Contents

Acknowledgements vi
Introduction viii

Chapter 1 Understanding alternative and ‘independent’ journalism 1
Chapter 2 Defining moments in the history of alternative journalism 22
Chapter 3 Finding the basis for alternative and independent journalism 56
Chapter 4 Looking for answers: How alternative media journalists engage their audiences 73
Chapter 5 Connecting with democracy: The ‘new’ alternative media 95
Chapter 6 Throwing out the bathwater (but not the baby): Objectivity, ‘professionalism’ and the economics of alternative journalism 111
Chapter 7 The global policy environment for alternative and community media forms 141
Chapter 8 Concluding thoughts: The nature of alternative journalism 165

Appendices 177
References 188
Index 207
Chapter 1

Understanding alternative and ‘independent’ journalism

The impetus for this book came from years of practising, thinking and writing about the unique characteristics and motivations of people who work in the non-mainstream media. These thoughts gained some context after a simple comment by the former editor of an independent political news magazine, *The Monthly* produced in Melbourne, Australia. Sally Warhaft left her position as editor of the increasingly successful progressive publication, featuring quality longer-form journalism, in controversial circumstances in mid 2009. In attempting to discover why *The Monthly* considered itself ‘independent’, I had asked Warhaft how she felt *The Monthly* did journalism differently. She answered that the publisher, Morry Schwartz of Black Inc, had made a deliberate decision *not* to employ a trained journalist as the editor in an effort to elicit a different way of thinking about the publication’s content (Warhaft, 2006). While she indicated Schwartz had respect for ‘good journalists’, Warhaft’s background as a lecturer in politics, and as an anthropologist working in the slums of Mumbai in India had placed her in the realm of someone involved in, and interested in, political and social issues but without the journalistic training which might provide more predictable editorial outcomes (Warhaft, 2006). She intimated that a trained journalist would consistently frame the
news, and discussions of current news events and social issues, in a fairly conventional way which was not the type of journalism and writing *The Monthly* was interested in. This suggested that perhaps what alternative – and I interchange the word ‘independent’ with alternative throughout this work – journalists do is not merely a reaction to the mainstream, but in some cases takes very little account of mainstream journalistic practices and values. It is not necessarily a product of its current context, but a considered and *instinctive* set of practices, carried on in various ways for around 150 years and which now, in the internet age, have come to the fore as genuine alternatives to the highly flawed professional norms of mainstream journalism.

I am more than aware that many in our broader journalism and media studies research disciplines are sceptical about the journalistic value of alternative and independent media outlets, primarily based on concerns about their marginal audiences; their sometime subjectivity and, apparently by implication, their lack of ‘professionalism’ (Schudson, 1978; Hampton, 2008). This book seeks to put that scepticism to rest, premised on an argument that alternative forms of journalism have been around as long as – nay, longer than – conventional journalistic practices. While the advent of the internet with all its empowering, democratic potential is a significant moment in the development of alternative journalism, it is primarily another outlet, another way for alternative journalists to organize and to impart their message. It does not change their motivations, their values, and their determination which is really what defines alternative journalism and journalists. These are all investigated in further detail throughout this work.

I have fallen back to the use of the term ‘alternative journalism’ in part due to its increasingly widespread use (Atton and Hamilton, 2008) but also because ‘alternative’ seems to be the only term which can encompass all the different media we refer to – community, grassroots, radical, citizens and independent. All these terms are a little too specific for what I want to consider in this book. ‘Radical’, for example, does not necessarily include localized, participatory ‘community’ media which are often quite moderate in their political viewpoints. ‘Grassroots’ and ‘community’ do not necessarily include the professional, independently-owned opinion publications which provide fresh and innovative perspectives on public sphere debates and which are free of any obvious
Understanding alternative and ‘independent’ journalism

political and commercial ties. So alternative, I feel, and occasionally ‘independent or alternative’, encompasses all. These terms also include far more than this book attempts to consider, though, so it is important to establish boundaries. I hope one of the contributions of this work will be to give a firmer, albeit still blurry, perimeter for the understandings and theorizing of alternative journalism as at the moment, our conceptions of ‘anything that occurs outside the mainstream news media’ (Hirst, 2009: 2) are simply too broad to be meaningful. Note the following discussion is limited to defining ‘alternative and independent journalism’ and not their media which, again, encompasses a far broader scope.

Considering alternatives

The increasing attention given to alternative media and journalism is, to a great extent, married to the rising chorus of voices critiquing mainstream media news practices, and which naturally extends to concerns about the future of robust democracy. Atton and Couldry argue the crises in Western democratic systems with decreasing voter turnouts, the growth in the global social justice movement and other worldwide trends are making the work of alternative media outlets more relevant than ever before to the agendas of media and communications research (2003: 579). Deuze finds that alternative news outlets produced specifically for ethnic community groups – particularly print outlets – are experiencing ‘exponential growth’ in the United States and in European countries such as The Netherlands (2006: 262–63). And Deuze does not accept that the development of this media is due to the growth of such ethnic populations in Western democracies such as the United States. Rather it is consistent with the ‘worldwide emergence of all kinds of community, alternative, oppositional, participatory and collaborative media practices’ (Deuze, 2006: 263). Scholars writing in this field consistently define what it is they mean by the range of terms used for all the non-mainstream media and forms of journalism that are emerging and receiving so much scholarly, and public, attention. The term ‘community media’, according to the international professional body for community radio AMARC, and also accepted by Carpentier et al, tends to refer to non-profit media outlets which, generally, encourage the participation of their community (whether that be
a geographic community or community of interest) in developing content (Carpentier et al, 2003: 53; also AMARC, www.amarc.org). Clearly, different outlets that we might generally consider to be ‘non-mainstream’ come in many different forms – some are commercial organizations, for example, while others consider that their non-profit status defines them; some attempt to include their communities/audiences in production, while others do not; some are structured democratically or in a cooperative arrangement (Atton, 2002) while others work on fairly traditional media organizational structures (Forde, 1997a). A far more considered discussion of the nature of these organizations is provided in Carpentier et al (2003) and although they use the term ‘community’ rather than ‘alternative and independent’ as it is applied here, their recognition that the organizations under discussion stand outside the mainstream through their attempt to offer ‘an alternative for a wide range of hegemonic discourses on communications, media, economics...’ (2003: 51) suggests their discussions are entirely relevant to definitions of alternative, independent and radical media outlets as well as community media outlets. Indeed, these terms very frequently overlap. In his later work with co-authors Bailey and Cammaerts, Carpentier helps identify that the existing framing of alternative media rests on an ‘unsustainable set of distinctions, such as that between non-commercial and commercial or radical and non-radical alternative media’ (Bailey et al, 2008: xii). In line with Rodriguez’s approach to processes as a means to define or distinguish alternative media (2010), Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier suggest the identity of alternative media, and by extension its content, ‘should be articulated as relational and contingent on the particularities of the contexts of production, distribution, and consumption’ (2008: xii). In essence, there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ definition and indeed, their work suggests a broadening of the definition of alternative media to include a wide spectrum or a range of media ‘generally working to democratize information/communication’ (2008: xi). Rodriguez takes this further, stressing that Colombian community radio initiatives in conflict zones (2010: 150–51, original emphasis included):

...are not communication discourses about mediation and conflict resolution; rather, they are communication spaces to be used to mediate and interact (Rodriguez, 2004). The stations are not sending messages
to the community about how to solve conflict in nonviolent ways. Instead, the stations themselves are mediating conflicts...

Stein’s study conducted under the auspices of John Downing’s work on radical media and social movements (2001) found public access television in the United States had facilitated a space for grassroots political communication, but ‘a restructuring of access television resources would further strengthen the democratic potential of the medium’ (2001: 300). We can only assume from Stein’s conclusions that, in 2001 at least, public access television in the US was not providing the space for alternative journalists that was originally envisioned – i.e. ‘a public space where, liberated from the economic and editorial constraints of commercial television production, citizens could air their views over the most powerful and pervasive communications media of the era’ (2001: 299).

Downing points out that it is unhelpful to simply provide a binary definition of radical media, i.e. mainstream and alternative media, as it fails to recognize the complexity of the spectrum of media that exists both within a ‘mainstream commercial’ context, and within the alternative context. Certainly, if there are two separate spheres of media that do not and cannot intersect, ‘that position would discount any movement toward democratizing large-scale commercial media, which would let them off the hook much too easily...It would downplay the uses that oppositional movements and groups may sometimes be able to make of mainstream media. It would also flatten out the very considerable variety of radical media’ (Downing, 2001: ix). He offers ten defining points of the radical media (v–xi) as part of the introductory comments to his important 2001 study, but it is the concluding sections of his work which perhaps best encapsulate what radical media – and by implication, radical alternative journalists – offer. He brings his analysis into a ‘hexagon’ of recurring themes in radical media, notably artistic flair, memory levels, pragmatic realities, social movements, time frame and the power structure. Without examining each of these, we can summarize that Downing sees radical media as something much more than their content, or their processes: they create memories of past movements (‘memory levels’); provide sparks (‘artistic flair’); share organizational and financial struggles (‘pragmatic realities’), are something much more than a group of 1960s counter-culture media initiatives (‘time frame’);
and share a common view of established power as an obstacle, and a target (‘power structure’) (2001: 389–91). Essentially, his view of radical media is rooted in social movements which are ‘the life blood of these media, and they are the movements’ oxygen’ (2001: 390). Downing’s work does not attempt to cover all alternative journalists but he also certainly sees much ‘radical’ journalism, as he calls it, being produced by political activists and political movements, with political and social change as the primary purpose of such journalism (Downing, 1984; 2001). A survey of Australian alternative journalists conducted more than ten years ago confirms the importance of the way alternative journalists identify themselves with a developing definition of ‘alternative’ or ‘independent’ journalism, and also found that journalists working for a range of alternative and independent print media in 1996–97 often identified their journalism as an extension of what they otherwise were: an activist; a community aid worker; an Aboriginal person representing their community; a freelance ‘writer’ and so on (Forde, 1997a; 1997b).

Social and political movement media form a part, but only a sub-section, of the group that Atton and Hamilton (2008) refer to as ‘alternative journalists’. Atton and Hamilton not only attempt to define the key term but also offer important frameworks for thinking about alternative journalism. Among the many points that their work makes, a common theme is the conceptualization of alternative journalism as ‘amateur’ (Atton, 2002; Atton and Hamilton, 2008; Atton, 2009). ‘[Alternative journalism] is produced by those outside mainstream media organizations. Amateur media producers typically have little or no training or professional qualifications as journalists; they write and report from their position as citizens; as members of communities; as activists, as fans’ (2009: 265). Much of the scholarship around ‘community’ media forms follows this (for many parts of the sector, quite accurate) identification of amateur production, of the non-professional nature of the medium and the journalism it produces (Jankowski, 2003; Lewis, 1976). Atton’s definitions extend to what he terms ‘cultural journalism’, exhibited in fanzines and alternative journalism produced by individuals rather than collectives through blogging but the common theme is the ‘ordinary people’ involved in the production of this alternative journalism (2009: 268).
Hirst, in his critique of Atton and Hamilton’s offering, suggests alternative journalism can perhaps simply be identified as occurring outside the boundaries of ‘acceptable’ topics:

The news media revolves around what Daniel Hallin (1989) calls the spheres of consensus and limited controversy – debate is limited to acceptable topics and boundaries, beyond which lies deviance (and perhaps alternative journalism) (Hirst, 2009).

In order to take a step beyond how the journalists might be superficially labelled (i.e. as a journalist, an activist, an aid worker etc), we should consider their practices in more detail. The journalism of alternative media, Atton and Hamilton suggest, is primarily informed by a ‘critique’ of the dominant practices of journalism. That is:

Its critique emphasizes alternatives to, *inter alia*, conventions of news sources and representation; the inverted pyramid of news texts; the hierarchical and capitalised economy of commercial journalism; the professional, elite basis of journalism as a practice; the professional norm of objectivity; and the subordinate role of audience as receiver (2008: 1).

Such a definition accounts for not only the work of scholars on community, participatory and citizens’ media (Rodriguez, 2001; Howley, 2005; Meadows et al, 2007; Gordon, 2009; Deuze, 2006; Gillmor, 2006; Harcup, 2003) but also the political economy work of those examining the cooperative editorial structure of alternative media organizations (Atton, 2003; Collins and Rose, 2004) and the commercial imperatives of the mainstream (Hamilton, 2004; McChesney, 2003; 2008). Atton and Hamilton’s words also point to the (to date, fairly limited) research so far about the breakdown of the audience-producer barrier in different forms of grassroots, community and alternative media (Forde, Foxwell and Meadows, 2009; Lewis, 2008; Howley, 2005; Tacchi and Kiran, 2008). So this understanding of alternative journalism as a form which proposes a range of anti-mainstream practices and structures is incredibly useful and sufficiently broad to capture much of the activity of alternative journalists. Significantly, Atton and Hamilton’s work recognizes
the development of alternative journalism over time and indeed its longevity as a form.

The key insight of this overview is that alternative journalism is not an unchanging, universal type of journalism, but is an ever-changing effort to respond critically to dominant conceptions of journalism. Accordingly, alternative journalism is best seen as a kind of activity instead of as a specific, definitive kind of news story, publication or mode of organization. What alternative journalism is at any given moment depends entirely on what it is responding to (2008: 9).

His suggestion, however, that alternative journalism is an evolving ‘type’ or concept which is reacting to the times in which it exists – i.e. its form depends ‘entirely’ on what it is responding to – suggests something which Rodriguez specifically challenges. She argues, simply, that alternative media forms, what she calls ‘citizens’ media’, need to be defined by what they are, not by what they are not (Rodriguez, 2001); and says that the terms ‘community media, alternative media, autonomous media and radical media all fit within the broad definition of “citizens” media’ (Rodriguez, 2010: 132). Rodriguez overwhelmingly focuses on the processes of participation, organization, and connection between people as the key defining characteristic of citizens’ media, and does not really address ‘what it is responding to’. Rather it is a consideration of the mediations that occur rather than the media itself (2003: 190). This disparity perhaps highlights more than anything the undeniable diversity in the field we are engaged with.

Scholarship in the field of alternative, independent and grassroots media then clearly recognizes, appropriately, that the field is broad and diverse, and difficult to accurately define. But the assessment that alternative journalism is constantly ‘responding’ to something else is somewhat unsatisfying. It suggests a lack of strength and conviction about the task at hand, and perhaps rejects the notion that alternative journalism, over time, and despite technological changes has always demonstrated a core set of features and practices. This issue is particularly examined in the next chapter, which looks at the history and development of alternative journalism, but is a constant theme throughout. If we are to evaluate the potential for independent and alternative journalism practices to be integrated into both mainstream practice and into the way budding journalists are trained, we must be able to identify key
consistencies and traits. Practitioners are able to offer an important perspective here.

How do practitioners see ‘alternative journalism’?

The preceding sections suggest that a number of ‘ways of seeing’ the sector have developed among different theorists of alternative media and alternative journalism, particularly when examining what it is the sector is really doing, and aiming to do. Practitioners from the sector have a fresher, and a somewhat more grounded idea of the work of independent journalists. Some of it, however, is critical of the shape and operations of the sector. Australian freelance journalist Margaret Simons, who has worked for both mainstream and alternative media outlets, certainly does not idealize the modus operandi of many alternative publications. She wrote in 2005 that Crikey (crikey.com.au), the successful alternative online newspaper which provides daily e-newsletters to its subscribers and which had clear inside links to all major and progressive political parties, was influential but somewhat haphazard in its content and operation:

Mayne [Stephen Mayne, the former conservative Liberal Party staffer who founded Crikey] is fond of referring to his ‘Crikey army’, to whom he often appeals for leads. But none of the independent internet outlets pay their contributors anything like industry standard rates, and most pay nothing... So far independent internet journalism mostly depends on a mixture of philanthropy and idealism or, as Graham Young, editor of the not-for-profit Online Opinion puts it, ‘drudgery and despair’ (Simons, 2005).

Simons, who is now the regular media commentator for Crikey and appears as a source later in this work, goes on to describe the publication more fully, writing at the time when original founder Stephen Mayne sold the independent online news site to Eric Beecher’s left-of-centre media stable. She found that, like most alternative media, Crikey was ‘asking questions nobody else was asking’ and that at times the publication had been ‘scrappy, inconsistent and often sneered at by the more polished journalistic professionals’. Nevertheless, she wrote, ‘it has been more influential than most would admit’ (Simons, 2005). Independent press colleagues in New Zealand who ran a successful alternative newspaper for eight years, the Wellington City Voice, drew on their own
motivations as a way of defining their practices, and this is a useful tool. If we can understand what motivates independent and alternative journalists, it provides important pointers to what they might actually be doing, or aiming to do, in the field. It also has synergies with Rodriguez’s focus on process over content, unlike Simons’ considerations above which are wholly focused on the journalistic output. Collins and Rose reported that they aimed to produce a different kind of newspaper which ‘tried with public journalism to empower people to understand issues and to actually do something about them’. Their journalistic processes were focused on accessing non-elite sources: ‘if we were writing about schools, we aimed to interview the students; if the subject was prisons, we would interview the prisoners; if it was drugs, we would interview the drug addicts’ (2004: 34).

Indeed, more independent press journalists reported in the 1990s that they undertook their duties for the higher ideals of autonomy, the chance to help people, and editorial freedom rather than the superficial concerns expressed by mainstream journalists such as the pay, fringe benefits, the chance to ‘get ahead’ and job security (Henningham, 1996: 211; Forde, 1997b). Furthermore, they are more committed to the active public and ‘citizens’ form of their craft, reflected in Collins and Rose’s comments about public journalism, in that Australian independent news journalists nominate ‘providing context to the news’, ‘motivating the public’ and ‘giving a voice to the voiceless’ as their primary journalistic aims (Forde, 1997a: 118). Independent and alternative news publications practise a journalism that is based on strong notions of social responsibility (Atton, 2003: 267) and their journalists generally demonstrate stronger commitment to the idealistic norms of journalism than their mainstream counterparts (Forde, 1997b; 2010). Indeed, if we consider the aims of publications such as The Monthly (Warhaft, 2006) and the Australian-based but global online alternative publication Eureka Street (Cranitch, 2006), they describe their journalism in a way that is entirely consistent with Jankowski’s definition of ‘community’ media, focusing on providing news and information relevant to the needs of the community members; ‘to engage these members in public discussion, and to contribute to their social and political empowerment’ (Jankowski, 2003: 4). Their practices and motivations also have much in common with the notion of ‘public journalism’ and I wish...
to consider this now in a further attempt to clarify the essential nature of alternative journalism.

Public journalism, the public sphere and alternative journalists

In my original study of the practices and motivations of Australian alternative press journalists in the 1990s, I found the then emerging concept of public journalism to be a particularly useful way to describe the activities of the journalists I surveyed and interviewed. Since the early 2000s, however, public journalism has been torn down as a preferred *modus operandi* for contemporary journalists as experience has shown that it cannot work as its proponents had hoped in the commercial context (Ewart, 2002; Haas, 2007). More likely, public journalism was perceived to be a fairly cynical attempt by commercial media to allow their audiences to ‘feel’ as though they were engaged and involved without providing any real opportunities for that. Additionally, mainstream practices of tapping into elite sources, ignoring ‘ordinary’ people and attempting to maintain neutrality and detachment destroyed any opportunity for public journalism to work in the mainstream context. It can, however, operate quite successfully in alternative media, and does (Forde, 1997a; 1998). The national study of community broadcasting audiences around Australia found community broadcasting journalists were regularly and successfully engaging their audiences; involving audiences; and more fully meeting audience needs to becoming part of the community they were working for (Meadows et al, 2007; 2009a; 2008), which is a key principle of public journalism. They were redefining ‘news’ as it related to their local community and often saw community announcements, talk shows and interviews with local people as ‘local news content’ which they considered a unique service of community radio (Meadows, 2008; Forde, 2010). Let’s revisit the notion of public journalism for the moment, to evaluate where it began and where it has gone in the 15 years since its early proponents boasted of its culture-changing potential.

Jay Rosen and mainstream newspaper editor Davis ‘Buzz’ Merritt worked closely together throughout the 1990s to define public journalism and to encourage United States journalists to adopt the practice as an industry standard. In general terms, public journalism calls on the media to take an active role in strengthening
citizenship, improving political debate and reviving public life (Merritt, 1995; Rosen, 1995). Indeed, public journalism saw the professional notion of objectivity as one of the primary reasons for the long-term malaise in public life (Rosen, 1995; Merritt, 1995; also Haas, 2007). Gunaratne further defines public journalism as a practice which questions the value of objectivity, standard news values, and accuses the mainstream media of failing to connect the public with participatory democracy (Gunaratne, 1996: 64). Merritt argued that journalism’s tendency to ‘merely provide information – simply telling news in a detached way’ was not helpful to public life or to journalism (Merritt, 1995: 11). He argued that journalism had neglected its obligations to provide an effective public life (1995: 5) and that newspapers had to start seeing people not as readers, customers or an audience, but ‘as a public, citizens capable of action’ (Merritt, 1995: 11). Merritt, as editor of a Knight-Ridder daily mainstream, noticed a decline in public life and the efficacy of journalism, and assumed the two were related. At the height of the public journalism movement, he argued (1995: 11):

The objective of our journalism must be to re-engage citizens in public life. To make that shift, we must take two steps; (1) Add to the definition of our job the additional objective of helping public life go well, and then (2) Develop the journalistic tools and reflexes necessary to reach that objective.

Public journalism was identified as a fundamental change to journalistic practice. Indeed, in the 1990s it was identified as a major (journalism) cultural change which would take at least ten years before its potential could be properly evaluated (Merritt, 1995: 13; Rosen, 1995: 17). That time has been and gone, and much of the current research suggests public journalism, in practice, has done little to revive public life and public debate. While my earlier studies found key aspects of public journalism were alive and well in the Australian alternative press industry, and presumably, in alternative media industries globally, it did not evolve as a practice that could be successfully transplanted to mainstream, commercial media organizations. Public journalism provides evidence, if any more was needed, that the institutional structures of the mainstream commercial media repel journalism which fosters a more (politically) active public. Despite this, it is a concept that helps us to understand what it is that alternative journalists might be doing; and what it is about
their practices that make their contribution to public life and the public sphere unique. Certainly, views from community broadcasting audiences would suggest that a form of ‘public journalism’ is being successfully carried out by community broadcasters, at least in terms of public engagement and audience ‘attachment’ to, rather than detachment from, their media (Meadows, 2008). Public journalism, on paper, has a great deal in common with the processes of the public sphere (Habermas, 1989; Rosen, 1991). Dahlgren also notes that the contemporary understanding of the public sphere relates directly to strengthening citizenship and improving political participation (1991: 1), the cornerstones of public journalism:

The public sphere is a concept which in the context of today’s society points to the issues of how and to what extent the mass media, especially in their journalistic role, can help citizens learn about the world, debate their responses to it and reach informed decisions about what course of action to adopt.

So for public journalism to be effectively practised, the media must create a forum in which people can discuss, engage and interact, and where they are empowered. Audience studies of the community broadcasting sector in Australia found this was indeed occurring in the ‘third sector’ of community media (Meadows et al, 2007); but among other factors, the audience/producer barriers which continue to exist in mainstream commercial media do not facilitate the full integration of the concepts of public journalism. Certainly, the more recent focus on citizens’ and community-oriented forms of media has usurped any significant discussion about the future of public journalism as a form (see Haas, 2007, replacing discussion of ‘public journalism’ with discussion of ‘the public’s journalism’). Dominant journalism’s commitment to the ‘neutral’ aspect of their professional norms, particularly objectivity, further prevents journalists from encouraging people to take part in political action and from motivating their audiences which is a key requirement of public journalism. It is still the case that mainstream journalists see it as their role to impart information, to give audiences as many viewpoints as they can, and to let audiences make up their own mind. The problem with this approach is that, sometimes, someone (perhaps a source) is wrong. Sometimes, a source or a political player’s viewpoints are so ill-informed and damaging that they should not be covered. But they are, because the mainstream
journalist is required to cover ‘all’ or ‘as many’ sides of the story as possible, without judgement. They increasingly fulfil the type of ‘stenographer’ role that McChesney alludes to (2003: 303). Their professional processes require them to make no comment; and to hope that the audience can read between the lines and see a faulty, misinformed source for what they are.

Public journalism called on journalists to leave this professional trait behind by engaging, attaching, participating and calling on others to participate. Mainstream journalists could not and did not do this. Alternative journalists did, and always have done. Indeed, Atton and Hamilton suggest that much of the critique of public journalism identified it as ‘patrician efforts to legitimize professionalism’ (2008: 64) which presumably, was never intended to root out the true basis of mainstream journalism but instead, to reinforce it by tinkering around the edges only. They suggest the concept fell ‘by the wayside due to historical and political-economic imperatives’ (2008: 152); and even proponents such as Haas (2007), and Haas and Steiner (2006) recognize that public journalism has a large battle on its hands in pushing against the power of economic imperatives in commercial media. Indeed, they suggest that individual commitment from journalists is one of the key requirements that will ensure public journalism’s future as a ‘journalistic reform movement’ (2006: 238; Haas, 2007: 186), but this ignores the structural forces at play which I argue render such individual commitment relatively futile. Further, research examining public journalism finds that most journalists are in agreement with the general principles of public journalism, but are more comfortable with using the public journalism practices that closely resemble standard, professional journalism (Haas, 2007: 189). This reinforces the suggestion that public journalism, while reforming on paper, has barely discernible results in practice and has had very little impact on the way journalism is done in the United States where most public journalism has occurred (Haas, 2007: 188). In terms of defining alternative journalism, then, the principles of public journalism have something to offer in terms of engagement with and involvement from community, and encouraging citizens to take motivated action on a range of local and broader national issues if necessary. Importantly, political engagement is an underlying basis. However, it does not suggest any practical solutions about the ways in which conventional, mainstream journalism might be radically reformed.
Alternative journalism and commercial motivations

Notions such as public journalism, Habermas’ concept of the public sphere, the views of practitioners, and scholarly research into alternative media suggest much about the practices of alternative journalists. Importantly, professional associations for alternative media outlets provide further perspective on how we might begin to define alternative journalism and, subsequently, to properly evaluate it. One of the key discussions to be had about alternative journalism surrounds its status as a commercial or non-commercial entity. Some definitions suggest alternative journalism must be ‘not-for-profit’, carried out by grassroots, community organizations, but this definition is far too limiting and excludes some excellent independent journalism occurring around the world which must, surely, be considered alternative journalism. An appropriate place to begin this discussion about alternative journalism and commercialism is the United States.

Sections of the US alternative media industry are well-structured and organized, with a range of representative bodies and professional associations reflecting the interests of the varied alternative print, radio, television and online organizations that are operating. The Association of Alternative Newsweeklies (AAN) is one of the longest established professional bodies for alternative publications in the United States, and has fairly clear membership guidelines which provide, to some extent, a working definition of what ‘alternative’ means to a subset of practitioners in the United States. Interestingly, it leaves out all of the niche media that authors such as Atton, Downing and Rodriguez include in their definitions, and excludes also any of the radical political media. In essence, members of the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies offer an editorial ‘alternative’ to the mainstream media in their local area, but they must do this within certain constraints. For example, AAN members must publish at least 24 times a year, which immediately excludes most publications that we would term ‘alternative’ in Australia, many of which are monthlies. They must also be general interest publications, so outlets focusing on Indigenous issues, environmental issues, ethnic communities etc are also excluded. Again, this would exclude many of the community radio stations in both the UK and Australia if the AAN definition were to be followed and certainly excludes fanzines, ezines, blogs and so on. In addition, while advocacy journalism and
journalism with opinions is encouraged in AAN members, their journalism must be ‘professional, thorough and fair’ (AAN, 2009a). They openly exclude ‘community newspapers’ although overtly encourage members to stay outside the mainstream:

By definition, alternative papers exist on the outside, and they should make an effort to stay there. What the [membership] committee likes is informed, well-researched, and well-written original reporting and reviewing with a strong point of view. Rocking the boat is a good thing, as is a healthy disrespect for authority and public-relations whitewash. Investigative reporting is a major plus. Service to the readers is key, and the mission of the alternative press is to give readers what they can’t find elsewhere (AAN, 2009a).

Somewhat ironically, however, some AAN members are part of quite significant media chains, not on the scale of major media ownership but large ownership groups. The Village Voice Media chain, for example, owns 13 alternative newsweeklies in New York, Phoenix, Denver, Dallas, Houston, Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Orange County, Minneapolis, Seattle, St. Louis and Kansas City. The Phoenix Media Communications Group owns seven AAN publications, and also publishes the official yearbooks of national basketball team the Boston Celtics, and the national ice hockey team the Boston Bruins. AAN member Metro Pulse is owned by E.W. Scripps, who also owns 14 daily and community newspapers, ten television stations and two news services. The Times Shamrock Alternative Newsweekly Group is comprised of five entertainment and dining-oriented weeklies and two radio stations while the New Mass Media Group, established in the mid 1970s in Connecticut, comprises three newspapers, which regularly run similar copy syndicated between the titles (in February 2011, for example, the Hartford Advocate and the Fairfield County Weekly were running the same front-page top story, about

online dating and STDs). Additionally, the AAN publications are unashamedly commercial, with the websites of even the smaller, more independent publications boasting the audiences they can sell to potential advertisers. The Easy Reader, for example, from Hermosa Beach has a circulation of 57,000 to residents in the South Bay area of California. On the Easy Reader website, the publication trumpets its alternative credentials (www.EasyReaderNews.com), its beginnings as an alternative, counter-culture publication founded in 1970 with an editorial policy rooted in the notion of ‘truth force’ endorsed by King, and Gandhi (Easy Reader, 2009). However, the aspects of the publication which are highlighted on the AAN Membership website emphasize the importance of marketing and commercial imperatives:

*Easy Reader* is a weekly, community newspaper serving the South Bay area of Los Angeles, one of the largest, most affluent retail markets in the country... *Easy Reader’s* monthly ‘Peninsula People’ edition reaches 25,000 homes in Palos Verdes, which has the highest per capita income of any zip code in the United States.

The strength of the paper is its aggressive news reporting. Each issue also offers an in-depth cover story, local news, and extensive entertainment listings. *Easy Reader’s* home delivery offers three times the market penetration of the *Los Angeles Times* and more than twice that of the *Daily Breeze*.

*Easy Reader’s* stitch and trim format and 4-color, electrabright cover give it a magazine quality appearance (AAN, 2009b).

The primary concern in defining the alternative newsweeklies as ‘alternative’ is not only their occasionally overwhelming commercialism, but the apparent homogeneity of the AAN publications in the United States. This is not to suggest that AAN publications constitute the entirety of the US alternative media industry – far from it, as later chapters will show. Several radical US journalists and editors interviewed for this work had never even heard of the AAN. They are, however, one of the primary representative organizations for alternative print and online publications with significant membership and audiences. Several AAN editors and representatives have contributed to this study and their views on the commercial nature of their publications are examined further in Chapter 6 where we look at funding models for alternative journalism. For now, it is sufficient to say that there exists a significant group of publications in the United States, which call themselves alternative
newsweeklies and are not associated with any of the major media ownership groups but which have, at their heart, a financial motive alongside their quite firm and overt commitment to ‘alternative’ journalism (see also Benson, 2003).

The issue of commercialism in alternative and radical journalism was raised by the editors of the Wellington (NZ) *City Voice*, with views in stark contrast to the principles of the AAN group. Collins and Rose noted that, unlike almost all other mass media in New Zealand at the time, *City Voice* did not exist primarily to make money. It aimed to earn its workers a decent living, but primarily it existed for reasons that are summed up... by the word democracy’ (2004: 32). Atton and Hamilton clarify, though, that ‘...one of the strengths of alternative journalism – and perhaps its abiding ideology – is its resistance to homogenization. This resistance derives from critiques of the political economy and ideological practices of professional journalism’ (2008: 138), suggesting a rejection of any form of commercialism within the sector. Certainly community broadcasting in Australia and the United Kingdom must be provided by non-profit organizations, which is a condition of their licensing. In some cases, they are undoubtedly producing strong alternative journalism but there can be no commercial motive tied to this, and any money that is made from sponsorships must be put straight back into the organization to better their service. Community and public broadcasters in the United States, and indeed, one of the AAN publications, the *Texas Observer*, also have not-for-profit status which enables them to draw income from foundations, granting bodies, and through donations from their readership. In contrast, independent and alternative online news sites such as *Crikey*, *Huffington Post*, *The Onion*, and *Salon.com* sell alternative journalism to their audiences, and make a profit from doing so. Commercial motives then, as they relate to alternative and independent journalism do not appear to be a defining characteristic although it can be argued that commercial imperatives probably have some impact upon the type of alternative journalism that is produced. We will return to this in Chapter 6.

**Working towards a meaningful definition**

From the mouths of practitioners and the alternative journalism sector, then, defining ‘alternative’ can be just as difficult and as broad...
as the offerings of theorists and researchers who have observed the field, often from the outside, for many years. If we consider overall the work of scholars and practitioners in the field of alternative journalism, and based on the literature and data assessed here, the main points defining alternative journalism suggest:

- It may be practised at a commercial or non-commercial publication, website or radio/TV station
- It may occur in an independently-owned or a chain-owned outlet, providing the chain-owned outlet does not belong to a ‘mainstream’ or ‘major’ media ownership group
- Coverage of news from an alternative perspective is important, but not essential as many definitions include music fanzines, blogs and niche publications which do not cover news at all
- Attachment to a political party/movement is accepted by Atton, Rodriguez, Downing, and others; but rejected by alternative media representative bodies such as the US Association of Alternative Newsweeklies; and by individual alternative media and journalists
- Those working for the alternative media outlet could be amateurs (e.g. working in small-scale community radio, or on fanzines, blogs or citizen’s media projects); or professionally trained journalists
- The news they produce may be incredibly local in nature – in the form of community service announcements, ‘what’s on’ information and so on; or it may be highly skilled investigative journalism
- It may range from a daily program or publication reaching a significant audience to an individually-produced blog or fanzine read by less than ten people.

In essence, what I am suggesting is that the definitions offered so far, across the range of theorists and practitioners, are simply too broad. If we take into account all that has been offered, ‘alternative media’ and ‘alternative journalists’ could include any type of communications which is not made by a recognized major media ownership group. Such a broad definition is not helpful and the ensuing chapters seek to offer data and perspectives which draw us closer to defining – and thereby better understanding, critiquing and theorizing – alternative journalism and its practices.
Summary

While the community, grassroots, and radical media field has experienced increasing attention from research scholars, established theories about the sector and a universally accepted way to ‘frame’ its activities are still in their early phases. This situation is exacerbated by the explosion of technology and electronic communications, much of which lays claim to being part of the ‘alternative’ forms of communication, user-generated content, citizens’ journalism and so on that has become the focus of much discussion in both research and more public fora. Ultimately, though, the definitions currently applied to the field of alternative journalism in particular are far too broad to be meaningful, and it is important that they become meaningful because this sector of our media landscape has much to offer the future shape of journalism. Significantly, our understanding of precisely what alternative journalism is and how it is practised will have direct implications for the way journalism is taught into the future. If we are to accept, as so many do, that the mainstream media is in crisis and producing thinner and weaker journalism, with little investment in investigative or quality work (McChesney, 2003; Hamilton, 2004; Anderson and Ward, 2007; Trigoboff, 2002: 12; Walley, 2002: 1, 22; Westin, 2001: 35), then we must look to the practices of alternative, independent and community media journalists who are, research indicates, producing content relevant to their audiences and relevant to the role of journalism in democracy. The last 15 years has shown us that while the concept of public journalism appeared to have much to offer, in practice it has done little except to effect minor changes in local newspapers. But alternative journalists are practising journalism in ways that are engaging audiences, including ordinary people, and creating a more active public by moving outside the definitions of professional news that we have become accustomed to consuming, and teaching in journalism education.

Challenging the News is intended to provide some input into the developing discussion about the nature of independent and alternative journalism, working to identify what lies at the heart of it. It is only when we discover this, in a specific and practical way, that we will be able to integrate it into journalism education curricula and see its impact on the dominant practices of journalism and I believe on the machinations of democracy. These issues of definition are
Understanding alternative and ‘independent’ journalism

returned to in Chapter 3, when practising alternative journalists provide definitions of their work; and their perceptions of the role of their journalism in the broader social and political milieu. First though, we return to the roots of alternative journalism and seek, through the past, to understand contemporary motivations and practices.
Index

Abbott, Tony, 104–5
Aboriginal media, see Indigenous media
activism, 82–5, 93
freelance journalists and, 82–3
see also social movements, alternative journalists
Adams, Phillip, 132
adversarial media, 168
advertising revenue
impact of, x, 25, 28, 47, 117
advocacy journalism, 15–16, 27–28, 114
African-American press, 29, 43
Albano, Terrie, 58, 62, 64, 67–8, 78, 84, 122, 180
Alternate Media Centre, 41
alternative journalism
as anti-mainstream, 7
audience engagement, 91–3
commercial aspects, 15–18
contextualizing news, 173–6
as critique of mainstream media, 7, 22, 42–3, 167–70, 175
defined, ix, 2–3, 18–21, 74–79
educational role, 59, 63–4, 168
Europe, 91, 113
illegitimacy of, 24
independence from corporate interests, 74–9
in-depth journalism, 60–3
news decisions, xvi
political basis, 43–5, 52–4
political economy, 168–73
practices, viii, ix, x, xiii–xv, 2, 10–11, 22–4
processes, 4
reactive nature, 8
role in public sphere, xvi, 113–5, 167–9, 172–3
social context, xvi, 42–3, 167
United States, 14–18, 28–31, 34–5
as ‘watcher’ over media power, 45, 61, 169
see also alternative journalists;
alternative media newsroom;
audiences; commercial imperatives; funding models;
history of alternative journalism;
mainstream journalism; news decisions
alternative journalists, 19
activism, 58, 63–4, 80, 82–5, 93
amateur, 79, 174–5
autonomy, 56
democratic participation, 64–6
as educators, 57–9, 61, 63–4
identification with social movements, 52–3
independence, 74–7
in-depth coverage, 60–1, 65, 87–90, 92
localism, 79–82, 85, 93, 123, 173–5
mobilizing audiences, 73–4, 84–5,
108, 126, 129, 168–9, 173–6
motivations, 10–11, 23, 52, 54,
66–8, 75, 94, 165–6
multi-skilling, 68
news decisions, 69–70, 73–4, 79–88
prioritization of local news, 73, 174–5
as professionals, 54, 112–8, 174–6
role, 72–4, 79, 167, 169–70, 175
scoops, 79, 85–7, 93, 175
self-definition, 57–60, 63–4, 73–4
social change role, 59, 60–7, 165–6
training, 56
views about alternative journalism,
56–73
see also alternative journalism;
mainstream journalists
alternative media newsroom, 56
cooperative editorial policy, 7, 56, 68, 70–1
democratic approach, 69–71
flexible operation, 69
organizational structures, 68–71
participatory journalism, 56
alternative newsweeklies (US), 15–19, 41–3, 62, 66, 78, 82, 88, 129
AMARC, 3–4, 156
American Forces Radio and Television service, 61
Anderson, Jim, 37
anti-conscription movement, see social movements
*Appeal to Reason, The*, 28–9
Arpaio, Joe, 88, 128
Association of Alternative Newsweeklies (AAN), 15–18, 71, 77–8, 82, 129, 137, 179
criticism of, 129
asylum seekers campaign, see social movements
*Athenaeum*, 29
audience engagement, 91–3, 174–5
audience-producer boundary, 7, 45–46, 50, 90, 155, 172–5
Australian Broadcasting Corporation, xi, 152
Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), 153
Australian Workers’ Union, 29, 35
*Avaaz.org*, 106–7, 110
Barker, Tom, 32–3
Barr, Peter, 58, 65, 67, 89, 120–1, 177
Beecher, Eric, 9, 61–2, 71, 75–6, 88, 98, 124–6, 177
bias, x, 40, 53, 113–4, 120–3, 139, 175
see also objectivity
*Black Action*, 43
*Black Dwarf*, 37, 42
Black Public Sphere, 29
Blakeslee, Nate, 87
*Blind Spot, The*, 47
blogs, ix, xiv, 13, 19, 47–9, 78, 95–8, 100, 102–3, 109, 174
Boote, Henry, 32, 35
Bouknight, Jon, 57, 67, 75, 87, 92, 120, 178
bourgeois media, 27
British Broadcasting Corporation, xi
Broadcasting Code of Practice, 154
Broadcasting Services Act (Australia), 134, 153, 158
Bullock, Darryl, 58, 64–5, 67–8, 75, 80, 82–3, 101, 130–2, 181
Carl, Carlton, 57, 67, 77, 86–7, 120, 131, 137, 179–80
Chartism, 25
*Chicago Defender*, 43
Citizens’ Appeal, 43
citizens’ media, xi, 2, 7–8, 78–9, 91–2, 101, 103–4, 173–4
connection with audience, 91
in developing nations, xi, 109
impact of internet, 96, 98
*City Voice* (Wellington, NZ), 9–10, 18
civil rights movement (US), 43
*Clarion*, 25
Clark, Manning, 38
Clarke, Jeff, 57, 61, 81–2, 120, 130, 178
Colombian
community radio, 4–5
media, xv, 109
*Coming Nation, The*, 28
commercial imperatives, xvii, 14, 17–18, 27, 118–20, 123–6
contradictions of, 133–8
growth of commercial press, 27–8
increased importance of, 118–20
commercial radio
amalgamation of stations, 81
closure of stations, 155
communities of interest, 90, 110
see also community broadcasting;
internet
community broadcasting, vi–vii, xii, xvi
‘alternative’ tag, 75–6
audience engagement, 91–4
audience participation, 66, 83
audiences, 11, 13
in Australia, 15, 18, 36
Index

community broadcasting – continued
democratization of radio, 49–50
in developing countries, 156, 163
in Europe, 157–60
financial model, 130–1, 133–4
history, 23
as journalistic training ground, 56
licences, 157–8
local focus, 79–82
niche services, 154
policy model, 143, 152–6, 160
presentation of diverse views, 45–6
role in community, 81, 154–6
role in emergencies, 81
specialist music programming, 80
sponsorship, 133–4
survey, 11
TV focus groups, 183–4
in United States, 15, 18, 154–5, 157
university-based stations, 36
see also public journalism
Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, 154–5
community empowerment, 171–3
community media, ix
community participation, 3–4
defined, 3–4, 8, 10
European portal, 158
processes, 101–103
as third sector, 13
COMRADSAT, 71
Consortium for Independent Journalism, 131–2, 178
Corporate Watch, xi
Council of Europe, 91, 141, 157
Culture and Education Committee Report, 157, 160
Declaration on the Role of Community Media, 91–2, 160–1
recognition of community media, 91–2
counter-culture movement, 22, 36–44
credibility, viii
Crikey, 9, 18, 61, 66, 67, 71, 75–6, 86, 88, 98, 100, 103, 107, 121, 124–6, 132, 136, 138, 177–8
cultural citizenship, 173
commercial model, 124–5
daily email newsletter, 124–5
website, 125
democracy
crisis of, 3
journalism and, x
Dennis, Felix, 37
developing nations
alternative media in, xiv–xv
community radio in, 156
Direct Action, 29, 31–3
declaration of illegality, 34–5
discussion lists, 95, 107
Dispatch, 26
Dixit, Kunda, 53–4, 118
Downing, John, 5
Drudge Report, The, xiv
East Valley Tribune, 128
Easy Reader, 17
editorial independence charters, 115
Ellis, Bob, 38, 132
e-mail newsletters, 47, 95
EnviroWeb, 46–7
ethnic media, 3, 50, 172–3
audience engagement, 91–3, 174–5
focus groups, 184
history, 30
in US, 30
Eureka Street, 10, 51
Eye, The, 124
ezines, xi, 15, 174
Facebook, 102–3, 107–8, 110
see also internet
fact checking, 102–3, 119
see also professionalism
Fairfield County Weekly, 16–7
fanzines, ix, 6, 15, 19, 78, 174
Federal Communication Commission (US), 157
Financial Times
attempt to charge web customers, 47
Fitzgerald, Tom, 38–9
Index

*Fitzgerald’s Nation*, 38–9
Fourth Estate role of media, 45, 169
Fraser, Allan, 38
*Free Press* (Liverpool), 29, 39, 42
Free Press movement, xi
*Freedom Journal*, 43
freedom of the press, 27
funding models
alternative journalism, 123–33
community radio, 134–7
*see also* commercial imperatives; media policy

*GetUp!,* xii, xvi, 93, 95, 104–9
Glessing, Robert, 42–3
global media policy, *see* media policy, global
globalization
impact on media policy, 162–3
Goodman, Amy, 92
groots media, 2
Grassroots Radio Coalition (US), 157
*Green Left Weekly*, 31 n 9, 136
Green Net, 46
Greer, Germaine, 132
Gustafsson, Karl-Erik, 147–51

Habermas, Jurgen, 15, 85, 113, 167
*see also* public sphere
Haines, Jim, 41–2
Harris, Max, 38
*Hartford Advocate*, 17
Heimans, Jeremy, 106
Henningham, John, 71–2
survey of Australian journalists, 71–2
history of alternative journalism, xi, xii, xv–xvi, 2, 22–55
anti-capitalist era, 22, 29–36, 52
counter-culture movement, 22, 36–44
internet era, 22, 41, 44, 46–52
nineteenth century radical and working class press, 22, 23, 24–7, 52
Hodge, John, 59, 63, 78, 83, 100–1, 181–2
Huffington, Arianna, 92, 99, 101

*Huffington Post*, xiv, 18, 92, 103, 107, 110
Hughes, Robert, 38
Hutchins Commission (US), 114, 147
*I.F. Stone’s Weekly*, 41, 116–7
impact, 80–1
Independent Media Centres, *see* Indymedia
Independent journalism, 6
media, 2
Indigenous media, 26, 30, 43, 50, 172
audience engagement, 90, 172–3
focus groups, 183
*Industrial Union Bulletin*, 30–1
*Industrial Worker*, 30–1
Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), 28–35, 52
in Australia, 31–2
reaction of mainstream press, 31
Indymedia, xiv, 46–9, 52, 70, 82, 89, 91–2, 97–102, 119, 180
democratizing power, 48, 97
connection with audience, 92
coverage of tenancy issues, 83
IndyKids, 99
IndyVideo, 99
information for action, 83–4
information society, 143
Inglis, Ken, 38
Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (Sweden), 147 n 29
*International Socialist Review*, 30
*International Times*, 41–2
*Internationalen*, 151
internet
impact on alternative media, xvi, 2, 23, 44, 46–52, 86, 95–110
limits on international reach, 109
internet weariness, 103
community-building, 103–4
democratization of media, 48, 49
commercial models, 47
context of new technology, 49
### Index

**internet – continued**  
- globalizing impact, 51–2  
- **see also** blogs; citizens’ media; ezines; web-based political movements; media policy  
- internet radio, 80  
- iPods, 80  
- *IT*, 37  
- iTunes, 80

**Johns, Brian**, 38

**journalism**  
- amateur, 6  
- cultural, 6  
- **see also** alternative journalism; mainstream journalism  
- Journalism as a Mirror, 114–5  
- ‘Justice?’ collective, 83

**Karpel, Richard**, 82, 179  
**Kessler, Lauren**, 52, 166  
**Klassekampen**, 151  
**Korrier**, 43

**labour movement**, 29; **see also**  
- socialism  
- Lacey, Mike, 127  
- Larkin, Jim, 127  
- Lawson, Sylvia, 38  
- Lee, Jessica, 58, 64, 70, 75, 83, 87, 89, 99–103, 119–20, 180  
- Leunig, Michael, 132  
- Levien, Harold, 38  
- Lewis, Peter, 91, 141, 159  
- Liberation News Service, 41  
- local news, 81–2  
- localization, 79–82, 93, 173–6

**MacCallum, Mungo**, 38, 132  
**Madden, David**, 106  
**Mailer, Norman**, 40

**mainstream journalism**  
- alienating power, xi  
- characteristics, 113  
- commercial imperatives, 114  
- cross-promotion, 170  
- decision-making processes, xvi  
- downsizing of newsrooms, 63  
- impact of new technology, 170  
- practices, 112  
- professionalism, 115–6  
- role, x  
- stenographer role, 13–14  
- **see also** objectivity  
- mainstream journalists  
- ethics, 168  
- increasing pressure on, 63  
- motivations, 10, 52, 168  
- Mayne, Stephen, 9  
- McChesney, Bob, xi  
- Media and Democracy project (Europe), 69  
- media policy, xvii, 141–64  
- Australia, xvii, 143, 146–7, 152–6, 160  
- Canada, 147  
- community radio, 152–6  
- in developing countries, 156–7, 163  
- European Union, xvii, 145, 148, 158–60, 163, 167  
- global, xvii, 141–64  
- Hutchins Commission (US), 114, 147  
- inquiries, 146–7  
- MacBride Round Tables, 144  
- market-driven, 143–4  
- nation-state boundaries, 144  
- NWICO policy debates, 144–5  
- relevance in global era, 242–3  
- third-sector, 152–7  
- United Kingdom, 146–7  
- United States, xvii, 143–4, 164, 167  
- **see also** media subsidies  
- media power, 168–73  
- media subsidies  
- Australia, 146  
- Sweden, 135, 143, 146–52  
- **see also** media policy  
- MediaLens, xi  
- Merritt, Davis ‘Buzz’, 11–12  
- *Metro Pulse*, 16  
- Miller, Tristan, 59, 69, 78, 122, 181  
- mobilization of audiences, 74, 82–5, 168–9, 173–4, 176  
- *Monthly, The*, 1–2, 10  
Index

MoveOn.org, 47, 93, 95, 104, 106–9
muckraking journalism (US), 29, 34, 39, 41
Nation, The, 29, 39, 82
Nation Review, 38, 43, 132
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), 34, 43
National Federation of Community Broadcasters (US), 62, 67, 180
Native Net, 46–7
Neville, Richard, 37
New Journalism, 36, 40–1, 44, 52
New Mass Media Group, 16–17
New Matilda, 107
New Republic, The, 82
New Standard News, 98
New Statesman, The, 29
new technology
impact on journalism, 166–7, 170, 176
see also internet
New York magazine, 41
news decisions, xvi, 79–90
see also alternative journalists;
alternative media newsrooms
Newspaper Stamp Duties Act 1819 (UK), 25
NFB Magazine, 181
North Action Jackson, 43
Northern California Public Broadcasting (NCPB), 57, 61, 130–1, 178
Northern Star, 25
Notes from the Borderland, 87, 102
O’Hara, Larry, 87, 102, 181
objectivity, 24, 32, 112–4
in radical media, 122–3
principles of, 113
links to commercialization, 123
alternative journalists’ perspectives, xvii, 118–23, 138–9
as professional norm, 115
differing views of, 113–5
European perspective, 113–5
in nineteenth century press, 27
Observer, 38
Offensiv, 151
Onion, The, xiv, 103
Online Opinion, 9
OpenDemocracy.org, xiv, 50–1, 103, 166, 168
open-source publishing, 82, 95–7, 100–101
OZ magazine, 37–9
court cases, 37–8
Parry, Bob, 57, 75, 86, 98–9, 131–2, 178–9
participatory media, ix
Peace News, 58, 76, 84, 92, 98, 101, 121, 123, 181
PeaceNet, 46
People’s World, 51, 58, 62, 64, 67, 78, 84–5, 122, 180
Communist Party funding, 132–3
Peresstödsnämnden (Sweden), 149
Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism, 115
State of the News Media reports, 115
Phoenix Media Communications Group, 16
Pierson, Carol, 62, 67, 80–1, 134, 157, 180
Pittsburgh Courier, 43
policy, see media policy
Politico, 98, 103
Poor Man’s Guardian, 25, 26
popular presses, see working-class presses
populist-mobilizer function, 85
Press Subsidies Council (Sweden), 149–51
Private Media Partners (PMP), 124
professionalism in journalism, x, 111–12, 115–18, 175
Proletaren, 151
proximity, 80
public access television (US), xiv, 23–4, 36, 41–2
public broadcasting, 81
see also community radio; public access television
public journalism, 10, 11–15, 20, 93
role in public life, 11–12
participation and, 14
as change to journalistic practice, 12
v. public’s journalism, 13
critique of, 14
principles, 14
political engagement and, 15
public sphere, 11, 13, 85
alternative journalism and, 167–8
alternative, 172–3
communication in, 113–14
multiple spheres, 167–8
see also Black Public Sphere; Habermas, Jurgen
radical media, 2, 5–6
links with social movements, 6
in nineteenth century, 22–7
objectivity in, 121–3
repression of, 34
see also working-class presses
radio, see commercial radio,
alternative broadcasting, internet radio
Radio 3RRR, 134
Radio 4ZZZ (Brisbane), 72
Radio Adelaide, 76
Radio KPOV (US), 67, 75, 87, 92, 178
Radio 3ONE (Shepparton), 154
Rai, Milan, 58, 75–6, 84, 98, 101–3, 121, 181
refugee campaign, see social movements
Reynold’s News, 25
Rodriguez, Clemencia, viii, xv, 4–5, 8, 10, 15, 109, 155
Rosen, Jay, 11
Ross, Edgar, 35–6
RTRfm (Perth), 58, 65, 67, 71, 120–1, 123, 134, 177
Ruffin, Josephine St Pierre, 29
Russell, Charles Edward, 33–4
Salon.com, xiv, 18, 98, 103
Sawer, Geoffrey, 38
SchNEWS, xiv, 51, 59, 63, 70, 78, 83, 89, 100–1, 122, 181–2
funding for, 133
Schwartz, Morry, 1–2
coops, 75, 79, 85–90, 93, 175
see also alternative journalists
Scripps, E.W., 16
Sheikh, Simon, 106
Silver, Josh, xi
Sim, John, 42
Simons, Margaret, 9, 10, 57, 67, 75, 88, 98, 121, 132, 177
Sinclair, Upton, 29
Slate, xiv, 98, 103
SmartCompany.com.au, 125
social movements, 6, 23
anti-conscription movement, 23, 28
40 hour week campaign, 23
global, 3, 51–2
impact of internet, 104–9
1960s and 1970s, 24
refugee campaign, 136–7
see also GetUp!; MoveOn.org; Avaaz.org
social responsibility, 10
socialism
alternative media’s links to, 25,
28–36, 44
in US, 30
see also labour movement
Socialist, The, 63, 79–80, 122
Socialist Standard, 59, 69–70, 78, 122, 181
Socialist Worker, 31, n 9
Solidarity, 29–31
Solomon, Brett, 106
South African Broadcasting Corporation, 152
Spark, The, 58–9, 61, 64–6, 75, 79, 82, 89, 101, 130–2, 181
Spear, Scott, 82, 88, 166, 179
Special Broadcasting Service (Australia), xi, 152
Spectator, The, 29
Spectrezine, 179
stamp duty on publications, 26–7
## Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stone, I.F.</td>
<td>41, 116–17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suich, Max</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Review</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Observer</td>
<td>18, 57, 67, 71, 77, 86–7, 120, 137, 179–80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Media</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson, Hunter S.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times, The</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times Shamrock Alternative Newsweekly Group</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner, Ian</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twopenny Trash</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underground newspapers, 41–2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see also counter-culture movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underground press (UK)</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underground Press Syndicate</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO, 144–5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations Working Group on Internet Governance</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>user-generated content, 103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see also citizens’ media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utne Reader</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Press Award, 77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Voice Media</td>
<td>16, 41, 82, 88, 121–2, 126–7, 179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>financial model</td>
<td>126–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice, 38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of Labour</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wakil, Riz</td>
<td>105–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsh, Richard</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warhaft, Sally</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayland, J.A., 28–9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web 2.0, 95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>web-based political movements, 47, 78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democratization of communications, 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wells, Ida B.</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wharton, Billy</td>
<td>63–4, 80, 122, 179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitaker, Brian</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitlam, Gough</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind Chill Factor, 51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wire, The</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolfe, Tom</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Era</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker, The</td>
<td>29, 32, 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers’ Weekly</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working-class presses (UK), 23, 24–7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repression of, 23–6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Trade Organization, 47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young, Graham</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>