passed through traditional ceremonies or life happenings such as birth or menopause. As is shown in Dussart's chart above, boys were circumcised between 12 and 13 years old. Women married between 15 and 18 and men between 18 and 22. Not all women were automatically included in ceremonial life as

they had to show an interest and, at first, young women were given only menial tasks. The circumcision of a woman's first son (or a sister's son if she had none) gave her status as she moved from the role of a child nurturer towards one of ritual life. After menopause, women enjoyed a social and ritual power as important as their male counterparts. Men were most active in ritual life between 35 and 50. After the age of 70 men and women were classified as 'warungka' or babies as the cycle returns to their origins. At this stage their younger siblings took over their songs and ceremonies and the older person gradually lost authority. When a person died their spirit returned to the ancestral powers. Warlpiri people considered the transmission of ritual in terms of a flow from older members of a descent group to their younger relatives but it could also be exchanged across a group. For example middle-aged women taught their brother's daughters. They could also exchange knowledge with other women or could also acquire knowledge through breaches of secrecy. (Dussart 1988,57-118.)

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