

DISCOURSES ON COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

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COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

By

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a sociological study which examines discourses on communication technologies through public proceedings in the process which led to Canada's 1991 Broadcasting Act. The methodological basis of the study is historical, qualitative research (mainly utilizing the transcripts of government committee proceedings and debates)

The study considers a theoretical problem. The theoretical problem involves understanding how the discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism figure into the struggle over hegemony among social agents. The public proceedings which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act, and the social agents which participated in those proceedings, provide an empirical basis for grappling with the theoretical problem.

The study presents an argument in relation to the theoretical problem which it addresses. This argument suggests that: a) the discourse of technological causality played a role in the process of establishing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting; b) the discourse of technological democracy played a similar role while becoming the target of a counter hegemony which favoured community broadcasting; and c) the discourse of technological nationalism played a role in the process of securing the federal state's hegemony over its institutional components and the regions (as well as

efforts to strengthen national public broadcasting), but the discourse became the focus of a counter hegemony which eventually led to its transformation.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Canadian broadcasting legislation has always had to contend with developments in communication technologies. The first piece of legislation, the 1932 Canadian Radio Broadcasting Act, was a response to the emergence of radio. The specific reference to radio was dropped from the 1936 Broadcasting Act since it made way for television. From there, Canadian broadcasting legislation began to have difficulty keeping up with communication technologies. The circumstances of broadcasting were soon affected by the appearance of cable, but cable was not addressed in the 1958 Broadcasting Act. Although cable was dealt with in a limited and insufficient way through the 1968 Broadcasting Act, that statute did not contend with the development of satellites. As cable and satellites became increasingly significant in relation to broadcasting, there were efforts to establish new legislation which would incorporate these communication technologies and others. The new legislation finally materialized as the 1991 Broadcasting Act.

This dissertation is a sociological study of the public proceedings that led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act, and it focuses on ideological issues which are connected to communication technologies. More specifically, the study utilizes the proceedings to examine the discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and

technological nationalism. These three discourses will be comprehensively discussed in Chapter Two. However, it may be useful at this point to briefly and generally define them. The term *technological causality* refers to a discourse which indicates that technologies shape societal developments. The term *technological democracy* refers to a discourse which maintains that technologies facilitate such things as participation, equality, access, and control. Finally, the term *technological nationalism* refers to a discourse which suggests that technologies are associated with creating a country.

THE THEORETICAL PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

The theoretical problem addressed in this study involves understanding how the discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism play a role in the struggle over hegemony among social agents. By grappling with this problem, the study makes a contribution to knowledge.

The study makes a contribution to knowledge by moving into areas that have been unexplored in the literature. There has been a tendency in the literature to focus on one or two of the discourses rather than all three of them. For example, Maurice Charland has addressed technological nationalism while Robert Babe has discussed technological nationalism and technological causality (what he calls technological dependence).¹ This has left open the matter of the relationships among the three discourses. There has also been a tendency in the literature to focus on the discourses in relation to one or two dominant social agents. For instance, Charland's analysis was concerned with the federal state in Canada while Babe's work concentrated on industry and government. Although the most powerful

social agents are discussed, the least powerful ones tend to be ignored, little is known about workers and other subordinate groups with regard to the discourses. A focus on certain discourses and certain social agents may have served the purposes of these studies, but it has clearly left some intriguing issues unexplored.

Why is it important to examine all three of the discourses in relation to dominant and subordinate social agents? It is important to address the powerful social agents *and* the less powerful ones in order to place the focus on the struggle between them. It is important to address all three of the discourses because they are resources which may be linked and utilized by social agents in the struggle. Powerful social agents may, for example, attempt to advance their interests in communication technologies through the notion that the technologies are causal forces which bring societal benefits such as democratic participation and nation-building. However, the interests of powerful social agents may be challenged through alternative discourses on communication technologies that are put forth by less powerful social agents. These issues are analyzed in the study through the concepts of hegemony and counter hegemony. The study therefore deepens our understanding of how three discourses on communication technologies have been taken up in the ideological struggle between dominant and subordinate social agents.

There are several reasons why public proceedings on Canadian broadcasting and the 1991 Broadcasting Act provide an appropriate empirical basis for grappling with the theoretical problem. First, broadcasting is linked to the issues of causality and democracy through its origins, development, impact, and structure. Second, *Canadian* broadcasting adds the issue of nationalism to the mix since it is frequently associated with nation-

building. Third, the public proceedings which led up to the 1991 Broadcasting Act make it possible to examine all three of these issues in terms of the discourses noted above and their implications for hegemony. That is because the public proceedings which pertained to this piece of broadcasting legislation were closely linked to discussion and debate about communication technologies.

PUBLIC PROCEEDINGS ON BROADCASTING LEGISLATION

The public proceedings which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act were part of an extensive policy formation process. The intention here is to investigate the discourses in the public proceedings of that process. The study is therefore *not* an attempt to understand all of the factors which shaped the legislation; such an attempt would necessarily involve examining many other issues, including dimensions of the policy formation process which were not public. The transcripts of the public proceedings are utilized to investigate the role played by the discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism. The study is consequently limited to the ideological factors which may have had some bearing on the legislation.

It is important to have some sense of the policy formation process that was connected to the 1991 Broadcasting Act. The process spanned six years. Information about what happened during the public side of the process is provided through a chronology of events in Appendix Three. The events in the process can also be seen as a series of four distinct stages. What follows is a brief description of the two pre-legislative stages and the two legislative stages.

Pre-Legislative Stages

The first stage centered around the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy. The task force was established in May 1985. Chaired by Gerald Caplan and Florian Sauvageau, it was to undertake a full investigation of broadcasting issues and pave the way for a new act that would replace the last piece of legislation. The task force spent five months travelling across the country to get the views of many organizations and individuals. In total, it heard 423 oral presentations and received 242 written submissions. The report of the task force was released in September 1986. The recommendations in it could have provided the basis for new broadcasting legislation. However, instead of a legislative stage, another pre-legislative stage began four months later.

The second stage involved the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture. The task force report was referred to the standing committee in January 1987. The committee divided into two phases its study of what organizations and individuals had to say about the task force report. In the first phase, which dealt with legislative issues, a total of 120 witnesses participated by either giving oral presentations or providing written submissions. During the second phase, which focused on policy issues, the standing committee spent seven months travelling across the country to hear from a number of organizations and individuals. A total of 268 witnesses participated in this phase. The standing committee set out its recommendations in three reports which frequently echoed the recommendations of the task force. The last of the committee's reports was released in June 1988.

Legislative Stages

The third stage focused on Bill C-136, which was a bill for new broadcasting legislation. The bill was introduced and given first reading in June 1988, just two weeks after the standing committee released its final report. After second reading, it was referred to the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136. The legislative committee heard oral presentations from 43 organizations and individuals. Bill C-136 later received third reading and was passed by the House of Commons. After being given first and second reading in the Senate, Bill C-136 had just been referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications when it died after a federal election was called in October 1988.

The fourth stage pertained to Bill C-40, which was a slightly modified version of Bill C-136. The new bill was introduced and given first reading in October 1989. After second reading, it was referred to the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40. The legislative committee heard oral presentations from 36 organizations and individuals. Bill C-40 then received third reading and was passed by the House of Commons. After first and second reading in the Senate, the bill was referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications. The committee heard oral presentations from 7 organizations. Soon afterward, Bill C-40 was given third reading and passed by the Senate. It received royal assent in February 1991 and came into force four months later.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PUBLIC PROCEEDINGS

As we have seen, there were many participants in the public proceedings which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act. With such a huge number of participants, it is useful for analytical purposes to categorize them.

The categorization scheme adopted here is loosely based on a distinction made by Marc Raboy. Raboy suggests that the participants who contributed to the proceedings of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy can be divided into two broad categories: the *cultural industries* ("private sector, public sector, creators, and producers") and the *cultural communities* ("national and regional groups, ethnic and social minorities").² These two categories also generally describe the participants in the various proceedings which followed those of the task force. However, two aspects of this scheme are unsatisfactory. First, Raboy has classified those who are relatively powerless with those who are more powerful. Workers, for example, would appear to be included among the cultural industries even though they have more in common with the cultural communities. Second, Raboy has lumped both private sector and public sector organizations into the cultural industries. This complicates analysis considerably. The problems with Raboy's classification scheme can be overcome by defining three categories - the two noted above plus the *cultural agencies* - and by developing specific sub-categories for each.

What follows is a brief overview of the categorization scheme that has been utilized in this study. More specific notes on cultural industries, cultural agencies, and cultural communities can be found in Appendix One.

Cultural Industries

Cultural industries are organizations that play a central role in broadcasting. They are principal sources of production and distribution. However, unlike the case in Raboy's scheme, the cultural industries are defined here as being in the private sector. Such an approach has been adopted by Herbert Schiller. Schiller utilizes a definition from a study that was conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). "Generally speaking, a cultural industry is held to exist when cultural goods and services are produced, reproduced, stored, or distributed on industrial and commercial lines, that is to say, on a large scale and in accordance with a strategy based on economic considerations rather than any concern for cultural development."³ Several types of cultural industries participated in the public proceedings: the private broadcasting industry, the cable industry, the satellite industry, and the independent production industry

Cultural Agencies

Like cultural industries, cultural agencies are organizations that play a significant role in broadcasting. They too are closely tied to production and distribution. However, they differ from cultural industries in two ways; they are in the public sector, and they usually have some concern for cultural development. Drawing on distinctions made by John Meisel, cultural agencies can be divided into several types: operating agencies (which are involved with production and/or distribution); supporting agencies (which provide funding for production); and administrative agencies (which control production and distribution through regulation, policy, or legislation).⁴ The cultural agencies that participated in the public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation came from both the federal and the

provincial/territorial levels of government.

Cultural Communities

Cultural communities are organizations or groups that play a peripheral role in broadcasting. To the extent that they are involved in production and distribution, it is as providers of alternative media or as workers in mainstream media. For the most part, cultural communities are relegated to the realm of consumption. Organizations or groups reflecting all of these features participated in the proceedings. In relation to alternative media, there were contributions from aboriginal broadcasters and community broadcasters (the latter of which formed an emerging community sector alongside the established public and private sectors). Workers' groups represented those within mainstream media while those who were audiences for various types of media were primarily represented by consumers' groups, minority groups, and nationalist groups.

THE ARGUMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study presents an argument in relation to the theoretical problem which it addresses. Empirically, the problem involves understanding how the discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism figured in the struggle over hegemony among the social agents that participated in the public proceedings which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act.

The argument in the study suggests that: a) the discourse of technological causality played a role in the process of establishing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting; b) the discourse of technological democracy played a similar role

while becoming the target of a counter hegemony which favoured community broadcasting; and c) the discourse of technological nationalism played a role in the process of securing the federal state's hegemony over its institutional components and the regions (as well as efforts to strengthen national public broadcasting), but the discourse became the focus of a counter hegemony which eventually led to its transformation.

The argument of the study is developed through the next seven chapters. Chapter Two examines theoretical ideas about hegemony and the three discourses on communication technologies. Chapter Three outlines the methodological aspects of the study, which include data gathering as well as data processing and analysis. In Chapter Four, the discourse of technological causality is explored with regard to debates about broadcasting definitions. Chapter Five considers the discourse of technological democracy by focusing on debates about community broadcasting. Chapter Six addresses the discourse of technological nationalism in relation to debates about national broadcasting. Finally, Chapter Seven pulls together the threads of the study.

The study also includes four appendices. Appendix One offers additional notes on cultural industries, cultural agencies, and cultural communities. Appendix Two outlines a chronology of events in the history of Canadian broadcasting legislation (since occasional references will be made to such events throughout the study). It should be noted that the issues which are outlined in Appendix Two have been comprehensively addressed by several writers.⁵ Appendix Three provides a chronology of events that led to new Canadian broadcasting legislation. Appendix Four supplies a list of acronyms that are used throughout the study.

ENDNOTES

1. See Maurice Charland, "Technological Nationalism"; Robert E. Babe, "Emergence and Development of Canadian Communication: Dispelling the Myths"; and Robert E. Babe, *Telecommunications in Canada: Technology, Industry, and Government*.
2. Marc Raboy, *Missed Opportunities: The Story of Canada's Broadcasting Policy*, p. 300
3. Cited in Herbert I. Schiller, *Culture Inc.: The Corporate Takeover of Public Expression*, p. 30.
4. Meisel distinguishes between "operating bodies" (including the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the National Film Board), "supporting institutions" (such as the Canada Council and Telefilm Canada); and "policy-making and administrative institutions" (including the Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commission and the Department of Communications). See John Meisel, "Flora and Fauna on the Rideau: The Making of Cultural Policy", pp. 53-54.
5. See, for example, Frank W. Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting, 1920-1951*; Frank W. Peers, *The Public Eye: Television and the Politics of Canadian Broadcasting, 1952-1968*; Marc Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*; E. Austin Weir, *The Struggle for National Broadcasting in Canada*; and Dallas W. Smythe, *Dependency Road: Communications, Capitalism, Consciousness, and Canada*.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL ISSUES

This chapter examines some theoretical ideas about hegemony and discourses on communication technologies. It begins by discussing several important theoretical concepts in order to pave the way for a neo-Marxist approach. Within this approach, a focus on ideology and discourses is established and then elaborated by reviewing some facets of hegemony which appear in the writings of Antonio Gramsci as well as various analyses of Thatcherism. Once the basic theoretical approach is in place, the chapter considers two significant historical developments in Canadian broadcasting that shaped the conjuncture of the late 1980s during which public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation occurred. In order to examine discourses on communication technologies within this historical context, the chapter then sets out some specific theoretical characteristics of ideology with regard to hegemony. It next considers the three discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism themselves. Finally, pulling the threads of the chapter together, a model which pertains to hegemony and discourses on communication technologies is established with a view to testing it in the study.

CONCEPTIONS OF STATE, CLASS, AND IDEOLOGY

Before discussing hegemony and discourses on communication technologies, it

is necessary to begin with an understanding of what is meant by some important concepts that play a role in the theoretical discussion. The concepts in question are those of the state, class, and ideology.

State

There are different ways to see the concept of the state. For example, Robert Alford and Roger Friedland distinguish between interpretations of the concept which are offered by pluralist theory, managerial theory, and class theory.¹ Even within class theory, which is based on the writings of Karl Marx, there are different approaches to the state. The different ways that Marx discussed the state have produced instrumentalist and structuralist interpretations of the concept.² Carl Cuneo notes that Marxist theory has also produced both institutional and functional definitions of the state. Whereas institutional definitions identify the state as a set of institutions that interact within a system, functional definitions center on the functions which various parts of the state perform in the reproduction of capitalism.³ It is useful to explore these definitions further in order to reach an understanding of what is meant here by the concept of the state.

Louis Althusser provided a functional definition of the state in capitalist society. This definition distinguished between repressive state apparatuses (which function “by violence”) and ideological state apparatuses (which function “by ideology”). The former pertain to “the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, the Prisons, etc.” The latter encompass religion, education, the family, law, the political system (including political parties), trade unions, communications (“press, radio, and television, etc.”), and culture (“Literature, the Arts, sports, etc.”).⁴ As Cuneo argues, this definition is

problematic for two reasons. First, the notion of a “functional state” eliminates the possibility of a “dysfunctional state”; the state does not always reproduce conditions that are favourable to capitalists. Second, since it includes aspects of civil society, the definition places too much within the state.⁵ For instance, it apparently includes *all* of the mass media (even the mass media which are privately-owned).

Ralph Miliband offered an institutional definition of the state in capitalist society. His definition indicated that the state comprises the institutions of the government (the “political executive”), the administration (“the traditional bureaucracy of the state” as well as “public corporations, central banks, regulatory commissions, etc.”), the military (along with “para-military, security and police forces”); the judiciary; the sub-central government (regional and local government, which is at least in part “an extension of central government and administration”); and representative assemblies (such as parliamentary assemblies). Miliband specifically separated from this “state system” the institutions which are part of the “political system” (such as political parties and pressure groups). He also made it clear that other institutions are also not part of the state (among them, giant corporations, the churches, and the mass media).⁶ Miliband’s definition is an improvement over Althusser’s since it avoids functionality. However, his definition is still problematic because it leaves too much out of the state. For instance, Miliband did not specifically situate *any* of the mass media within the state (even the mass media which are publicly-owned, while he nevertheless included public corporations).

Carl Cuneo has suggested an alternative institutional definition of the state in capitalist society. Cuneo defines the institutions of the state to be the central and regional

governments, the administration; the representative assemblies; the armed forces and police; the intelligence and security services; the judicial and court system; prisons, reform institutions, and asylums; law, public education and schools; the public health care system, public corporations, and the public mass media.⁷

This definition has two advantages. First, it opens up the theoretical space to examine the public mass media as components of the state. Second, since it does not see the state as either a functional entity or a monolithic entity, the definition also opens up the theoretical space to consider conflicts and contradictions within the various parts of the state. For these reasons, Cuneo's institutional definition of the state will be utilized in the present study.

Class

Like the state, class is a concept that can be seen in a variety of ways. Stanislaw Ossowski noted, for example, that there are gradational schemes and dichotomous schemes for understanding class. In gradational schemes, various classes are ordered in a hierarchical fashion. In dichotomous schemes, there is a hierarchical structure as well as a relationship between two fundamental classes.⁸

The latter better reflects the approach to class in Marxist theory. Drawing on Ossowski's ideas, Anthony Giddens indicates that Marx's writings contain an abstract, dichotomous model. In this model, there is a conflictual relationship since the capitalist class (the bourgeoisie) exploits the working class (the proletariat).⁹ Following Carl Cuneo, we can understand how these two fundamental classes apply to the current Canadian context. The business class is comprised of people who own and/or control the means of production.

In contemporary Canadian society, this involves control over corporations through executive managers and/or ownership of significant blocks of shares. Members of the business class purchase (for a wage) the labour power of people and extract surplus labour from them. The working class consists of people who work for others, usually those who own and/or control corporations or those who control the state. In the industrial sector, members of the working class are exploited by members of the business class since their unpaid labour forms the basis of the latter's wealth.¹⁰ As significant as these two fundamental classes are, the writings of Marx and his followers have not been limited to them.¹¹

Building on aspects of the abstract, dichotomous model, Vincent Mosco has attempted to incorporate Marxist conceptions of class and the state into analysis of the American communications system. There are three general categories in his classification scheme.¹² First, Mosco considers the *capitalist state*. He identifies the major institutions of the state, including those which are responsible for public broadcasting and the regulation of the communications field. Second, Mosco develops a category which is associated with the capitalist class, the *dominant power bloc* of media companies which have common and conflicting interests. Third, Mosco specifies a category which is linked to the working class but goes beyond it, he sets out the *dominated classes and strata*, such as media workers, activist groups, and individual consumers.

As outlined more fully in Chapter One and Appendix One, this study adopts an approach which is similar to Mosco's. The classification scheme which has been utilized for the participants in the public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation is based on three general categories. The category of cultural agencies includes institutions that are part

of the capitalist state. These institutions can be divided into operating agencies, supporting agencies, and administrative agencies. The category of cultural industries includes components of the capitalist class which form what Mosco refers to as the dominant power bloc of media companies. The sub-categories here are the private broadcasting industry, the cable industry, the satellite industry, and the independent production industry. The category of cultural communities extends beyond the working class. In addition to worker's groups, the category encompasses nationalist groups, minority groups, consumers' groups, aboriginal broadcasters, and community broadcasters. It therefore includes what Mosco calls the dominated classes and strata.

Ideology

The notion of ideology has had a long history. As Jorge Larraín indicates, the term was first used in the 18th century and was fully developed as a concept during the 19th century. Marx's contribution to an understanding of the concept involved linking it to the conditions of capitalist society.¹³

Marx saw the concept of ideology in several different ways. Martin Allor argues that there were two particular tendencies in Marx's writings. On the one hand, he notes that there was a focus on ideology as false consciousness. On the other hand, Allor notes that there was a focus on ideology as the upper level within a base-superstructure topography.¹⁴ Stuart Hall contends that there are problems with both aspects of "classical Marxism." He describes the notion of false consciousness this way: "It is a highly unstable theory about the world which has to assume that vast numbers of ordinary people, mentally equipped in much the same way as you or I, can simply be thoroughly and systematically duped into

misrecognizing entirely where their real interests lie.”¹⁵ As Hall and others have argued, one of the inadequacies with the base-superstructure topography is its economic determinism; since it holds that the ideological superstructure is reflective of and determined by the economic base, it fails to see that the ideas and meanings in the superstructure can have a social effectivity of their own.¹⁶

Hall has discussed how ideology is addressed within the field of cultural studies. He notes that there are strands within the field which utilize the terms of a classical political economy of culture and therefore retain the base-superstructure topography as well as the notion of ideology as false consciousness.¹⁷ However, Hall also notes that the “two paradigms” which are central to the field, the culturalist and structuralist approaches, have attempted to move beyond the terms of “classical Marxism.”¹⁸ Hall indicates that both of these approaches have strengths and weaknesses. Indeed, he holds that the strengths in one paradigm can almost be derived from the weaknesses in the other. He argues, for instance, that structuralism has a strength relative to culturalism, whereas culturalism tends to neglect ideology in favour of a focus on culture. structuralism has elaborated the concept of ideology. Hall recognizes that the structuralist understanding of the concept has often been functionalist, making it impossible to conceive of either ideology which is not “dominant” or struggle involving ideology. However, he points out that structuralism has drawn on the work of Antonio Gramsci to more adequately see the concept. Hall also argues that culturalism has a strength relative to structuralism; unlike structuralism, culturalism has built on Gramsci’s ideas to emphasize conscious organization and struggle.¹⁹ All of these points in his analysis lead Hall to the conclusion that “the line in Cultural Studies which has

attempted to *think forwards* from the best elements in the structuralist and culturalist enterprises, by way of some of the concepts elaborated in Gramsci's work, comes closest to meeting the requirements of the field of study."²⁰

Hall's own orientation to ideology is rooted in a focus on discourses as well as Gramsci's approach to the concept of hegemony. As it appears in the work of Gramsci, Hall refers to "the superiority of hegemony over other concepts in approaching the task of historical explanation and analysis."²¹ Hall's interest is in "the struggle and contestation for the space in which to construct an ideological hegemony."²² He adopts "a modern, more discursive understanding of ideology, which mediates the link between ideas and social forces through language and representation."²³ Since Hall's approach is followed in this study, it is necessary to explore more fully some issues connected to hegemony and ideology. We will begin by briefly reviewing Gramsci's discussion of hegemony.

THE CONCEPT OF HEGEMONY

Hegemony and the Writings of Gramsci

Hegemony is a concept which has a long and varied background. As Raymond Williams points out, the concept has progressed through several definitions. The traditional definition of hegemony was political rule or domination, especially in relations between states. Marx extended this definition to relations between classes. The concept of hegemony was then further developed within Marxism by Gramsci.²⁴ Gramsci's discussion of hegemony was multi-faceted and therefore complex. It is not possible to comprehensively address his ideas here, but it is necessary to highlight a few points

Although Gramsci did not focus on the economic aspects of hegemony, he did address them. He pointed out that hegemony was, to some degree at least, connected to economic factors:

...the fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of the groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed - in other words, that the leading group should make sacrifices of an economic-corporate kind. But there is also no doubt that such sacrifices and such a compromise cannot touch the essential; for though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity.²⁵

As this passage indicates, Gramsci recognized the economic basis of the hegemony that is enjoyed by the leading group. He also recognized that economic concessions are important in order to secure and maintain this hegemony; economic issues are among the interests of subordinate groups that have to be addressed within a "compromise equilibrium" which favours the leading group. However, Gramsci emphasized that hegemony is not limited to economic factors. Indeed, Gramsci concentrated on what he called "intellectual, moral and political hegemony."²⁶

By addressing these three aspects of hegemony, Gramsci incorporated the role of force and consent into the concept. Gramsci indicated that, at times, hegemony is based on both force and consent: "The 'normal' exercise of hegemony on the now classical terrain of the parliamentary regime is characterized by the combination of force and consent, which balance each other reciprocally, without force predominating excessively over consent."²⁷ However, Gramsci also addressed force and consent in ways which implied that only the

latter was associated with hegemony; he referred to “the levels of force and of consent, authority and hegemony, violence and civilization.”²⁸ Similarly, he wrote that “the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as ‘domination’ and as ‘intellectual and moral leadership’. A social group dominates antagonistic groups, which it tends to ‘liquidate’, or to subjugate perhaps even by armed force; it leads kindred and allied groups.”²⁹ For Gramsci, ideology was clearly linked to leadership: “If the ruling class has lost its consensus, i.e. is no longer ‘leading’ but only ‘dominant’, exercising coercive force alone, this means precisely that the great masses have become detached from their traditional ideologies, and no longer believe what they used to believe previously, etc.”³⁰

In an important passage, Gramsci elaborated on the role of ideology in securing the consent that is necessary for hegemony. He wrote:

...previously germinated ideologies become ‘party’, come into confrontation and conflict, until only one of them, or at least a single combination of them, tends to prevail, to gain the upper hand, to propagate itself throughout society - bringing about not only a unison of economic and political aims, but also intellectual and moral unity, posing all the questions around which the struggle rages not on a corporate but on ‘universal’ plane, and thus creating the hegemony of a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate groups. It is true that the State is seen as the organ of one particular group, destined to create favourable conditions for the latter’s maximum expansion. But the development and expansion of the particular group are conceived of, and presented, as being the motor force of a universal expansion, of a development of all the ‘national’ energies. In other words, the dominant group is coordinated concretely with the general interests of the subordinate groups, and the life of the State is conceived of as a continuous process of formation and superseding of unstable equilibria (on the juridical plane) between the interests of the fundamental group and those of the subordinate groups - equilibria in which the interests of the dominant group prevail, but only up to a certain point, i.e. stopping short of narrowly corporate economic interest.³¹

Gramsci made three crucial points here. First, there is struggle as ideologies come into conflict, but only certain ideologies become linked to hegemonic leadership through their “universal” character. Second, the “universal” character of ideologies involves establishing the particular interests of the dominant group as the general interests of subordinate groups. Third, the state aims to ensure that the interests of the dominant group prevail over those of the subordinate groups in the compromise at a particular moment.

In his discussion of ideology, an important concept for Gramsci was the notion of common sense. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, the two editors of Gramsci’s *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, explain:

Essential to Gramsci’s approach is the notion that an intellectual revolution is not performed by simply confronting one philosophy with another. It is not just the ideas that require to be confronted but the social forces behind them, and more directly, the ideology these forces have generated and which has become part of what Gramsci calls ‘common sense’. The last term is used by Gramsci to mean the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become ‘common’ in any given epoch.³²

Gramsci himself defined common sense as “the traditional popular conception of the world.”³³ In his view, the struggle against capitalism in part involved “a cultural battle to transform the popular ‘mentality’.”³⁴

Hegemony and Thatcherism

Clearly, there were a number of dimensions to hegemony in the writings of Gramsci. The theorists who have been influenced by Gramsci have placed different degrees of emphasis on the economic, political, and ideological aspects of the concept. This can be illustrated by briefly describing a theoretical debate which revolves around studies of

Thatcherism.

The term “Thatcherism” refers to the political project that was adopted by the Conservative government in Britain under the leadership of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher during the late 1970s. The intention of this project was to eradicate the state interventionist approach of Keynesianism. As Bob Jessop, Kevin Bonnett, Simon Bromley, and Tom Ling indicate, the project therefore had economic dimensions: “Thatcherism does have an explicit economic strategy... Thatcherism has adopted a neo-liberal accumulation strategy premised on the deregulation of private capital, the privatization of significant parts of the public sector and the introduction of commercial criteria into the residual activities of the state sector. The strategy also implies commitment to an open economy.”³⁵ However, since support was needed for this economic strategy, Thatcherism had significant ideological dimensions as well. Hall notes “the reversals at which Thatcherism aimed in the area of social thought or the ideological domain. Its mission was to stem the anti-capitalist tide it believed had been allowed to gather impetus during the 1960s...and also to crack the whole pattern of social expectations predicated on increased state support.”³⁶

Two concepts - those of the “power bloc” and the “people” - have been employed in studies of Thatcherism. As Bob Jessop points out, both concepts were elaborated in the work of Nicos Poulantzas.³⁷ The power bloc refers to the unification of the dominant class or class fractions through hegemony. The notion of the “people”, whose active consent is sought through the process of building hegemony, reflects the broadening of oppositional forces beyond the working class. The exact composition of the “people” depends on the form and range of the state policy involved.³⁸ Hall utilizes both concepts

within his focus on ideological issues:

Certain ways of thinking, feeling, and calculating characteristic of Thatcherism have entered as a material and ideological force into the daily lives of ordinary people. We underestimate the degree to which Thatcherism has succeeded in representing itself as 'on the side of the little people against the big battalions'. Ideologically, it has made itself, to some degree, not only one of 'Them', but, more disconcertingly, part of 'Us': it has aligned itself with 'what some of the people really want', while at the same time continuing to dominate them through the power bloc.³⁹

Hall indicates that, in part through ideology, Thatcherism has aimed "to rework and neutralize the people/power bloc contradiction."⁴⁰

Hall has examined Thatcherism and its ideological aspects through the concept of hegemony. He states:

I have deliberately used the Gramscian term 'hegemony' in order to foreclose any falling back on the mechanical notion that Thatcherism is merely another name for the exercise of the same, old, familiar class domination by the same, old, familiar ruling class. 'Hegemony' implies the struggle to contest and dis-organize an existing political formation: the taking of the 'leadership position' (on however minority a basis) over a number of different spheres of society at once - economy, civil society, intellectual and moral life, culture; the conduct of a wide and differentiated type of struggle; the winning of a strategic measure of popular consent, and, thus, the securing of a social authority sufficiently deep to conform society into a new historic project. It should never be mistaken for a finished or settled project. It is always contested, always trying to secure itself, always 'in process'. Thus, I do not argue that Thatcherism is now and will be forever 'hegemonic'.⁴¹

Within this approach, Hall focuses on certain issues. He indicates that "questions of ideology and culture play a key role in any analysis from the 'hegemonic' perspective and cannot be regarded as secondary or dependent factors. No social or political force can hope to create a new type of society or raise the masses to a new level of civilization without first

becoming the leading cultural force and in that way providing the organizing nucleus of a wide-ranging set of new conceptions.”⁴² Hall indicated that “Thatcherism aimed for a reversal in ordinary common sense. The ‘common sense’ of the English people had been constructed around the notion that the last war had erected a barrier between the bad old days of the 1930s and now: the welfare state had come to stay; we’d never go back to using the criterion of the market as the sole measure of people’s needs, the needs of society.” Since Thatcherism challenged this view, “it entered the political field in a historic contest, not just for power, but for popular authority, for hegemony.”⁴³

Hall has been taken to task by Jessop et al. for focusing on the ideological aspects of hegemony in his work on Thatcherism. In their view, “one should note that the Gramscian heritage is problematic for all those inspired by him. Gramsci focused mainly on the politics and ideology of class leadership and neglected the structural determinations of hegemony. Hall shares this neglect.”⁴⁴ Jessop et al. were concerned that, because Hall’s approach emphasized discursive strategies, “it could neglect the structural underpinnings of Thatcherism in the economic and state systems and its specific economic and political bases of support among both people and power bloc.”⁴⁵ Jessop et al. preferred a different analysis: “...in contrast to Hall’s approach, our account assumes that Thatcherism’s success (if any) as a hegemonic project cannot be analysed solely in ideological terms. It must also be related to the emergent accumulation strategy and to a particular state strategy which seeks to institutionalize this project.”⁴⁶

Responding to Jessop et al., Hall defended his focus on the ideological aspects of hegemony in his analysis of Thatcherism. He pointed out that, while important, other

aspects of hegemony fell outside the scope of his analysis.

. I have consistently struggled against any definition of hegemony which identifies it as exclusively an ideological phenomenon. On the contrary, I have repeated ad nauseam Gramsci's argument about hegemony being impossible to conceptualize or achieve without 'the decisive nucleus of economic activity'. It is therefore particularly galling to be accused of advancing an explanation of Thatcherism as exclusively an ideological phenomenon, simply because I have drawn attention to features of its ideological strategy which are specific and important.⁴⁷

Hall extended this position elsewhere:

The moment you give the ideological dimension of the analysis its proper place, people invert the paradigm, accusing you of thinking that things work by ideology alone. Ideology is tremendously important, and it has its own specificity, its own kinds of effects, its own mechanisms, but it doesn't operate outside the play of other determinations, it has social, political, economic conditions of existence.⁴⁸

Hall added that it is difficult to bring the other dimensions of hegemony into the analysis and do justice to all of them. Consequently, it is necessary to make allowances in the direction of the dimensions which are being left out of the analysis. Those who are studying ideological discourses or texts must therefore keep in mind the political and economic factors that help to establish the field they are looking at.⁴⁹

As the case of Thatcherism illustrates, it is clear that a full understanding of hegemony must take into account political, economic, and ideological issues. However, following Hall, the focus here will be on developing a better understanding of ideological factors. Although a well-rounded understanding of hegemony is obviously an important objective, the more modest goal of this study - as stated in Chapter One - is to develop a better understanding of discourses on communication technologies in relation to hegemony.

DEVELOPMENTS IN CANADIAN BROADCASTING HISTORY

The debate about the analysis of Thatcherism provides a good introduction to the historical conjuncture which influenced the public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation in Canada. The impact of Thatcherism on the Canadian broadcasting situation is clear. As Marc Raboy notes in his history of Canadian broadcasting policy, “the definite turning point in the ideological winds can be marked by the election of the Thatcher government in Great Britain in 1979. Britain thus became the first major Western country with a government actually *committed* to rolling back the boundaries of the state, rather than doing so with rhetorical reluctance in the face of fiscal crisis.” Raboy goes on to indicate that the push toward privatization and deregulation received “its second boost” with the election of Ronald Reagan in the United States during 1980. These two developments set the stage for the Canadian situation.⁵⁰ As Seth Feldman points out, after Brian Mulroney came to power in Canada during 1984, “the Conservative government introduced its own version of Reaganism/Thatcherism.”⁵¹

Within this historical conjuncture, we are concerned with discourses on communication technologies during public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation. Despite the focus here on ideological issues, it is important to have some understanding of the basic political and economic conditions. Building on the chronology of events that is presented in Appendix Two and Appendix Three, these conditions will be outlined by reviewing two historical developments.

Shifts in Power Among Broadcasting Sectors

The first historical development involves a change in the balance of power

between the public sector and the private sector in Canadian broadcasting.

Public broadcasters originally held the dominant position in the Canadian broadcasting system. The first two pieces of broadcasting legislation to be passed by federal governments ensured that Canadian broadcasting was founded on the principle of public service. The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC) was established under the 1932 act, and it was later replaced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) through the 1936 legislation. Both of these government agencies operated public radio stations. However, they also regulated private radio stations and even had the power to nationalize Canadian broadcasting. This power was never used though, and there was no question of eliminating private broadcasters by the 1940s.⁵² The CBC later lost its regulatory control and was placed on an equal footing with the private broadcasters before two successive independent regulators; the Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG) was set up through the 1958 statute, and it was replaced under the 1968 legislation by the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC).

Private broadcasters eventually acquired the dominant position in the Canadian broadcasting system. As Raboy notes, "the power and influence of 'private' broadcasters in Canada have grown steadily and without interruption, but the role of the 'public' element of the system has ebbed and flowed."⁵³ For example, although the public sector lost regulatory control, it did enjoy some expansion in the early 1970s as provincial governments established four educational television broadcasting services: Radio Quebec, TV Ontario, British Columbia's Knowledge Network and Alberta's Access Network.⁵⁴ On the whole, however, television has been closely connected to the growth of the private sector. Although

the original intention was for the public sector to be the main provider of television services, the private sector quickly developed in this area. During the early 1960s, the BBG licensed CTV, a private English language network, as well as TVA, a private French language network. Robert Pike notes the aftermath of further expansion by private broadcasters:

By the mid 1980s, bolstered by the licensing of Global TV in the Toronto market in 1972 and Television Quatre Saisons as Quebec's second private TV network in 1985, private TV had become dominant in the conventional Canadian broadcasting market both in terms of revenues and viewers. Concomitantly, cuts in the public appropriations to public sector broadcasters, including both the CBC and such publicly funded provincial broadcasters as Radio Quebec, have obliged them to augment advertising revenues in order to bridge the shortfall between income and expenditures.⁵⁵

However, private broadcasters soon began to have economic difficulties of their own, some of which they shared with the CBC. These difficulties stemmed from a variety of factors that are detailed in the report of the Task Force on the Economic Status of Canadian Television, which was chaired by Jacques Girard and J.R. Peters. The Girard-Peters task force indicated that these factors included the emergence of new services, more competition for advertising revenues, and increasing program expenses.⁵⁶

Cable companies later assumed the dominant position in the Canadian broadcasting system. New communication technologies such as cable and satellites had become the basis for many firms within the private sector. Indeed, Pike notes that new players such as the cable industry "increasingly shifted the balance between the public and private TV broadcasting sectors in favour of private sector dominance."⁵⁷ Among the new players, the cable industry was the big winner. As Pike indicates:

...the cable industry has become a major private player in Canadian

broadcasting. Cable's high profits, its substantial command over resources, and its growing dominance by such corporate giants as Videotron in Quebec and Rogers Cablesystems in English Canada has, most notably in Quebec, largely eclipsed the power and influence of the ailing conventional broadcasters.⁵⁸

However, as Pike explains, the cable industry has faced challenges from other sources, including companies which provide services through direct broadcast satellites.⁵⁹ These challenges began to appear prior to the policy formation process on new broadcasting legislation in the late 1980s.

While power had shifted from the public sector to the private sector between the 1920s and the 1980s, it is important to note as well that a community sector had been struggling to find a place within the Canadian broadcasting system since its emergence in the 1960s. From that time forward, community broadcasting had not been seen by the CRTC as a new sector which should be fully developed in order to satisfy the needs that were unmet through public or private broadcasting.⁶⁰

Changes in Economic Policy on Broadcasting

The shifts in power among the sectors in Canadian broadcasting are linked to a second historical development. This second development involves a change in economic policy which has affected Canadian broadcasting.

The 1920s initiated a focus on state intervention in Canadian broadcasting. As Raboy explains, state intervention was needed to protect Canadian cultural sovereignty and ensure Canadian national unity:

The 'national' purpose of broadcasting policy was to be double-edged. On the one hand, it would be the main cultural component of the federal strategy for maintaining a political entity distinct from the

U.S., a strategy requiring constant and vigilant state involvement in the cultural sphere, and particularly in broadcasting. On the other hand, broadcasting was to serve as a strategic instrument against the *internal* threat to Canada's national integrity posed by cultural resistance among French Canadians in Quebec - which in its most extreme form was articulated as a demand for political independence.⁶¹

The emphasis on intervention was first reflected in the report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, which was chaired by John Aird. The Aird Commission recommended "that broadcasting should be placed on a basis of public service and that the stations providing a service of this kind should be owned and operated by one national company."⁶² That paved the way for the first two pieces of Canadian broadcasting legislation which, as noted above, created the CRBC and the CBC. The spirit of the Aird Commission report was also reflected in the reports of later commissions and committees.⁶³

Starting in the early 1980s, there was a shift away from a focus on state intervention in Canadian broadcasting. As already indicated, the focus turned to privatization and deregulation. The first signs of this were in the report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, which was chaired by Louis Applebaum and Jacques Herbert. The Applebaum-Herbert committee suggested a significant role for the private sector. It called for the CBC to get out of in-house production (except in relation to news) and carry entertainment programming by independent producers.⁶⁴ Many of the committee's proposals were adopted by the Department of Communications (DOC) in its 1983 statement on new broadcasting policy and a subsequent statement on the role of the CBC.⁶⁵ The approach developed by the DOC was continued when Marcel Masse, as Minister of Communications, established the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, which was chaired by

Gerald Caplan and Florian Sauvageau The terms of reference which Masse set for the Caplan-Sauvageau task force stated that it was to make recommendations on “an industrial and cultural strategy” which met the following conditions:

The strategy will take full account of the overall social and economic goals of the government, of government policies and priorities, including the need for fiscal restraint, increased reliance on private sector initiatives and federal-provincial co-operation, and of the policies of the government in other related economic and cultural sectors. It will also take full account of the challenges and opportunities in the increasingly competitive broadcasting environment presented by ongoing technological developments.⁶⁶

This mandate was clearly in line with the thinking that had emerged with the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee.

During the late 1980s, there was a partial return to the focus on state intervention in Canadian broadcasting. The revival came through the report which was submitted by the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy. As John Meisel has pointed out, “the extremely strong pro-CBC and pro-public broadcasting orientation of many of the key recommendations of the task force were not quite compatible with its mandate.”⁶⁷ In many respects, the task force recommendations were clearly a departure from the prevailing political winds. Among other things, the task force called for expanding the public sector through the creation of TV Canada.⁶⁸ The task force breathed new life into the long-standing argument for state intervention in Canadian broadcasting.

Broadcasting and Two Forms of Hegemony

These two historical developments - shifts in power among broadcasting sectors and changes in economic policy on broadcasting - imply that there were efforts to secure two

forms of hegemony.

The first form of hegemony concerns private capital. Once occupying a subordinate position within Canadian broadcasting, private capital eventually assumed the dominant position. This was partially due to the emergence of firms based on technologies such as cable and satellites. However, for private capital to enjoy hegemony within Canadian broadcasting, the expansion of the private sector required consent. Discourses which made connections to a variety of interests were therefore essential.

The second form of hegemony deals with the federal state. From the beginning, Canadian broadcasting policy was associated with the federal state's goal to secure hegemony over its institutional components and the regions (as concerns about the internal threat of Quebec's political independence clearly illustrate). This necessitated an economic policy of state intervention and the establishment of national broadcasting at the federal level of the public sector. It also necessitated discourses which made connections to a variety of interests. However, as the federal state has shifted economic policy away from state intervention, it has actually undermined the economic conditions for its hegemony. A significant contradiction has therefore emerged.

The latter form of hegemony does not imply the independence of the state from class. Some have argued that the state has its own interests.⁶⁹ However, through his concept of the *state project*, Bob Jessop has suggested something else. Jessop had once thought that his concept of the *hegemonic project* was adequate to understand the unity of the state. He eventually decided that "this view was clearly unsatisfactory because it failed to distinguish properly between the strictly administrative problem of 'apparatus unity' and the more

general problem of the state's potential role in unifying a society divided by classes." Consequently, he formulated the notion of the state project as a specific type of hegemonic project. He believed that it was important "to separate analytically the sort of political hegemony involved in securing the substantive institutional unity of the capitalist type of state from that which was involved in infusing this institutional unity with a definite class unity."⁷⁰ Although Jessop indicates that the state project need not be a class project, Rianne Mahon has suggested in her discussion of his concept that the internal unity of the state is a condition for capital accumulation.⁷¹

The general ideas behind Jessop's two concepts have some usefulness in this study. However, the concepts themselves are not employed since they are quite specific and do not address discourses. In Jessop's view, a hegemonic project involves "the mobilization of support behind a concrete, national-popular programme of action which asserts a general interest in the pursuit of objectives that, explicitly or implicitly, advance the long-term interest of the hegemonic class (fraction), and which privileges particular 'economic-corporate' interests compatible with this programme, whilst derogating the pursuit of other particular interests that are inconsistent with it."⁷² This suggests the need to examine how the dominant cable industry related to other fractions of the cultural industries in the process of securing the hegemony of private capital within Canadian broadcasting. With regard to the state project, Jessop writes that "any *substantive* unity which a state system might possess derives from specific political projects and struggles to impose unity or coherence on that system."⁷³ This may mean that a dominant state has to contend with "local or regional state projects" and "rival 'states within the state'."⁷⁴ Indeed, Mahon has suggested

that a state project in Canada might entail efforts to save federalism.⁷⁵ With this in mind, several institutional components of the federal state (the CBC, the provincial governments, etc) and a number of regional organizations are of particular importance in this study. The concern here is with how discourses on communication technologies may play a role in the unity and hegemony of the dominant federal state.

HEGEMONY AND IDEOLOGY

With a basic framework in place, we can now consider some issues more precisely. A few issues involving hegemony and ideology will be addressed before proceeding to a discussion of discourses on communication technologies.

Aspects of Ideological Struggle

Following Gramsci, common sense is a significant aspect of ideology in relation to hegemony. Hall elaborates on the concept:

Common sense shapes our ordinary, practical, everyday calculation and appears as natural as the air we breathe. It is simply 'taken for granted' in practice and thought, and forms the starting point (never examined or questioned) from which every conversation begins, the premises on which every television programme is predicated. The hope of every ideology is to naturalize itself out of History into Nature, and thus to become invisible, to operate unconsciously.⁷⁶

The hegemony of capital or the state is therefore secured when certain definitions acquire a naturalized meaning that can be taken for granted. Because they seem obvious, the definitions are unquestioned.

However, alternative definitions may be advanced by subordinate groups. As Jennifer Daryl Slack notes, "not all ideologies are equal. Indeed, the ideological contest -

so to speak - is a struggle to develop a system of meaning that can achieve dominance over competing systems in its claim to common sense."⁷⁷ Hall illustrates the importance of struggle over definitions with reference to the notion of democracy:

The real problem is which meaning of democracy is actually in play. The struggle in this case is over the different meanings of the same word. Different meanings will share some common characteristics but differ in their connotations. In ideology, in the kind of struggle over languages that goes on, the struggle is to fill out the precise way in which my 'popular democracy' differs from your 'liberal democracy'. It's exactly there, in the intersection of different connotations within the same linguistic sign, that the struggle takes place. And it *does* matter which becomes the dominant definition. It has real effects. Every time the word 'democracy' is used, which of those two associations does it trigger? So you can't exempt the domain of meaning, language, representation from the play of social forces.⁷⁸

There is, then, a significant struggle for dominance between the discourses that are put forward by different interests.

In this ideological struggle, connections emerge between discourses. Discourses become linked to each other through the process of articulation. As Hall notes, "ideology always consists, internally, of the articulation of different discursive elements."⁷⁹ The discourses of capital or the state are often articulated to moral discourses. Hall explains how this pertained to Thatcherism:

The aim was to reconstruct social life as a whole around a return to the old values - the philosophies of tradition, Englishness, respectability, patriarchalism, family, and nation. The most novel aspect of Thatcherism was indeed the very way in which it *combined* the new doctrines of the free market with some of the traditional emphases of organic Toryism.⁸⁰

Through articulation, the discourses of capital or the state come to represent subordinate

groups. For Hall, Thatcherism again provides an example:

It really is puzzling to say, in any simple way, whom Thatcherism represents....In the course of 'representing' corporate capital, however, it wins the consent of very substantial sections of the subordinate and dominated classes. What is the nature of this ideology which can inscribe such a vast range of different positions and interests in it, and which seems to represent a little bit of everybody? For, make no mistake, a tiny bit of all of us is also somewhere inside the Thatcherite project.⁸¹

As the case of Thatcherism indicates, articulation allows discourses to become universal and reflect many interests rather than particular interests. By appropriating and accommodating other discourses, articulation helps to secure hegemony.

However, hegemony may be difficult to secure since contradictions which are associated with the discourses may be identified and alternative discourses may be put forth.

Hall made this clear in his discussion of a strategy for the Left in defeating Thatcherism:

I do think one can begin to identify some weak spots, some contradictions, places where the discourses don't match up, or where there is a disparity between the promises and the delivery. There are lots of contradictions there, but they don't easily break in our direction or offer us big political opportunities; they require the constitution of an equally powerful, equally convincing alternative all the way across the political terrain.⁸²

Ultimately, as Hall indicates, "the only way of genuinely contesting a hegemonic form of politics is to develop a counter hegemonic strategy."⁸³ Like other discourses, the discourses associated with this strategy may also be appropriated or accommodated in order to eliminate their oppositional force

The state plays a role in the ideological struggle. As Hall notes, the state often sets the questions, terms, and definitions which frame a debate:

The power to initiate and formulate...is not decisive because you can't impose that formulation on everybody; but it does give you a first shot at the field - the power to formulate the question, to set the terms. Other definitions then have to respond to you; it's *your* definition that is being negotiated. The political apparatuses are effective precisely because of the monopolization of the power to formulate in our society.⁸⁴

However, the state also accommodates or makes concessions to discourses which do not favour dominant interests. Hall explains:

The state is clearly absolutely central in articulating the different areas of contestation, the different points of antagonism, into a regime of rule. The moment when you can get sufficient power in the state to organize a central political project is decisive, for then you can use the state to plan, urge, incite, solicit and punish, to conform the different sites of power and consent into a single regime.⁸⁵

By striking a compromise among the discourses, the state aims to win the consent of subordinate groups while ensuring that dominant interests prevail. In so doing, it aims to secure the hegemony of dominant interests.

Ideological Struggle and Communication Technologies

A certain meaning of the term "technology" has perhaps come close to achieving the status of common sense. Dallas Smythe once considered how often a definition of "technology" is provided by writers. Smythe reported that "I made a modest search in some dozens of books (out of the thousands published in the past century with technology as a central theme) for definitions of the term. What I learned was that hardly any of these authors ever troubles to define the term technology. Is it so obvious that it doesn't need definition?"⁸⁶ Jennifer Daryl Slack implies that the "obvious" definition is "machines, tools, and devices."⁸⁷ The definition is not linked to social organization. Smythe suggests that this

has important implications: “If ‘technology’ can be blamed for the ills of our social order, then the responsibility is displaced. A convenient scapegoat has been found, labelled and criticized. But the social order rolls on, protected to some extent against serious criticism by the smoke screen of the controversy over technology.”⁸⁸

This is not to suggest that the dominant definition of technology is entirely unquestioned. A challenge may be presented by alternative understandings of the concept.

As Slack notes:

...it is incumbent on anyone writing a treatise on technology to define what is meant by the term. Doing so is not an easy task, for a plethora of definitions must be considered. Nevertheless, the task of definition is of critical importance, for the way in which we define technology, or conceive of it, influences our attitudes toward it, our understanding of it, and our prescriptions for changing it.⁸⁹

Slack adds that “there are advantages in adding the dimension of social organization to the definition of technology....By embedding technology in social organization and practice, we acknowledge that technology is not an autonomous, isolated force, unconnected to the rest of society.” Slack regards “technology” to be the machines which are produced by a “technical system” and thereby acknowledges the social organization behind technology.⁹⁰

In this study as well, technology is regarded to be social.

A number of issues are linked to the dominant definition of technology. Flowing from the definition of technologies as asocial objects, there are several discourses which concern the implications of communication technologies. We will now turn to a consideration of three such discourses. We will examine their articulation to other discourses, the contradictions that are associated with the discourses, and the characteristics

of some alternative discourses.

DISCOURSES ON COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Technological Causality

The first discourse is *technological causality*. Building on an understanding of technologies which separates them from social organization, this discourse suggests that technologies themselves shape societal developments.

The discourse of technological causality seems to have had considerable influence. It has been associated with the ideas of some academics, most notably Marshall McLuhan. McLuhan has been negatively described by a number of writers as reflecting technological determinism.⁹¹ He indicated, for example, that “all media work us over completely. They are so pervasive in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical, and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected, unaltered.”⁹² However, in part stemming from the attention which McLuhan paid to specificity (the characteristics and implications of different media), his work has been described more charitably by Raymond Williams as “an apparently sophisticated technological determinism.”⁹³ The discourse of technological causality has been expressed in a different way through the work of Ithiel de Sola Pool. Through his notion of “soft technological determinism”, Pool argued that barriers, such as government regulation, can impede the effects of communication technologies.⁹⁴ As this suggests, the discourse can be used as an argument for deregulation. It may therefore have been particularly apparent in statements made by both industry and government during the

historical conjuncture which is examined in this study. The discourse may also have been reflected by these interests since, as Robert Babe argues, it mystifies their powerful role.⁹⁵ Indeed, some of the critical literature on communication technologies suggests that the discourse has been taken up by industry and government. Frank Webster and Kevin Robins have noted, for example, that aspects of the discourse exist in corporate advertising as well as government policy.⁹⁶

From a critical perspective, Babe sees the discourse of technological causality as taking two forms. Babe discusses technological determinism, but he also makes reference to the technological imperative. He defines the technological imperative as the idea that “most or all technological developments (‘technological evolution’) are inevitable and/or necessary; stated otherwise it holds that human choices are severely limited, if not illusory.” Technological determinism suggests that “all important human phenomena - cultures, the distribution of power, belief systems, industry structures - are the products of or are explainable by ‘technology’, which has, in accordance with the doctrine of the technological imperative, a life, growth, and development of its own.” Babe concludes that “the dual doctrines of technological dependency - the technological imperative and technological determinism - posit technology to be active and humans to be passive, implying that at best one can only adapt in order to survive.”⁹⁷

In a different way, both Jennifer Daryl Slack and Raymond Williams also see the discourse of technological causality as taking two forms. The first and most prevalent form is what Slack calls “simple causality.” This view of communication technologies involves a simple cause and effect relationship. As Slack puts it, “communication technologies are

conceived of as autonomous causes whose appearance produces inevitable effects.”⁹⁸ Williams calls simple causality “technological determinism.”⁹⁹ The second and less common form of technological causality is described by Slack as “symptomatic causality” (a term which is derived from Williams’ notion of “symptomatic technology”).¹⁰⁰ This view of communication technologies builds on the simple cause and effect relationship by introducing social institutions as a mediating variable. Although they are still seen as autonomous causes, communication technologies are no longer seen as having inevitable effects. The effects of the technologies are either thwarted or enhanced by social institutions.¹⁰¹ Through what is done with them when they appear, communication technologies become symptoms of forces that are connected to social institutions.

There are alternatives to the discourse of technological causality which present more useful ways of seeing causality. Williams, for example, pushes beyond the discourses of simple causality and symptomatic causality. He argues that the problem with simple causality is that it excises all notion of intention (since the technologies are autonomous). He argues further that the problem with symptomatic causality is that it only sees intention as indirect (since social institutions make decisions regarding the use of autonomous technologies). As an alternative to technological causality, Williams suggests that communication technologies reflect *direct intention* in the research and development which is conducted by social organizations.¹⁰² This direct intention may be scientific, military, commercial, administrative, or some combination of the above.¹⁰³ As Vincent Mosco has indicated, the approach taken by Williams is valuable since it “situates technology within a *social* setting that shapes the design, production, distribution, and use of the

technology.”¹⁰⁴ There are contradictions involving the discourse of technological causality. Marike Finlay argues that discourses on communication technologies are “inherently contradictory and therefore in a state of crisis.”¹⁰⁵ She notes that “technological determinism still thrives today in many discourses on new communications technology” but adds that “very often, these causalist discourses turn the deterministic procedure off and on at will as it suits their argument.”¹⁰⁶ Consequently, there is a contradiction between the *technological* and the *social* dimensions of causality. According to Finlay, the discourse of technological causality is also sometimes tied to contradictions that take the form of “double binds.”¹⁰⁷ We will examine some of Finlay’s ideas more fully in Chapter Four.

Technological Democracy

The second discourse is *technological democracy*. This discourse maintains that technologies facilitate such things as participation, equality, access, and control

The discourse of technological causality is articulated to the discourse of technological democracy. As Mosco explains, those who adopt the latter discourse “assume that technologies are responsible for social transformation and can achieve widespread participation and equality.”¹⁰⁸ This connection between the two discourses is apparent in the work of several writers, although the extent of the connection differs. On the one hand, Alvin Toffler stresses pure technological determinism in relation to democracy. He suggests that technologies give rise to other forms of political participation: “The permutations offered by the new communications technologies are endless and extraordinary. Once we recognize that our present institutions and constitutions are obsolete and we begin searching for alternatives, all sorts of breathtaking political options, never before possible, suddenly

open up to us.” For example, Toffler envisions individuals registering their political views from home through electronic town hall meetings.¹⁰⁹ On the other hand, in relation to democracy, Pool again advances his soft technological determinism: “The characteristics of media shape what is done with them, so one might anticipate that these technologies of freedom will overwhelm all attempts to control them. Technology, however, shapes the structure of the battle, but not every outcome.”¹¹⁰ Pool contends that the inherent democratic potential of the technologies may be inhibited by government regulation. Like the discourse that is linked to it, the discourse of technological democracy can be used as an argument for deregulation. It too may therefore have been apparent within industry and government circles during the historical conjuncture which is examined in this study.

Building on Williams’ points in response to technological causality, there are alternatives to the discourse of technological democracy which offer more useful ways of seeing democracy. As Mosco notes, the discourse of technological democracy is problematic: “By emphasizing the determining influence of technology, even in Pool’s and others’ ‘soft’ versions, technological democracy misses an important historical lesson: technologies embody, in their production, distribution, and use, existing political and social relationships.”¹¹¹ Mosco also notes another difficulty with the discourse. Apart from seeing democracy as a technological process, the discourse sees democracy as an *individual* process; we have noted that technological democracy focuses, for example, on the individual electronically voting from home. For Mosco, “the danger in this view is that it fails to recognize that democracy is a *social* process, propelled by social movements and social gatherings.”¹¹² Mosco therefore advances an alternative understanding of democracy: “...it

is not technology that creates democracy; rather, democracy grows out of economic, political, and social forces that use a variety of tools, including advanced technology, to achieve democratic ends.”¹¹³

The discourse of technological democracy is associated with contradictions. Finlay’s point that discourses on communication technologies are inherently contradictory applies once again. She notes that sometimes there is a contradiction between the overt claims of the discourses and their covert rules of operation.¹¹⁴ With regard to the issue of democracy, “the contradiction lies between a content of democratization and a procedure of hierarchical exclusivity.”¹¹⁵ On the one hand, many of the statements which deal with communication technologies make the claim that the technologies will lead to active roles for people through participation. On the other hand, many of the statements situate people in passive roles rather than active ones.¹¹⁶ This raises an interesting difference between technological causality and technological democracy. Whereas the contradiction that is tied to technological causality is between the *technological* and the *social*, the contradiction here is between *democracy* and *domination*.

Technological Nationalism

The third discourse is *technological nationalism*. This discourse suggests that technologies are associated with creating a country.

The discourse of technological nationalism is more closely linked to the state/government than industry or academics. To be sure, Melville Watkins has argued that the discourse is reflected in the work of Marshall McLuhan and Harold Innis.¹¹⁷ However, several writers have also noted the important role of the discourse with regard to the

Canadian state or government. Arthur Kroker indicated that “technological nationalism...has always been the essence of the Canadian state and, most certainly, the locus of the Canadian identity.”¹¹⁸ Maurice Charland showed how the discourse of technological nationalism has been reflected by the Canadian state since the 19th century.¹¹⁹ Robert Babe illustrated how the discourse has been apparent in the policy documents issued by the Canadian government during the last few decades.¹²⁰ Although they agree on a number of points about the discourse of technological nationalism, Charland and Babe have divergent interpretations of it in relation to technological causality.

On the one hand, Babe suggests that the discourse of technological causality (which he refers to as technological dependence) is not articulated to the discourse of technological nationalism. According to Babe, “the doctrine of technological nationalism postulates that Canadians have purposefully deployed systems of communication for nation-building but, paradoxically, the myth of technological dependence asseverates that we have few options in deploying industrial techniques.”¹²¹ Grounded as it is in human agency and the decisions of the Canadian government, this version of the discourse suggests the need for government intervention.

On the other hand, Charland suggests that the discourse of technological causality is articulated to the discourse of technological nationalism. Charland holds that there is a connection between technological causality and technological nationalism because the latter “ascribes to technology the capacity to create a nation by enhancing communication.”¹²² This suggests something similar to what we have seen with the other discourses: technology itself, rather than the government through regulation and legislation, is sufficient to achieve

the goal of nationalism. However, it also suggests that the role of the state/government vis a vis nationalism is mystified rather than celebrated.

The discourse of technological nationalism may also be articulated to the discourse of technological democracy and, in the process, open up contradictions which are similar to the ones that plague the latter discourse. Charland notes “the paradoxical promise of democracy and domination inherent to the rhetoric of technological nationalism.” In the Canadian experience, technological nationalism “proposes the electronic *polis* and affirms no value save the communication of the people’s voices... However, this vision of a society in and through technology is undermined by technological nationalism’s other goal, that of creating a *united* Canada.”¹²³ The discourse of technological nationalism presents technology as a neutral medium which offers democratic communication while also revealing technology to be a medium that sustains power relations among the federal-provincial or central-peripheral components of the country.

There are alternatives to the discourse of technological nationalism. Several “alternative discourses” have been reviewed by Raboy.¹²⁴ As in the critique of technological democracy, these discourses feature an understanding of democracy which focuses on social rather than technological elements. In the view of Raboy, these discourses also feature an understanding of the public which goes beyond “national” considerations. Raboy suggests that “broadcasting can become an instrument of democratic social development only if its public dimension is fully realized.”¹²⁵ He suggests that this necessitates several things. For example, jurisdiction over public broadcasting must transcend “federal” or “provincial” categories: the issue of cultural sovereignty must be framed in a way that goes beyond

“national” or “Canadian” terms; and public participation must be widely extended and clearly defined in a number of areas.¹²⁶

THE PRINCIPLES OF A THEORETICAL MODEL

The discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism have been addressed in the literature on communication technologies. However, studies have tended to focus on one or two of the discourses and the most powerful social agents (capital and the state).

The relationships among the discourses, social agents, and hegemony are complex. There are at least two reasons for this. First, historical change in the discourses and the social agents may have a bearing on the linkages between them. Second, the discourses are not equivalent to each other and neither are the social agents; the discourses vary in their prominence and internal characteristics while the social agents (cultural industries, cultural agencies, and cultural communities) vary in their power.

Although the relationships involved are complex, the aim here is to make some sense of them through a theoretical model which has been assembled from the literature reviewed above. This theoretical model, which will be evaluated in the study, is comprised of three basic principles.

Connection

The first principle is that connections between the discourses are most likely to be made in the arguments of the cultural industries and the arguments of the cultural agencies that are associated with the centre of the country. These connections work toward

establishing hegemony.

The discourse of technological causality mystifies the role of private capital, but the hegemony of the latter within Canadian broadcasting could require the articulation of technological causality to other discourses. The arguments of the cultural industries may reflect connections between the discourse of technological causality and discourses on democracy or nationalism. This can be illustrated with reference to Thomas Streeter's analysis of how the cable industry developed in the United States. Streeter notes that the cable industry drew a linkage between cable technology as an asocial, autonomous force and its potential for democratic communication.¹²⁷ He explains that this won favour among a number of public interest groups and had an impact on the growth of the cable industry:

It is important to note that the industry that benefited from the policy debate did not simply manipulate the debate toward its own ends; it was not just a case of the public interest being overwhelmed by the power of big business. Cable was brought into the regulatory fold in the early 1970s not simply because an industrial elite demanded it but because a coalition of groups, some with goals quite at odds with those of corporate management, cajoled the FCC [Federal Communications Commission] into action through a collective public argument that coalesced around the discourse of the new technologies. The hopes for diversity, democracy, and cultural expression embodied in the discourse of the new technologies may have been naive, but they were rarely cynical; they were largely fueled by genuine social and political concerns. Clearly, the policy debate nonetheless served the industry much more effectively than it did the social and democratic ambitions that helped generate the debate.¹²⁸

This suggests that the articulation of technological causality to discourses of democracy or nationalism may facilitate the hegemony of private capital; through connections to general or moral interests, consent to the expansion of the private sector could be secured.

The hegemony of the federal state over its institutional components is a different matter, and two possibilities seem to exist with regard to the arguments made by the cultural agencies that are associated with the centre of the country. On the one hand, technological causality may be articulated to discourses of democracy or nationalism. Charland notes, for instance, that Prime Minister Mackenzie King once linked radio to both nationalist and democratic interests (since it would bring the citizens of Canada together and enhance their incorporation into Canadian democracy through the opportunity to hear their leaders)¹²⁹ This mystifies the role of the federal state in domination while reflecting general and moral interests. On the other hand, technological causality may not be articulated to technological nationalism, and the latter may instead focus on human agency. A statement by Prime Minister R.B. Bennett provides an example of this: Bennett once indicate that, “properly employed, the radio can be made a most effective instrument in nation-building.”¹³⁰ This version of technological nationalism justifies the role of the federal state by suggesting the need for human agency to protect national interests.

Contradiction

The second principle is that contradictions involving the discourses are most likely to be identified and acted upon by the cultural communities as well as the cultural agencies which are associated with the periphery of the country. These contradictions can work against establishing hegemony, and they may take two forms. First, there is a contradiction between the *technological* and the *social* which appears in arguments that are linked to the discourse of technological causality. The cultural industries might, for instance, suggest that communication technologies themselves create conditions which the

industries must adapt to and then later indicate that the industries play a crucial role within the broadcasting system through their design or control of the technologies. This contradiction opens up the space for alternative discourses that focus on the social origins and development of communication technologies. Second, there is a contradiction between *democracy* and *domination* which figures into arguments that are associated with the discourses of technological democracy and technological nationalism. The arguments of the cultural industries might, for example, emphasize the choices which communication technologies allow audience members to make while at the same time revealing how those choices are structured and limited by the industries themselves. This contradiction opens up the space for alternative discourses which push beyond domination and propose new forms of democracy in the broadcasting field. However, private capital or the federal state may make connections to the alternative discourses of a counter hegemony in order to strip them of their oppositional force.

Compromise

The third principle is that the federal state attempts to secure its own hegemony as well as that of private capital by meshing various interests and discourses into a compromise within broadcasting legislation. The compromise is weighted in favour of private capital and the federal state, but it grants concessions to oppositional interests. In the history of Canadian broadcasting legislation, a number of such compromises have been formed. Perhaps the best examples focus on the issue of Canadian content. Marc Raboy notes that, in debates preceding the 1991 Broadcasting Act, there was strong support for a greater contribution to Canadian programming by the private broadcasting industry. The

private broadcasting industry was among the few opponents of this principle. The final legislation emphasized the importance of Canadian programming, but the legislation weakened and restricted the provisions for it. This aspect of the legislation was, as Raboy indicates, “more in line with the industry’s view.”¹³¹

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined some theoretical ideas about hegemony and discourses on communication technologies. It began by developing an approach to the concepts of state, class, and ideology. The chapter then tied ideology to hegemony through an overview of Gramsci’s ideas and the debate about hegemony in relation to Thatcherism. Building on Hall’s concern with the ideological aspects of hegemony, the chapter proceeded to outline some important developments in the history of Canadian broadcasting. These developments suggested that there were efforts to secure two forms of hegemony, one involving private capital and the other involving the federal state. The chapter then outlined some major issues pertaining to hegemony and ideology. It went on to address the discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism. The three discourses and their implications for hegemony were brought together within a theoretical model.

We are now in a position to consider this theoretical model through reference to how discourses on communication technologies played a role in the public proceedings on new Canadian broadcasting legislation. To put it in Martin Allor’s terms, we have completed the first step in a conjunctural analysis of ideology and can now proceed to the

second step:

The first move of a conjunctural analysis of ideology should be discursive....A discursive analysis of a representation focuses on its regularities, internal consistencies, and connections to other terms - other representations. ...But this discursive analysis is only the first step in this conjunctural analysis. Discourses only have existence within particular institutional sites. And the second move should be to document and analyze (through sociological analyses), the ways in which particular institutions have taken up, deployed, and altered the discourse...¹³²

We will soon turn to this sociological approach. Since some of the major issues are the expansion of the private sector (partially through its involvement in new forms of broadcasting), the emergence of the community sector, and the contraction of the public sector, it may be useful to focus on the discourses in terms of debates about broadcasting definitions, community broadcasting, and national broadcasting. Before addressing these debates, however, it is necessary to discuss how the research for the study was done. That is the subject of Chapter Three.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

This study involves historical, qualitative research. The present chapter describes how the research for the study was done. The first section addresses data gathering while the second section considers data processing and analysis. In both of these sections, I outline what was involved, the problems that I encountered and, where it was possible, what I did to overcome these problems.

It is important to note that this study has undergone a metamorphosis. Originally, it was intended to be an analysis of political, economic, and ideological factors pertaining to communication technologies and the policy formation process which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act.¹ Eventually, of course, it became more focused on ideological factors, it was transformed into an analysis of discourses on communication technologies in the public proceedings that were part of the process. The following discussion, which is organized in a chronological fashion, addresses methodological issues that are linked to all phases of the study.

DATA GATHERING

A distinction is usually made between primary and secondary sources of data. As Theda Skocpol puts it, primary sources are “the original residues of the past” whereas

secondary sources are “published books and articles.”² A number of secondary sources were utilized when doing research for the study. These sources included the reports issued by the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, and several other committees. They also included academic works which dealt with the topic of the research. However, most of the research for the study was based on primary sources. These sources included historical documents that were produced by groups and organizations.

The methodological literature on such documents has noted several problems which pertain to them. The most basic problem is getting access to the documents. As Marc Bloch points out, access may be hampered by groups and organizations through the impact of two factors, “that negligence which loses documents and, even more dangerous, that passion for secrecy...which hides or destroys them.”³ Jennifer Platt indicates that two problems may result from documents being lost, hidden, or destroyed. First, if the factors responsible for a lack of access play a significant role, there will be an inadequate quantity of data. Second, even if a sizable amount of data is collected, the factors which generate a lack of access could still have produced “a qualitatively unsatisfactory distribution of data.”⁴ In other words, there might be much information on some issues but little on others. My experience in gathering data on the proceedings of the task force illustrates a number of these problems.

Written Submissions to the Task Force

My research began in late 1991. Since I needed to know the positions of various organizations on broadcasting policy issues, I thought that it would be important to acquire

the written submissions (also referred to here as the briefs) that were given to the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy during 1985. The first step in my research therefore involved efforts to obtain these submissions or briefs.

I began by trying to locate where they were being held. I contacted the Department of Communications (DOC) on the reasonable assumption that they were being held there. I was told by DOC officials that their library had the research reports which were commissioned by the task force, but it did not have the written submissions. After conducting a search for me, DOC officials established that the submissions were being held in the National Archives of Canada. I was told that there were 24 boxes of material, 7 or 8 of which contained written submissions. Some of the other boxes contained audio tapes of public meetings which the task force held. It was not made clear to me what was in the remaining boxes. Although the task force material was being held in the National Archives of Canada, I was told that it was still under the authority of the DOC and therefore not in the public domain. Consequently, DOC officials indicated that I could only obtain the written submissions if I went through Access to Information. I was advised that this could take some time since they would have to contact all of the organizations whose submissions I wanted to see and get their permission in writing for me to view the documents. The case of the task force material provides a perfect illustration of the “passion for secrecy” which, as Bloch notes, leads to documents being withheld.

Interestingly, while doing research for the study, I later discovered that other writers have had similar difficulties in obtaining the task force material. Presumably stemming from experiences in doing research for his book on Canadian broadcasting policy,

Marc Raboy commented in 1989 on the exclusivity of access to the material:

More than 350 groups made representations to the task force, either submitting briefs, meeting with the task force in private, appearing at public meetings with the task force, or some combination of the above. Its work generated several dozen cases of documents, currently lodged in a National Archives of Canada depot where only a handful of DOC employees can reach them without going through cumbersome Access to Information procedures.⁵

Difficulties in getting access to the task force material were also noted by Michael Nolan, a member of the Faculty of Journalism at the University of Western Ontario, when he appeared as a witness before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture in 1987. Nolan told the committee that he was concerned about the unavailability of records on what Canadians had said to the task force, and he asked the committee about obtaining the records. The chair of the committee asked Paul Audley, who had been in charge of research for both the task force and the standing committee, to answer Nolan's question. Audley indicated that no transcripts were made of the private meetings. Notes were taken and a series of books providing summaries of the private meetings were prepared, but these were "not available." (This explains, at least partially, what was in the rest of the boxes). Audley added that the public meetings had been taped. He was about to expand on this before the chair of the committee interrupted and advised Nolan to try going through Access to Information.⁶

At this point, I decided to seek the assistance of some people who had been directly associated with the task force. I wrote to Gerald Caplan and asked if he had any of the submissions or could offer some advice on obtaining them. In his reply, Caplan wrote that "I'm terribly sorry you're having such a problem getting access to our research; we were

solemnly assured this would not happen, but we have no control of any part of the process any longer.” Caplan indicated that he did not have any of the submissions in his own files. However, he advised me to contact Paul Audley because “if anyone can help you out, it is he.”⁷ I subsequently contacted Audley. Audley wrote back, indicating that “I’m sorry to say that it is my understanding that there are real problems in getting access to task force material.” With regard to the written submissions, Audley indicated that “I might have some copies myself, but if they were submitted in confidence, I would be unable to share them with you.” He explained that he would only be able to share submissions with me if I had letters from the organizations involved which authorized me to see their submissions. In light of this, Audley suggested that I adopt the strategy of writing to the organizations which made the submissions and asking them if they would be willing to send their submissions directly to me.⁸

I decided to follow Audley’s advice and write to the organizations themselves. The report issued by the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy indicated that 242 briefs had been received from organizations and individuals. The names of the many organizations and the relatively few individuals were provided along with their province of origin.⁹ I focused on the organizations and tried to find them through a variety of directories and other reference sources. Locating the organizations proved to be a difficult task. Many of them could not be found in any of the directories or other sources that I consulted. There are several possible reasons for this. Some organizations may not have been listed simply because they no longer existed. Others may not have been listed because they were too small or otherwise did not meet the criteria for inclusion. Using their province of origin or

(better yet) any location references in their names, I was able to find a few of these organizations through telephone books. Even if they were listed in reference sources, I might not have found some organizations because they were not listed where I expected them to be; they may have changed their names or amalgamated with other organizations. I found evidence that this was the case with a few organizations, and I was subsequently able to track them down. However, there may have been others that I did not catch. I managed to find mailing addresses connected to 141 of the 242 briefs, that is, 58 per cent of them. I then prepared and sent out letters to organizations asking them to send me a copy of the brief which they submitted. After six weeks, I sent out follow-up letters to the organizations that I had not yet heard from. As I discovered, there were several problems with this strategy for getting the briefs.

First, I sometimes received the wrong brief from organizations. A few organizations apparently misunderstood what I wanted or otherwise erred even though my letter had clearly made reference to the Caplan-Sauvageau Task Force on Broadcasting Policy. For instance, CTV sent me its brief to the Girard-Peters Task Force on the Economic Status of Canadian Television. I subsequently made two phone calls to CTV to ask for the correct brief. Although I was told both times that the correct brief would be sent, I never received it. The Association canadienne française de l'Alberta sent me a brief that was submitted to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture during the latter's proceedings on the task force report in 1987. I wrote to the organization again and tried to clarify what I wanted. The organization wrote back insisting that it had sent the correct brief.¹⁰ This does not appear to have been a language problem since the

organization wrote to me in English. Moreover, some English-language organizations made the same mistake. The letter which the British Columbia Association of Broadcasters (BCAB) enclosed with its brief to the standing committee clearly indicated that the association thought it had sent the brief to the task force.¹¹ The confusion on the part of the BCAB and other organizations may have stemmed from the fact that the cover page on most of these briefs made reference to the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy. It may also have stemmed from a lack of familiarity with the various stages of the policy formation process. In any event, my efforts to resolve these problems by contacting the organizations all met with failure.

Second, I did not receive briefs from a number of organizations. In some cases, organizations did not respond to my letters. I was not necessarily being slighted since some of the mailing addresses that I used may have been inaccurate or outdated. In other cases, organizations responded to my initial letter or the follow-up only to note that the requested material could not be provided. It is interesting to consider the variety of explanations they offered for this. Although it was listed in the task force report as having provided a brief, Baton Broadcasting claimed that it only made an oral presentation before the task force and did not submit a brief.¹² Several organizations simply said that their brief could not be located.¹³ Some remarked that their current files did not go that far back. They either explicitly or implicitly indicated that their brief may be in storage, but they did not search those files.¹⁴ Others also indicated that their current files did not go that far back, but they had checked their archival files and still not found their brief.¹⁵

Several organizations that apparently conducted thorough searches tried to

account for why their brief could not be found. Although these explanations do not necessarily reveal the “negligence” that Bloch speaks of, they do draw attention to some of the factors which can lead to documents being lost. Some organizations noted that staff changes may have made it difficult to locate their brief.¹⁶ Telemedia went further, suggesting that staff changes may have had an effect on its filing system.¹⁷ The Council of Canadians specified that it could not locate its brief because its filing system was not well kept in earlier years.¹⁸ The British Columbia Motion Picture Association said that it could not find its brief possibly because of “an inadequate filing system” and a move.¹⁹ Several other organizations speculated that a move may have resulted in their brief being lost.²⁰ Only one organization specifically pointed to documents being destroyed; of its brief, CISN-FM indicated that “it may have been discarded some years ago.”²¹ These instances of documents being lost or destroyed suggest that the strategy of making direct requests for briefs from organizations is only viable within a year or two of the point when the briefs had been submitted.

The issues outlined above meant that there were serious problems with my data. I managed to obtain 63 briefs. This was 45 per cent of the 141 requested briefs and 26 per cent of the total 242 briefs. I clearly had an inadequate quantity of data. More significantly, I also had what was described above as “a qualitatively unsatisfactory distribution of data.” The low number of briefs might not have mattered as much if the briefs had been spread more or less evenly across the various types of organizations that submitted them. However, I had an over-representation of briefs from the cultural communities (particularly workers’ groups and minority groups) and an under-representation of briefs from the cultural

industries (especially cable companies and independent producers). Although I had most of the briefs that were submitted by the CBC, I did not have briefs from some other cultural agencies.

Transcripts of Committee Proceedings and Government Debates

Other aspects of my research were being undertaken while I was trying to obtain the task force briefs, and they continued long after my efforts to acquire the briefs had ceased. Some of my research involved looking at the transcripts of debates in the House of Commons and the Senate. All debates involving Bill C-136 and Bill C-40 were studied to get information on the positions of major political parties and the development of the bills as they passed through various readings. In total, approximately 600 pages of debates were examined. My research also involved looking at the transcripts of proceedings conducted by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture; the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136; the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40; and the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications. I studied every one of the oral presentations that organizations and individuals made to these various government committees as well as all of the questioning done by committee members after each of the oral presentations. In total, an estimated 6,000 pages of government committee proceedings were examined. All of the government debates and committee proceedings were available in the Government Documents section of the Mills Memorial Library at McMaster University.

Compared to the task force briefs which I had been able to collect, the transcripts of proceedings by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and

Culture gave me a much better picture of the positions taken by various organizations. Unlike the case with the written submissions to the task force, I had a complete collection of standing committee transcripts. The standing committee heard oral presentations from 38 organizations or individuals in the first phase of its inquiry on the task force report, and it heard oral presentations from 246 witnesses in the second phase of its inquiry. In both phases, these witnesses were well distributed across the various types of organizations that had interests in broadcasting. It is also worth noting that the questioning of organizations by committee members was useful; the questioning probed further into issues that were addressed in an oral presentation, and they often dealt with issues that were not mentioned in a presentation. This advantage extended to the transcripts for the proceedings of other committees.

Taking Notes from the Data

Notes were taken in two different contexts. My research on the transcripts of government debates was done in the Mills Memorial Library at McMaster University, but the library staff kindly gave me permission to borrow the volumes of committee proceedings so that I could do some of my research at home. Doing some of the research at home rather than in the library had several benefits. I was able to take notes in comfortable, quiet surroundings at hours convenient to me. Instead of writing notes by hand, I was also able to type them directly into my computer. These are not insignificant matters when doing research such as this. The more pleasant working conditions better enabled me to read the large amount of data carefully and take comprehensive notes.

Taking comprehensive notes is an important strategy in historical research. Even

though such a practice may lead to considerable “waste”, it is simply better to have too many notes rather than too few. I consequently set a broad guideline to direct my note-taking. Reflecting the original focus of the study, the guideline that I set for myself was to take notes on any issues involving communication technologies and characteristics of the policy formation process. Although this guideline was broad, it eliminated a large number of other issues. If the wording of points on the relevant issues seemed like it might be important, I copied direct quotations into my notes. If the wording did not seem to be important, I paraphrased the information.

DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

Two Filing Systems

As a result of my research, I had thousands of pages of notes and other materials such as briefs or photocopies. In order to get a handle on the massive amount of data that I had, I utilized two filing systems.

The first filing system was based on participants in the debates about new broadcasting legislation. I established a scheme for categorizing these participants. From the beginning, my scheme had three categories. The earliest version of the scheme included the categories of private capital, subordinate groups, and state agencies. However, changes were made to the names and even the nature of these three categories until they were eventually transformed into cultural industries, cultural communities, and cultural agencies. I also refined the three categories by developing sub-categories for each. The final version of my categorization scheme is presented in Appendix One. Since I had separate notes and

other materials on each of the participants in the broadcasting debates, it was a simple matter for me to organize and re-organize my data files so that they fit the changes which were made in my categorization scheme.

The second filing system was based on issues in the debates about new broadcasting legislation. As my research progressed, I became interested in examining certain issues. Once I completed my documentary research on the general political, economic, and ideological issues involving communication technologies and the policy formation process, I went through the data to collect information on the specific issues which interested me. I began the process of establishing files on these issues by going through my first filing system and its data on the participants in committee proceedings. This enabled me to gather information on the issues while also systematically keeping track of the participants and the committee proceedings that were associated with the information. After this was done, I examined the government debates for further data. This second filing system provided my “analytical files”, the files from which I constructed much of my analysis.²² Although some of these files were not used in preparing the final study, others were. For example, some of the latter files bore titles like “Incorporating New Technologies”, “Challenges to Community Broadcasting”, and “Problems with Distribution by the CBC.” Along with a few others, these files were the basis for what is now Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Six.

Selection and Presentation of the Data

It may be useful to comment on the selection and presentation of quotations or paraphrased material from the files for inclusion in the study.

As Jennifer Platt points out, there are two extremes in the selection and presentation of material. On the one hand, we have “the appeal to authority.” Platt notes that this can be problematic:

Where it is known that someone is truly an authority in a particular area, with wide familiarity with its primary sources, his general impressions and broad summaries are clearly worth quite a lot; however, human frailty is always present, and without equal experience of one’s own, one cannot tell when statements are truly authoritatively grounded and when then are not.²³

On the other hand, we have “the total display of data.” As Platt notes, this can also be problematic. In her own experience, she once found that “I felt obliged to quote all the instances which supported a particular point, for lack of any alternative way of indicating the weight of the data, although this did not seem a satisfactory solution.”²⁴ For Platt, this was an unwieldy solution to the issue of demonstrating that the data do indeed support the interpretations which are made.

Platt suggests that there are three “middle ways” between these two extremes. In the first strategy, it is possible “to use a systematic method and to give a general account of it rather than to show its operation at each individual point; the main presentation of the data and conclusions can then be done just as if the method of authority were being used.” The second strategy involves “giving specific accounts of relevant aspects of methods in relation to individual conclusions, or devising ad hoc ways of supporting them. Here would come such suggestions as counting positive and negative instances and reporting the results.” In the third strategy, it is important “to write in a style that proceeds by way of illustrations, but to choose these illustrations on principles which make them qualitatively representative

of the whole body of data - ensuring that any generalizations can be supported by several different examples, choosing examples strategically so that they cover the range of meanings to be conveyed and indicate relative weights.”²⁵

The third strategy outlined by Platt is the one which most closely resembles the approach taken in this study. Since there were many organizations within each of the general categories and sub-categories, and since many of these organizations took similar positions, no attempt has been made here to provide a quotation from all of them to support a point. When there were similar positions, these have been illustrated through a quotation from one organization which clearly sets out the perspective and an endnote has been added to indicate what other organizations shared this perspective. When positions were different from those expressed by most other organizations, these too have been illustrated or at least referenced.

Re-focusing the Study

As noted earlier, the present study was originally intended to be an analysis of political, economic, and ideological factors pertaining to communication technologies and the policy formation process which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act. Some aspects of this approach were later abandoned since initial chapters of the study proved to be problematic. The early chapters tried to contend with the political economic *and* the ideological dimensions of the policy formation process in relation to three issues besides the ones that are examined in the current study. The additional issues were cable programming, cable distribution, and aboriginal broadcasting. Since the chapters were attempting to do too much, a narrower theoretical and substantive focus for the study was sought. Despite

considerable data in the public transcripts on the wide-ranging consultations that occurred behind closed doors, it would have been essential to conduct additional research through interviews with key players in order to successfully concentrate more on the political economic (and the non-public) dimensions of the policy formation process. The existing data therefore favoured a focus on ideological factors rather than political and economic ones. The focus of the study was subsequently narrowed down to three issues (broadcasting definitions, community broadcasting, and national broadcasting) in relation to the role which discourses on communication technologies played during the public proceedings.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While adopting a focus on ideological factors, specifically three discourses on communication technologies, this study is marked by a few limitations. These limitations involve the issue of representativeness, which is of concern to social scientists since it affects the generalizability of their findings.²⁶

The issue of representativeness arises in terms of reliance on the transcripts of public proceedings for textual analysis. As it has been noted, my efforts to obtain the briefs that were submitted to the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy met with mixed results. It should also be noted that the organizations which made oral presentations to various government committees submitted briefs to these committees. Are there differences between the transcripts of the public proceedings and the briefs? Some evidence suggests that there are no substantial differences. During the proceedings of the parliamentary standing committee, for instance, both Maclean Hunter and the Satellite Communications

Association of Canada specifically indicated that their presentation simply summarized the brief which they had submitted to the task force a few years earlier.²⁷ Moreover, in the rare cases where I had access to a brief which had been submitted to a committee, the brief was very similar to the presentation that an organization had made.²⁸ It is nevertheless important to bear in mind that, to some degree at least, the public proceedings may not be representative of all the ideas which were expressed in the policy formation process.

The issue of representativeness also arises in terms of the organizations which participated in the public proceedings. Briefs were submitted by many organizations which did not appear before the government committees; for example, while the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture heard oral presentations from 38 witnesses in the first phase of its inquiry, it also received briefs or letters from 82 additional witnesses.²⁹ Are there differences between the organizations which made presentations and the organizations which simply submitted briefs? Furthermore, are there differences between the organizations which played some sort of role in the policy formation process (through presentations and/or briefs) and the organizations which played no role at all? The latter situation might be particularly problematic; the organizations which played no role might, for example, have had lower levels of opposition to proposed recommendations or legislative clauses than organizations of a similar type which did play a role. In light of this, it is possible that the views of participants in the public proceedings may not be representative of all similar organizations.

Due to the potential existence of problems pertaining to representativeness, the generalizability of the study (with regard to positions on communication technologies) may

be restricted. However, at the very least, the findings of this case study could provide a basis for further research.

CONCLUSION

No research is perfect, and the preparation for this study certainly reveals a number of the problems that can affect historical, qualitative research. Bearing all of these methodological issues in mind, we will now turn to the results of the analysis. In the next three chapters, the discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism will be addressed as they pertained to the public proceedings which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act.

ENDNOTES

1. David Young, "New Communication Technologies and Broadcasting Policy: The Case of the 1991 Canadian Broadcasting Act", a proposal for a Ph.D. dissertation, Department of Sociology, McMaster University, 1991, p. 36.
2. Theda Skocpol, "Emerging Agendas and Recurrent Strategies in Historical Sociology", p. 382.
3. Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft*, p. 75.
4. Jennifer Platt, "Evidence and Proof in Documentary Research 1: Some Specific Problems of Documentary Research", p. 35
5. Marc Raboy, "Two Steps Forward, Three Steps Back: Canadian Broadcasting Policy from Caplan-Sauvageau to Bill C-136", p. 71.
6. Canada, House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture [hereafter HCSCCC], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1987), 54:60-61.
7. Gerald Caplan, Letter to the Author, 26 November, 1991.
8. Paul Audley, Letter to the Author, 27 February, 1992.
9. Canada, Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, *Report*, pp. 705-710.
10. Lyne Lemieux (Information, Association canadienne francaise de l'Alberta), Letter to the Author, 19 May, 1992.
11. Roy Gardner (Vice-President, Programming, BCTV), Letter to the Author, 4 May, 1992.
12. Douglas G. Bassett (President and Chief Executive Officer, Baton Broadcasting), Letter to the Author, 28 February, 1992.
13. This was indicated in the following Letters to the Author: Anne Boswall (Prince Edward Island Federation of Agriculture), 28 February, 1992; Elizabeth Hamilton (Executive Director, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Newfoundland and Labrador Division), 3 March, 1992; John Foss (President, Association of Canadian Advertisers), 5 March, 1992; Robert A. Elton (National Director, Communications and Human Resources, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, National Office), 3 April, 1992; David Coriat (Vice-President, Finance, Standard Broadcasting), 4 May, 1992; Jerry Good (General Manager, CFMX-FM), 8 May, 1992; F.L. Wagman (General Manager, Cable Regina), 27 May, 1992; Ed Frenette (Maritime Branch Representative, Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, Maritime Branch), 8 June, 1992; and Sylvie Powell (Manager,

Communications Services, Canadian Cable Television Association), 17 July, 1992.

14. This was indicated in the following Letters to the Author: Deborah Brenton (Executive Assistant, Western International Communications), 2 March, 1992; Claudette Hammock (Executive Assistant, Writers' Federation of Nova Scotia), 27 April, 1992; and Elizabeth Duffy-MacLean (Manager, Business Affairs, JLL Broadcast Group), 11 May, 1992.

15. This was indicated in the following Letters to the Author: Jennifer Rogers (Administrator, Radio-Television News Directors Association), 1 May, 1992, and Joanne Aspin (Executive Assistant, Director of Fundraising, Easter Seal Society), 13 May, 1992.

16. This was indicated in the following Letters to the Author: Don Thomas (Interim President and Chief Executive Officer, Access Network), 14 April, 1992; and Michelle Pang (Administration Secretary, Chinavision), 19 May, 1992.

17. Ingrid Paquette (Assistant to the President, Telemedia), Letter to the Author, 24 April, 1992.

18. Anne Boys (Executive Assistant, Council of Canadians), Letter to the Author, 5 May, 1992.

19. Linda McAteer (Program Coordinator, British Columbia Motion Picture Association), Letter to the Author, 16 March, 1992.

20. This was indicated in the following Letters to the Author: Louis Audet (President and Chief Operating Officer, COGECO), 31 March, 1992; Linda Power (Communications Coordinator, Assembly of British Columbia Arts Councils), 8 April, 1992; and Brenda Kass (Executive Director, Manitoba Association for the Promotion of Ancestral Languages), 30 April, 1992.

21. R. M. Lang (General Manager, CISN-FM), Letter to the Author, 7 May, 1992.

22. The notion of analytical files is borrowed from Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research* (Seventh Edition), p. 294.

23. Jennifer Platt, "Evidence and Proof in Documentary Research 2: Some Shared Problems of Documentary Research", pp. 60-61.

24. Jennifer Platt, "Evidence and Proof in Documentary Research 2", pp. 60-61.

25. Jennifer Platt, "Evidence and Proof in Documentary Research 2", p. 61.

26. Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, p. G7.

27. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the presentations made by Maclean Hunter, 65:17-19, and the Satellite Communications Association of Canada, 30:11.

28. This is the case, for example, with the presentations which the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Alliance of Canadian Cinema Television and Radio Artists made to the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136 and the briefs which these organizations made to the committee. See Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* (1988), 8:5-12 and 3:5-12; Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *CBC Brief to the Legislative Committee on Bill C-136*; and Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, *Presentation of Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists to the House of Commons Legislative Committee Regarding Bill C-136*.

29. Canada, HCSCCC, *Interim Report on the Recommendations of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy: Specialty Services and Some Proposed Legislative Amendments*, pp. 33:49-55.

CHAPTER FOUR

BROADCASTING DEFINITIONS AND TECHNOLOGICAL CAUSALITY

Chapter Two briefly described the expansion of the private sector in the Canadian broadcasting system and its current dominant position within the system. The historical changes regarding the private sector were partially due to the involvement of companies in communication technologies that fell outside broadcasting definitions. This chapter examines the private sector in relation to debates about broadcasting definitions during the public proceedings which led up to the 1991 Broadcasting Act. Although the private sector was dominant, its hegemony had yet to be secured. The analysis suggests that the discourse of technological causality played a role in the process of establishing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting.

HISTORICAL ISSUES

Technological Causality and the Rise of Cable Companies

The discourse of technological causality is associated with the growth of the cable industry. This has been demonstrated by Thomas Streeter with regard to the cable industry in the United States. Although Streeter focuses on American developments, his analysis also appears to reflect the Canadian experience.

Streeter contends that a shift in terminology from “CATV” to “cable” was significant. From the early 1950s to the late 1960s, the common term was CATV. Streeter notes that “the term ‘community antenna television’, still dominant in 1966, reflected an understanding of CATV as a service, as an alternative method of program delivery.” The service aspects of CATV were stressed when it was discussed by those involved with it. However, “by 1970, CATV had become cable; all references to service were dropped and replaced by the name of a piece of hardware.”¹ The emergence of “cable” was accompanied by treatment of it as an autonomous technology. Consequently, as Streeter argues, “a complex set of historical and economic circumstances was thoroughly obscured as CATV was abstracted in discourse into a simple new technology, something that was outside society.”² This notion of autonomous technology was combined with a notion of determining technology; the discussion of cable included the theme of “technological revolution, of major change caused by technology.”³ Similar discursive modifications took place in Canada. Between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the National Community Antenna Television Association of Canada renamed itself as the Canadian Cable Television Association and began to discuss “cable” rather than “CATV.”⁴

Streeter argues that the discursive change from CATV to cable helps to explain a “regulatory about-face” in the position taken by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).⁵ It helps to explain “the shift in the FCC’s attitude towards CATV from one of restriction to one of encouragement.”⁶ Initially, FCC rules had placed restrictions on CATV systems because they were seen as a threat to local broadcasters. However, the FCC ended up supporting the development of the cable industry through new rules. Streeter explains:

The reconceptualization of CATV as cable, associated with the discourse of the new technologies,...had made it increasingly difficult to speak of cable as merely a marginal enterprise that concerned the FCC only insofar as it threatened local broadcasters. The discourse had given birth to a new common sense, a new set of taken-for-granted ideas about cable as an inevitable wave of the future, as a manifestation of the progress that was supposed to be the FCC's concern. The reconceptualization, combined with unrelenting pressure from lobbying cable operators and their financial backers, made it only a matter of time before new rules were drawn up⁷

Although other factors were involved, Streeter makes it clear that discourse was partially responsible for a change in the position of the FCC. It helped the cable industry to obtain a better position vis a vis broadcasters and regulation

Robert Babe indicates that a number of factors, including discourse, also played a role in altering the position of the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC). During the early 1970s, the CRTC saw cable operators as a threat to broadcasters (who were responsible for fulfilling a public purpose). The CRTC offered special protection to broadcasters through various policies. However, by the end of the 1970s, the CRTC's position on cable began to change. According to Babe, three factors were behind this. First, the economic impact of cable on broadcasting was not as extensive as it had originally been anticipated to be. Second, the CRTC had become less optimistic about the willingness of private broadcasters to serve a public purpose. Third, there was "receptivity of rhetoric about the imminence of an information revolution." As a result of these three factors, cable was transformed into a chosen instrument that would bring the information revolution to Canadians. By the mid-1980s, the CRTC's "about-face" on cable was complete and the cable industry had begun to assume the dominant position in Canadian broadcasting. Babe

notes that, like broadcasting before it, “cable was now held in such high esteem by Ottawa’s mandarins that it too warranted special protection - from the even newer ‘new technologies’ of private dish antennae, VCRs [video-cassette recorders], and apartment MATVs [master antenna television systems].”⁸

Changes in Broadcasting Definitions

The definition of broadcasting was changed slightly between the first few pieces of broadcasting legislation. In the 1932 Canadian Radio Broadcasting Act, broadcasting was defined as “the dissemination of radioelectric communications intended to be received by the public, either directly or through the medium of relay stations.”⁹ The 1936 Broadcasting Act reproduced this definition, but it specified radioelectric communications to include “radiotelegraph, radiotelephone, the wireless transmission of writing, signs, signals, pictures and sounds of all kinds by means of Hertizan waves.”¹⁰

The focus on radioelectric communications in the definition of broadcasting was challenged by the development of CATV because the latter involved the wired transmission of signals. Canada’s first CATV system was set up in the town of Nicolet, Quebec during 1950. The first urban system was established in London, Ontario during 1952.¹¹ Many other CATV systems were formed in Canada over the next few years. Throughout the 1950s, there was little effort to control the development of these systems. The Department of Transport (DOT) issued licenses to CATV operators, but it only kept technical considerations in mind when doing so; the DOT did not attempt to supervise the selection of program services to be relayed by CATV systems. Moreover, no provisions for CATV systems were included in the 1958 Broadcasting Act. Since CATV systems were then mainly used to bring

television to small communities which could not otherwise be served due to terrain or distance from transmitters, it did not seem necessary to the drafters of the 1958 act to bring the systems under regulation by the Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG).¹² Consequently, the definition of broadcasting remained as it had been in the 1936 legislation; the definition was confined to radioelectric communications and did not include the transmission of signals through wired systems.¹³

By the early 1960s, pressure to change the definition of broadcasting was mounting due to conflict between broadcasters and the operators of CATV systems. Since the systems were increasingly being used to multiply the number of services available in urban areas, television broadcasters were concerned about the added competition and the resulting fragmentation of the audience.¹⁴ In 1961, before the House of Commons Special Committee on Broadcasting, both the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) argued that the definition of broadcasting should be widened to include CATV systems and thereby bring the systems under the regulatory authority of the BBG.¹⁵ CATV systems were regarded as such a threat to television broadcasters that the government asked the BBG to undertake a special inquiry on the systems. For this reason, CATV systems were excluded from the terms of reference for the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting (Fowler II).¹⁶ Fowler II nevertheless chose to comment on CATV systems. It concurred with the conclusion of the BBG inquiry that the systems should be considered as a component of broadcasting which is subject to licensing, regulation, and control by the BBG. The White Paper on Broadcasting as well as the House of Commons Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Films, and Assistance to the Arts echoed

that assessment.¹⁷ However, the National Community Antenna Television Association of Canada expressed its opposition.¹⁸ In the end, CATV systems were not brought under the definition of broadcasting in the 1968 Broadcasting Act. Broadcasting was defined as “any radiocommunication in which the transmissions are intended for direct reception by the general public.”¹⁹ Since broadcasting was limited to radiocommunication, it did not cover CATV systems. However, CATV systems were to some degree covered in the legislation through the new concept of a broadcasting receiving undertaking.²⁰

The definition of broadcasting which appeared in the 1968 Broadcasting Act was clearly obsolete from the outset, and it became even more obsolete over the years. During the 1970s and early 1980s, cable systems became more prevalent in Canada while satellites became crucial in Canadian broadcasting.

PRE-LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Developing a New Approach to Broadcasting Definitions

Against this historical background, the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy tried to establish what should be done with the definition of broadcasting. The Caplan-Sauvageau task force pointed out that the definition established in the 1968 Broadcasting Act was now inadequate:

This definition covers only the activities of undertakings that broadcast their programs free of charge to anyone who has equipment capable of receiving the signals. It is based on the assumption of program transmission by Hertzian waves, which was the dominant configuration in 1968 when the Broadcasting Act was passed. Because it covers only radiocommunication in which the broadcasts are intended for ‘direct’ reception by the ‘general’ public, the definition appears to ignore the many program services such as

specialty services transmitted by point-to-point satellites that are distributed to subscribers only.²¹

The task force indicated why the omissions in the definition were problematic. The task force argued that “it is not fair for individuals or companies involved in activities that very closely resemble the activities of companies considered to be part of the broadcasting system to be able to avoid the obligations incumbent upon the latter simply because the definition of broadcasting in the act is too narrow to include them.”²² Consequently, the task force recommended that “the act should broaden the definition of broadcasting and related concepts to cover all types of program reception and distribution whether by Hertzian waves or through any other technology.”²³

One of these “related concepts” was that of a broadcasting undertaking. The 1968 Broadcasting Act stated that a broadcasting undertaking included a broadcasting transmitting undertaking (e.g., a television station); a broadcasting receiving undertaking (e.g., a cable system); and a network operation (e.g., a television network).²⁴ The Caplan-Sauvageau task force explained what should be done with the notion of a broadcasting undertaking:

The definition of a broadcasting undertaking should of course tally with the definition of broadcasting. It should cover not only the transmission and reception of broadcast signals, but also any other form of program distribution by telecommunication, whether or not there is a charge for the service, as well as networks. All undertakings involved in such activities would, within the meaning of the act, be considered broadcasting undertakings. Only common carriers such as telephone companies should be exempted because their role is limited to relaying messages.²⁵

Clearly, although the task force argued that broadcasting definitions should be expanded,

they did not go so far as to include telephone companies within those definitions.

The Growth of Competition

The House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture investigated the ideas which numerous organizations had about the recommendations of the task force, including the ideas of the cultural industries. Most of the cultural industries agreed with the task force that the broadcasting definitions in the legislation had to be modified. The arguments of several industries centered around the growth of unregulated and unfair competition.

Private broadcasters have long been preoccupied with competition which stemmed from various communication technologies. As we have seen, the CAB had been concerned about CATV systems during the 1960s since the latter did not fall under the definition of broadcasting and were therefore unregulated. Although cable never was brought under the definition of broadcasting in the 1968 Broadcasting Act, it was subjected to regulation as a broadcasting receiving undertaking. This situation had been enough to satisfy private broadcasters for many years. However, in light of new technologies, private broadcasters now believed that it was time to make changes in the definition of broadcasting. The CAB built on the point that the task force made about unfair competition: "As to where specialty [services] and everybody else fits in, basically private broadcasters believe in having level playing fields - equal rules for all people who are on that playing field."²⁶ Like the conventional private broadcasters which the CAB represented, specialty services and pay-TV services were concerned about unfair competition. First Choice stated that, although "government policies have said much about fostering a level playing field for

all broadcast players”, unregulated satellite systems were importing the company’s American counterparts - including Home Box Office (HBO), Cinemax, Showtime, and The Movie Channel.²⁷ Both First Choice and Superchannel called for changes, including changes in the definition of broadcasting, to contend with such problems.²⁸

Along with private broadcasters, cable companies faced competition from satellite systems. Two types of satellite systems were of concern to cable companies. The first type of systems, which permit direct-to-home (DTH) satellite distribution, are known as TVRO (television receive-only) systems. These are personal systems comprised of an earth station (a satellite dish) that an individual home owner has installed for reception of satellite services. The second type of systems are known as SMATV (satellite master antenna television) systems. These are essentially “mini-cable systems” that are installed in buildings such as apartment complexes, hotels, and motels. All of the units or rooms in each building are equipped for reception of satellite services from an earth station which is linked to the building. Although the cable industry was worried about both types of satellite systems, TVRO systems were considered to be less of a threat than SMATV systems. This was because TVRO systems were at that time still largely confined to rural areas and SMATV systems therefore represented greater competition in urban areas. However, the cable industry had the same basic objections to both. Apart from the cost of the receiving equipment, including the decoding devices for scrambled signals, both types of systems enabled people to pick up largely American services without having to pay fees for the programming. Alberta Broadcasting made its objections to satellite systems quite clear:

Perhaps the most serious of the threats we face right now, and a big

threat to the Canadian broadcasting system as we see it, is the unchecked growth of illegal satellite distribution systems. The latest assault comes through the advertised and mass-marketed decoding equipment now available...which promises to unscramble any and all available satellite services, including the three-plus-one U.S. networks, providing all that a licensed cable operator can offer and less. no Canadian content, no community programming, no educational programming, and all for the low one-time charge of approximately \$2,000. Who needs cable?²⁹

Several cable companies or cable organizations voiced similar concerns about satellite systems.³⁰ Others indicated the need to establish a “level playing field” between the cable industry and the satellite industry³¹

The satellite industry generally agreed with this need, but it disagreed with the cable industry over the amount of competition that existed between them. The Satellite Communications Association of Canada (SCAC) noted that cable systems had a lock on over 63 per cent of Canadian homes while TVRO systems were set up in only 2 per cent of Canadian homes. It also noted that acquiring services through TVRO systems was more expensive than getting them through cable systems due to pricing discrepancies. As the SCAC concluded, “the possibility of private satellite TVRO receiving systems competing with cable television is remote and unrealistic.”³² However, the SCAC acknowledged the competition between SMATV systems and cable companies as well as the practice by some SMATV systems of importing American pay-TV services. In the marketplace for the distribution of services, the SCAC called for “a level playing field situation...so that cable and satellite enterprises can compete for that marketplace with fair rules in place. There should be regulation and rules in place for the importation of foreign signals as well as Canadian domestic signals.”³³ As a precursor to this, the SCAC indicated that satellites

should be brought under the Broadcasting Act, and SMATV systems should be brought under the definition of a broadcasting undertaking.³⁴ Canadian Satellite Communications (Cancom) concurred. Cancom, which had been licenced as a broadcasting receiving undertaking, endorsed the task force recommendations that called for changes to the definition of broadcasting and the associated definition of a broadcasting undertaking. The company argued that these changes were important to ensure fair competition since some courts have held that SMATV systems fall outside the definitions in the Broadcasting Act and consequently escape regulation.³⁵

While the cable industry faced actual competition from the satellite industry, it also faced potential competition from the telecommunications industry. The Canadian Cable Television Association (CCTA) wanted to preclude this. It argued that, since telephone companies were much larger and more powerful than cable companies, “we have to recognize that there is not a level playing field between cable and telephone companies and never will be. It is impossible to create that level playing field.”³⁶ Telephone companies were regulated by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) as carriers rather than as broadcasters, and the CCTA wanted to keep things that way by putting appropriate provisions in the Broadcasting Act: “Our position here is straightforward; keep the telcos out of the broadcasting business....Telephone companies are carriers, and the rules governing their business are generally incompatible with broadcasting. The prohibition in the holding of broadcasting licences should extend not only to telephone companies and their subsidiaries but also to affiliates, including holding companies such as Bell Canada Enterprises.”³⁷

The cable industry defended excluding the telecommunications industry from broadcasting by pointing out that cable companies faced a great deal more competition than telephone companies. Ted Rogers, the president of Rogers Communications, stated:

We feel tremendously under pressure - and I mean it most sincerely - from the rental of movies, which is probably taking as much money out of homes as cable does in our area. Secondly, the discs and the satellites to the home with high-definition television, far better quality than over-the-air broadcasters can deliver, is a tremendous threat to us over the next three to five years....There is a lot of competition in our business. There is no competition for people wanting to make phone calls.³⁸

Because of this situation, Rogers Communications contended that it would be unfair to make the two industries go up against each other.

Cable Companies and Technological Causality

The issue of convergence or divergence between the cable industry and the telecommunications industry came up during the public proceedings. In order to understand these aspects of the proceedings, it is first necessary to review some points that have been made by Robert Babe

Through historical analysis, Babe has challenged the ideological representation of the convergence and divergence between industrial sectors. Babe writes:

Although a superficially persuasive case is sometimes made that years ago the nature of the underlying industrial arts necessitated fundamentally diverse industrial structures and legal/policy frameworks...careful historical analysis reveals otherwise. Rather, industrial and government powerplays, not mere machines, were decisive in causing the initial divergences. These prototypical powerplays continue today, restructuring and converging markets. None the less, visionaries currently are declaring, erroneously, that it is 'technology' which is imposing a convergence (more accurately, a reconvergence) among publishing, telecommunications, and

broadcasting.³⁹

As Babe indicates, the technological imperative and technological determinism prominently figure in explanations for convergence or divergence.⁴⁰

This is illustrated in the public proceedings through statements made by cable and telecommunications interests. As we will see later, telecommunications firms sometimes supported their entry into broadcasting through reference to a technology-driven convergence between cable and telecommunications activities which stemmed from fibre optics. However, the cable industry defended excluding the telecommunications industry from broadcasting through arguments which also reflected the discourse of technological causality: cable companies responded to the arguments of telecommunications companies by suggesting that, if anything, a technology-driven *divergence* was occurring. The CCTA indicated that “we are much less persuaded that technology is converging. We would argue that quite the reverse is true.” According to the CCTA, the reverse situation existed because the technical infrastructures of the cable industry and the telecommunications industry were forcing each to put quite separate uses to fibre optics: “We should not attribute so much importance to our common use of fibre that we say the two industries have converged. We are very specialized. We are optimized to carry and deliver large numbers of broadband signals. The telephone companies are optimized and structured as a switch network, and they will use fibre in that optimum format.”⁴¹

The discourse of technological causality entered the arguments of the cable industry in other ways as well. Although several cultural industries believed that it was necessary to alter broadcasting definitions, only the cable industry considered how the

definitions might actually be revised. The cable industry did not want new broadcasting definitions to establish inequalities among technologies. The CCTA was worried that, in drafting a new definition of broadcasting, the Department of Communications (DOC) would enshrine one of the available technologies as a chosen instrument in legislation and impose its use over other technologies.⁴² The cable industry did not want satellite or telecommunications technologies to be selected over cable, nor did it want to have its options in utilizing various technologies restricted. The discourse of technological causality was reflected in the CCTA's call for a definition of broadcasting which recognized a variety of technologies. For the CCTA, "the reality is that technological change is invariably the result of evolution and not revolution." Since it was autonomous, evolutionary technological change was difficult to manage. "The danger is that we can greatly overestimate the rate of impact of technological change or, even worse, we can wrongly estimate it and attempt somehow to control its outcome. For the most part, technological change cannot be accurately predicted." The CCTA concluded, then, that the DOC should not try to shape technological change by preparing a definition of broadcasting that aimed to support one technology while inhibiting others. For the CCTA, it was important to adapt and "accommodate technological change." Consequently, "the focus has to be on programming and its distribution and not on a particular delivery technology."⁴³

The Ontario Cable Telecommunications Association (OCTA) also made the argument that technological evolution necessitated a definition of broadcasting which was not based on one delivery vehicle. In making its presentation to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, the OCTA placed this argument

within the context of its interest in providing services through fibre optics:

We expect the technology will continue to evolve, and that where it makes economic sense fibre optic cable will be used in Canada as it is beginning to be used by some U.S. cable operators. We urge the committee to avoid the temptation to establish a policy framework that anoints a particular technology as desirable over others.⁴⁴

Therefore, like the CCTA, the OCTA stressed that there must be no efforts to interfere with the “evolution” of technologies by establishing a definition of broadcasting which restricted any of them.

The cable industry implied that a definition of broadcasting which recognized the need to accommodate technological change would not simply benefit cable companies. The CCTA stated:

Cable represents the most cost-effective method of delivering an ever increasing range of programs and services to Canadians....Cable television is more appropriately designated as a communications system. It is an aggregate of many different technologies. For example, cable television is one of the main users of microwave capacity in this country and indirectly the major user of satellite facilities....Cable's technology is a model of adaptability and is constantly changing to meet the needs of Canadians.⁴⁵

Even more forcefully, the Association des cablodistributeurs du Quebec argued: “We all know that our broadcasting system is subject to regulation; it is therefore essential to have the same rules for everyone. Cable subscribers who pay to receive services feel unfairly treated, and rightly so, when the same services are available free of charge to other people.”⁴⁶ According to the cable industry, then, all Canadians would benefit from an approach which permitted the use of various technologies in broadcasting and eliminated unregulated competition.

Contradictions Involving Technological Causality

The extent to which the discourse of technological causality appeared in the cable industry's arguments about changes to the definition of broadcasting encourages a closer inspection of the industry's arguments during the public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation. As we noted in Chapter Two, Marike Finlay has suggested that discourses on communication technologies are plagued by contradictions. A closer inspection reveals these contradictions.

Some of the contradictions in the arguments of the cable industry involved tensions between the technological and the social dimensions of causality. As we briefly saw in Chapter Two, Finlay indicates that causalist discourses sometimes turn the determining role of technologies on and off in order to fit particular arguments. The cable industry provides a good example of this. For the cable industry, there were at least four sources of causality. The first source was communication technologies. The CCTA was, for instance, concerned about "the impact of technological change on cable and the broadcasting system"⁴⁷ This focus on technological forces was contradicted by other sources of causality, all of which were based on social forces of one form or another. The second source was the regulator. This was evident when the CCTA argued that some aspects of regulatory policy have inhibited technological advancement.⁴⁸ The third source was the consumer. For example, the CCTA argued that "distribution technologies will need to make significant changes to accommodate consumer demands for services."⁴⁹ The fourth source was the cable industry itself. CUC indicated that the cable industry "is an industry committed to research through involvement in the mainstream of development of new

technologies such as high definition television.”⁵⁰ Videotron also made explicit reference to its role in research and development on communication technologies.⁵¹ Thus, the arguments of the cable industry conveniently ranged between decontextualization of communication technologies to contextualization of the technologies

The arguments of the cable industry also featured contradictions which involved what Finlay calls “double binds.” She indicates that “the discourses on new communications technology seem to function principally by producing either/or situations where there is no real possibility of making the ‘right’ choice and yet where the discourse provides a compulsion to do so.”⁵² The compulsion stems from the side of the contradiction which involves technological causality. Two double binds seem to have emerged during the proceedings of the standing committee

As described by Finlay, the first double bind focuses on reflection vs. urgency.⁵³ This can take the form of an opposition between the need to consider the new technologies carefully, which means studying them and even trying to impose limitations on them until more is known, and the need to move forward quickly and decisively under the propelling influence of these technologies. During the proceedings of the standing committee, this double bind was apparent in the presentation made by Greater Winnipeg Cablevision. The company argued that “we should be encouraging initiative and innovation within this highly competitive technology and program-driven broadcasting environment, not applying more regulatory or legislative constraints.”⁵⁴ In the case of Greater Winnipeg Cablevision as well as some other members of the cultural industries, the discourse of technological causality was a component in their arguments for deregulation.⁵⁵

The second double bind suggests that it is dangerous to adopt the technologies, but it is more dangerous to not adopt them. As Finlay indicates, this double bind often takes the form of a trade off between dependence and development.⁵⁶ A focus on development was reflected by Rogers Communications. The company admitted that the new technologies are a “threat to our sovereignty.”⁵⁷ However, it also argued that “we cannot build a wall around this country” to protect us from the impact of the technologies. Consequently, in order to meet “all the nation’s video needs today and tomorrow”, the company said that “we will use fibre or whatever other technology is useful for the plant and for the distribution system.”⁵⁸ The position of Rogers was more succinctly stated by a member of the standing committee who summarized it for the representatives from Global: “The thrust was that we cannot stop the world and get off, that technology is going to keep on rolling along whether we like it or not. If we do not keep up, then we will drown in the sea of Americanization or world technology anyway.”⁵⁹

There are two strategies for getting out of such double binds. The first strategy is to eliminate the discourse of technological causality by pointing to the role of social forces. The second strategy, as Finlay notes, is to identify a third option and thereby move beyond “the ridiculous either/or position.”⁶⁰ For example, as Babe suggests, it is possible to be selective, instead of adopting *all* technologies or *none* of them, it is possible to adopt some but reject others with particular social, cultural, and political goals in mind.⁶¹

The Absence of a Critical Challenge

A surprising aspect of the discussion about broadcasting definitions was the absence of a critical challenge from the cultural communities. Very few organizations

among the cultural communities addressed the issue of broadcasting definitions. To the extent that they did, they echoed the cable industry's arguments. They also echoed the cable industry's focus on the discourse of technological causality and did not identify the contradictions in the positions taken by the industry.

Some organizations among the cultural communities took the lead of the cable industry and uncritically discussed incorporating new technologies into the Broadcasting Act. The Union des Artistes argued that "a review of the act is required since it goes back to 1968 and does not always take into account the appearance of new technologies."⁶² The Canadian Authors' Association said that the revised legislation "should not only be on the cutting edge of technology, but ahead of it."⁶³ The Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) specifically considered the question of re-defining broadcasting. The CCA argued that "the definition of broadcasting should be adjusted to reflect the changes in the broadcasting environment."⁶⁴ Like the cable industry, the CCA told the standing committee that the legislation should recognize the unpredictable nature of technological change by allowing all technologies to be accommodated:

In the course of your discussions much consideration has been given to technological change in the field of broadcasting and much debate during your hearings focused on the need for a revised broadcasting act to meet the changing technological environment...[W]e would suggest that it is impossible to predict all the changes which will have an impact on broadcasting in Canada. Instead of planning for all eventualities, we would urge the government to develop a new Broadcasting Act with a built-in review mechanism designed to respond to changes and developments in the delivery of radio and television programming.⁶⁵

As Appendix One indicates, the CCA was an umbrella organization that represented several

types of cultural communities. It can be suggested, then, that the cultural communities generally agreed with the position taken by the cable industry.

The discourse of technological causality was reflected in the arguments which some members of the cultural communities made about communication technologies. A representative of the National Aboriginal Communications Society said that “I believe technical change has the ability to steamroll over you, or has the ability to accelerate your progress as a society or a community.”⁶⁶ The Societe des Acadiens du Nouveau-Brunswick indicated that “the development of a modern Acadien society will only be possible if information dissemination programs and cultural promotion activities adapt to new technologies.”⁶⁷ Given the power and largely positive impact which the cultural communities accorded to communication technologies, it is little wonder that they believed the definition of broadcasting should include all of the technologies.

There were a few exceptions to this focus on the discourse of technological causality by the cultural communities, but even the exceptions did not fully escape it. Douglas Myers of Henson College in Nova Scotia said the following about the task force report: “Among its many strengths, it seems to me, are its attitude toward technology, which is dynamic rather than passive and deterministic.”⁶⁸ Although it is critical of technological determinism, this statement is contradictory since it still identifies communication technologies as being active; the notion that technologies are active is a component of technological determinism. A more critical statement came from John Parry, an NDP Member of Parliament who appeared before the standing committee to speak on behalf of native peoples in his area of Ontario: “Despite the development of new technologies of

communications, and despite a grand, though flawed, theoretical concept of the global village, very real political and economic barriers to access still exist in northwestern Ontario.⁶⁹ Even this statement misses the mark to some degree. Although it correctly directs attention to political economic conditions, the statement also remains within a dominant view of communication since it concentrates on access. This raises one of two opportunities which the cultural communities missed when they made their arguments.

First, the cultural communities missed the opportunity to focus on the *practice* of communication. Finlay argues that communication is usually seen as an object; it is seen as a thing or a commodity. Discussion has therefore focused on ensuring a fair distribution of communication, making sure that everyone has access to technologies and services. While such an orientation is useful, Finlay argues that a more fruitful strategy must begin with a different understanding of communication:

The first alteration of discursive procedures that could be suggested would be to consider communication as an activity or a practice rather than as an object. This change of procedures would result in the shifting of issue formation from one of trying to ensure equitable distribution of commodities to one of trying to guarantee an equitable order of communicational practices and processes.⁷⁰

Finlay suggests that such an approach could involve pushing for the right to communicate rather than advocating the right to access.⁷¹ The implications of these two concepts will be addressed more fully in Chapter Five.

Second, the cultural communities missed the opportunity to focus on the *design* of communication technologies. This is because their arguments were linked to the discourse of technological causality and its decontextualization of communication

technologies. As Finlay points out, the notion that communication technologies are asocial (and therefore neutral) suggests that the only relevant policy issue is the *use* of the technologies.⁷² We have seen, for example, that the discourse of technological causality, as expressed by the cable industry, led to the argument that the definition of broadcasting should not restrict the use or application of particular technologies. In contrast, the contextualization of communication technologies draws attention to a different policy issue: the social intentions which lie behind the conception and production of the technologies. As several writers have shown, many communication technologies were developed with military and commercial intentions (among others) in mind.⁷³ By zeroing in on this - as well as the way that contextualization slipped into some of the arguments made by the cable industry - the cultural communities could have established the need to eradicate certain discursive procedures which are built into communication technologies. One of these, what Finlay calls “a procedure of hierarchical exclusivity”, denies people the chance to speak.⁷⁴ Perhaps the best example of such a procedure is the structure of radio and television as one-way forms of control rather than two-way forms of interaction. Finlay indicates that “discursive procedures are part of the inherent design and structure of new communications technology...If we wish to change some of these procedures, it does not suffice to legislate merely the social uses of technology while not also legislating the design of technology.”⁷⁵

In combination, emphasis on the practice of communication and the design of communication technologies could have made effective arguments for the cultural communities with regard to the definition of broadcasting. These components of an alternative discourse could have helped the cultural communities make a case for infusing

the definition with social and democratic objectives. As Finlay suggests, “instead of permitting or forbidding satellites, for example, certain satellite transmission practices (which could be built into satellites) would have to be legislated.”⁷⁶

Solidifying a New Approach to Broadcasting Definitions

In the absence of a critical challenge, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture simply followed the lead of the task force and the witnesses that appeared before the committee. The standing committee endorsed the recommendation of the task force which called for the definition of broadcasting to be widened so that it covered all forms of reception and distribution. The committee also endorsed the task force recommendation to have the definition of a broadcasting undertaking fit all enterprises involved in providing and disseminating programming.⁷⁷ Moreover, like the Caplan-Sauvageau task force, the committee called for excluding common carriers such as telephone companies from broadcasting definitions.⁷⁸ The standing committee discussed the reasoning behind these recommendations:

.. we believed that technological change had overtaken the 1968 Broadcasting Act. As a result, we felt we must propose changes in the Broadcasting Act that would provide a just and equitable basis for future broadcasting policy and regulation. It is our view that the recommendations we have made accomplish that purpose, and we note that there was widespread agreement in the industry on the need for such changes.⁷⁹

Therefore, like the task force and cultural industries, the standing committee echoed the need for fair competition.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

As Appendix Three indicates, the work of the standing committee was followed by both Bill C-136 and Bill C-40. The issue of broadcasting definitions was addressed in these bills and the debates about them.

Technological Causality and Technology Neutral Legislation

The Department of Communications (DOC) used the policy statement that accompanied Bill C-136, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices: A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada*, to set out an approach to new broadcasting legislation. The policy statement emphasized the importance of what was called a “technology neutral” approach. This meant that broadcasting would not be confined to any specific technology or set of technologies.⁸⁰

The statement indicated the significance of such an approach.

The new broadcasting bill allows for the optimum use of new technology without predetermining a legislative or regulatory bias for or against a particular technology. By allowing the broadcasting system to adopt and adapt to changes in technology, the policy is designed to stimulate the system to become as competitive as possible. Individual firms will be able to choose the particular technologies they wish to invest in.⁸¹

Although this passage of the policy statement accorded companies the ability to “choose” technologies, it was only in an effort to “adapt” to conditions created for the broadcasting system and those within it by the technologies themselves. Once again, the implication at least was that the technologies are the primary movers. This was the latest in a long line of statements that were issued by the DOC over a few decades which featured the discourse of technological causality.⁸²

Among the political parties that participated in debates on Bill C-136, the

Conservatives were most closely associated with the discourse of technological causality. This is perhaps not surprising since their government was the architect of the new approach to broadcasting legislation. The discourse was clearly reflected in a statement by Pierre Cadieux. He indicated that “both communications technology and the very nature of our society have changed significantly” and “we know we will be unable to resist these changes.”⁸³ The Conservatives also made several references to the need to embrace new technologies.⁸⁴ Similarly, they discussed the need to accommodate technological change.⁸⁵ Finally, the Conservatives addressed technological evolution.⁸⁶ The discourse of technological causality appeared less frequently in the arguments that were made by the Liberals and the New Democrats. Indeed, there was one reference to technological evolution from each of the parties.⁸⁷

The Conservatives once again provided more references to technological causality than the other political parties during debates on Bill C-40. Marcel Masse, the Minister of Communications, said that “technology always has been a driving force in broadcasting.”⁸⁸ Jim Edwards, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Communications, made several remarks that were even more striking. He indicated, for instance:

Technological advances.. have made available new services over which the government and the CRTC technically have no control. Canadians are embracing that progress and, indeed, it has such power and momentum that in some situations no government or people can stop it, even if they wished to.⁸⁹

Edwards also indicated:

We cannot cling to outdated technological limitations as a basis for

regulating a changing environment. The technologies used for broadcasting and telecommunications are converging and this trend appears to be inevitable.⁹⁰

Finally, Edwards spoke of the need to embrace new technologies.⁹¹ Similarly, both the Conservatives and the Liberals discussed the need to adapt to new technologies.⁹² The two parties also shared references to technological evolution.⁹³ However, the discourse of technological causality does not seem to have appeared in the arguments that were made by the New Democrats.

During proceedings on both Bill C-136 and Bill C-40, the idea of technology neutral legislation received support from most of those who mentioned it. Of course, the Conservatives enthusiastically emphasized the technology neutral character of their approach during debates on Bill C-136.⁹⁴ However, Liberal Sheila Finestone just as enthusiastically proclaimed that “it was an excellent move to make this bill technology neutral.”⁹⁵ Although the New Democrats did not specifically address the notion of technology neutral legislation, the comments of Ian Waddell indicate that they supported efforts to alter the Broadcasting Act in a way that grappled with technological change.⁹⁶ One of the cultural agencies that participated in the proceedings on Bill C-136 - the Department of Transportation and Communications for the Government of Nova Scotia - contended that the legislation would make it possible to “accommodate” technological change and facilitate “adaptability” to such change.⁹⁷ This particular department repeated its support for technology neutral legislation when Bill C-40 was addressed.⁹⁸ It was joined by several members of the cultural industries and cultural agencies.⁹⁹

Although most of those who mentioned technology neutral legislation offered

support for the idea, some expressed concerns. This was the case with some of the cultural communities. The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Radio and Television Artists (ACTRA) endorsed the idea of technology neutral legislation when it addressed Bill C-136, but the union qualified its comments by stating that it had begun to wonder about two things; ACTRA questioned whether the objective of technology neutral legislation had been achieved and, more fundamentally, the union questioned whether it should be an objective to make the legislation technology neutral.¹⁰⁰ The Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA) took the next step:

In recognizing that technology has changed and will continue to change our broadcasting system, we should make sure we have the means to use that technology to meet our national broadcasting goals. The technologically neutral bill the government has tabled does not resolve the issue. Rather, it ignores or escapes it altogether.¹⁰¹

The CCA seemed to suggest that a strategy should be devised for using communication technologies to meet national purposes rather than paving the way for blanket acceptance of all technologies for any purposes. However, the CCA did not move beyond the discourse of technological causality (since it argued that technology will continue to change the broadcasting system). The cultural communities nevertheless took a more critical stance than they had during the pre-legislative proceedings.

Technology Neutral Legislation and Broadcasting Definitions

The Conservative government's technology neutral legislation entailed a major departure from the existing definition of broadcasting. As we have seen, the 1968 Broadcasting Act stated that broadcasting is "any radiocommunication in which the transmissions are intended for direct reception by the general public."¹⁰² In contrast to this

technology specific approach, Bill C-136 did not restrict broadcasting to over the air reception which is freely available. It specified that broadcasting includes “any transmission of programs, whether or not encrypted, by radio waves or other means of telecommunication for reception by the public by means of broadcasting receiving apparatus, but does not include any such transmission of programs (a) made on the demand of a particular person for reception only by that person, or (b) made solely for performance or display in a public place.”¹⁰³ Since the definition of broadcasting clearly emphasized the programs rather than the technologies which carried them, the definition of what constituted a program became crucial. According to the terms of Bill C-136, a program includes “sounds or visual images, or a combination of sounds and visual images, intended to inform, enlighten or entertain, but does not include visual images, whether or not combined with sounds, that consist predominantly of alphanumeric text.”¹⁰⁴ *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices* therefore indicated that “broadcasting is specifically defined not by its technology, which it may share with other non-broadcasting uses, but by its content.”¹⁰⁵

The new definition of broadcasting, as well as other modifications that were made in Bill C-136, addressed concerns that had been expressed by the cable industry. In our discussion of pre-legislative issues, we saw that the cable industry offered the only substantial comments about revising the definition. The cable industry had been worried that the DOC would establish a definition of broadcasting which favoured one technology over others. The satellite industry or the telecommunications industry might be advantaged by such a move. At the very least, the cable industry’s choices in using technologies would be restricted. The discourse of technological causality was reflected in the cable industry’s

call for a definition of broadcasting in which the focus was on programming rather than a particular delivery technology. The discourse was also linked to the industry's call for keeping the telecommunications industry out of broadcasting. While presenting a definition of broadcasting that was in line with what the cable industry wanted, Bill C-136 also prohibited Bell Canada from holding a broadcasting licence.¹⁰⁶

Nevertheless, the cable industry had concerns about the new definition of broadcasting and the other modifications that had been made in Bill C-136. The industry wanted telecommunications firms other than Bell Canada to be prohibited from entering broadcasting.¹⁰⁷ However, the cable industry focused most of its attention on the new definition. Among the few organizations in the debates that discussed the new definition of broadcasting, there was a mixture of enthusiasm and uncertainty.¹⁰⁸ The cable industry reflected both types of reactions. While it favoured the new definition, the CCTA was worried about one of the two exemptions. As noted above, Bill C-136 excluded from the definition the transmission of programs "made on the demand of a particular person for reception only by that person." According to *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, this meant that scheduled pay per view services were covered by the definition while broadcasting services operating on demand were not.¹⁰⁹ The CCTA argued that this set up an unequal regulatory situation between two technologies for delivering programming:

Pay per view is in essence an elementary or early form of video on demand. The essential difference is in the technology, not the program content....Presumably, the definition of broadcasting is intended to exclude video on demand but not pay per view. So should this bill be enacted, video on demand would be unregulated and pay per view will be captured under the proposed act. So we urge that the definition of broadcasting be amended to exclude

clearly all services delivered on demand.¹¹⁰

Since it alluded to technological differences between the telecommunications industry and the cable industry, this position was consistent with the latter's view that there was no technology-driven convergence between the two industries. This position was also consistent with the interest of the cable industry in a technology neutral approach; the focus had to be on programming rather than technologies. However, the cable industry wanted to establish a fair regulatory situation through the definition of broadcasting by excluding (rather than including) similar programming services.

The definition of broadcasting in Bill C-136 was altered before it reappeared in Bill C-40, and the change was satisfactory to the cable industry as well as others. One of the two exemptions - that which pertained to programs delivered on demand - was removed.¹¹¹ Presumably because an exclusion for all pay per view/video on demand services would have left out services whose content conformed to the definition of a program, there was now an implicit inclusion for all such services. Although the cable industry had argued for an exclusion, it accepted the inclusion and even argued that it should be explicit. The CCTA stated:

...in Bill C-136, there was a specific exclusion of the delivery of programs 'made on the demand of a particular person for reception only by that person.' In simple language, to us that means pay per view or video on demand, as the telephone industry prefers to call it. [W]e argue that the two terms mean essentially the same thing. The only issue is whether pay per view or video on demand service is regulated or not under the Broadcasting Act. We think Bill C-40 wisely eliminates the specific exclusion...But in doing so, it leaves the matter unresolved. So we argue...that what was heretofore an exemption from the definition should now be made a specific inclusion such that, regardless of who delivers such a service, pay per

view or video on demand should be subject to Canada's broadcasting policy ...¹¹²

This position was strategically useful to the cable industry since it conformed to the interests of others among the cultural industries as well as organizations within the cultural communities. For example, Allarcom argued that the change in the definition was important since the company was committed to support for Canadian production through its recently-licensed pay per view service; if video on demand remained outside the definition of broadcasting and therefore not subject to the Broadcasting Act, the telephone companies would be able to escape offering support for Canadian production or having other similar conditions imposed by the CRTC through the legislation.¹¹³ A desire for Canadian production may also have been behind the positions that were taken by at least some organizations within the cultural communities. Although it did not explain why, ACTRA also wanted a specific inclusion for video on demand.¹¹⁴

The only participant in the public proceedings to oppose the altered definition of broadcasting was one of the cultural agencies. The discourse of technological causality was a central feature in the argument made by Alberta Government Telephone (AGT):

We are confident that many new and important service opportunities will develop out of the evolution of traditional telephone technology to the new high-capacity broadband technology based on the fibre optic transmission systems. Since this technology is compatible with the delivery of video services, which are usually associated with the cable TV industry, there is a technology-driven convergence between the two industries.¹¹⁵

AGT contended that "this convergence should be exploited for the benefit of Canadians" ¹¹⁶

However, it added that technology-driven convergence creates legislative and regulatory

problems which necessitate the exclusion of video on demand from the definition of broadcasting. According to AGT, there is “potential for an uneven, unnecessary and redundant duplication of regulation for many services that would fall within the definition of both telecom and broadcasting. In order to avoid this ambiguity and any potential confusion, we recommend that the definition of broadcasting be amended to replicate the definition as written in Bill C-136.”¹¹⁷ As Allarcom pointed out though, a return to the definition in Bill C-136 would also have allowed the telecommunications industry to escape conditions pertaining to support for Canadian production which would be imposed under the Broadcasting Act for video on demand services that were similar to pay per view services. Therefore, although AGT linked the discourse of technological causality to the interests of Canadians and its arguments about regulation, it had difficulty connecting these arguments to interests other than those of telecommunications firms.

Despite the opposition of AGT, no further change was subsequently made to the definition of broadcasting. The definition that was introduced in Bill C-40 became part of the 1991 Broadcasting Act.¹¹⁸

CONCLUSION

Through a discussion of debates about broadcasting definitions, this chapter has shown that the discourse of technological causality played a role in the process of establishing private capital’s hegemony within Canadian broadcasting.

The discourse of technological causality was featured in the arguments of the cultural industries. The discourse historically had a divisive role since it advantaged cable

companies over broadcasters. However, in the debates about broadcasting definitions, the discourse seems to have had a unifying role (which can be interpreted with reference to some principles of the hegemonic project, as outlined in Chapter Two). Through arguments rooted in technological causality, the dominant cable industry advocated a definition of broadcasting which focused on programming rather than technologies. This fit the economic interests of many cultural industries since it addressed their concerns about unregulated competition from new communication technologies. While privileging those interests that were compatible with its own particular interests, the cable industry derogated those economic interests which were incompatible; the cable industry employed a variety of arguments, including some based on the discourse of technological causality, to contend that the telecommunications industry should be excluded from broadcasting. The cable industry also presented its particular interests as the general interests of Canadians. Although the discourse of technological causality appeared in the arguments of the telecommunications industry, the latter industry was not as successful as the cable industry had been at making connections between particular interests and general interests. The arguments of the cable industry were, however, marked by a contradiction between the *technological* and the *social* dimensions of causality with regard to communication technologies.

The cultural communities did not offer an alternative to the discourse of technological causality. Although some of them took a slightly critical stance, they never identified the contradiction in the positions taken by the cable industry. The cultural communities tended to uncritically adopt the cable industry's arguments about the definition of broadcasting as well as its focus on the discourse of technological causality. Some of

them saw new communication technologies as being responsible for positive changes in society. In part due to the discourse of technological causality, the cultural communities gave their consent to a definition of broadcasting that would legitimize and deepen the expansion of the private sector in Canadian broadcasting by bringing under regulation companies which had previously not been covered in the definition. The cultural communities missed the opportunity to put forth an alternative discourse which could have provided the basis for a very different definition. The discourse of technological causality therefore appears to have played an effective role in the ongoing process of securing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting.

The above findings have implications for the theoretical model that was established in Chapter Two. These implications will be considered in Chapter Seven, but it is first necessary to examine the other discourses which are addressed in the theoretical model. The next chapter discusses the discourse of technological democracy, and that is followed by a chapter which focuses on the discourse of technological nationalism.

ENDNOTES

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4. Marc Raboy, *Missed Opportunities: The Story of Canada's Broadcasting Policy*, pp. 174 and 212.
5. Streeter, "The Cable Fable Revisited", p. 175.
6. Streeter, "The Cable Fable Revisited", p. 189.
7. Streeter, "The Cable Fable Revisited", p. 189.
8. Robert E. Babe, *Telecommunications in Canada: Technology, Industry, and Government*, pp. 212.
9. Canada, Canadian Radio Broadcasting Act (1932), sec. 2 (a).
10. Canada, Canadian Broadcasting Act (1936), sec.2 (a).
11. M. Patricia Hindley, Gail M. Martin and Jean McNulty, *The Tangled Net: Basic Issues in Canadian Communications*, p. 64.
12. Frank W. Peers, *The Public Eye: Television and the Politics of Canadian Broadcasting, 1952-1968*, p. 293.
13. Canada, Broadcasting Act (1958), sec. 2 (b).
14. Peers, *The Public Eye*, p. 293.
15. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, pp. 146-147.
16. Peers, *The Public Eye*, pp. 281-282 and p. 293.
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18. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 174.
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20. Canada, Broadcasting Act (1968), sec. 3 (d).

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22. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 149.
23. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 151
24. Canada, Broadcasting Act (1968), sec 3 (d).
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27. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 65:130.
28. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by First Choice, 65:133, and Superchannel, 29:76-77.
29. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 43:82.
30. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) See the comments made by the B.C./Yukon Division of the Canadian Cable Television Association, 50:91; Rogers Communications, 65:189; and North Eastern Cablevision, 44:83-84.
31. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the Association des cablodistributeurs du Quebec, 61:10; and Cowichan Cablesystems, 50:126
32. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 30:7.
33. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 30:12-14.
34. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 30:16, 19-20.
35. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 22:28-29.
36. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 69:84-85
37. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 69:78.
38. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 65:186.
39. Robert E. Babe, *Telecommunications in Canada*, p. 16.
40. Robert E. Babe, "Emergence and Development of Canadian Communication. Dispelling the Myths". p. 73, and Babe, *Telecommunications in Canada*, p. 243.

41. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 69:81. See also the comments made by Videotron, 62:111-113.
42. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 69:100.
43. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 69:76-77
44. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 65:160.
45. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 69:75.
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50. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 66:126.
51. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 62:107-109.
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53. Finlay, *Powermatics*, pp. 62-65.
54. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 45:58.
55. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) See, for example, the comments made by Telesat Canada, 69:110-111.
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58. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 65:180-181.
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60. Finlay, *Powermatics*, pp. 67-68.
61. Babe, "Emergence and Development of Canadian Communication", p. 74
62. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 24:63.
63. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 50:80.

64. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 25:51.
65. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 67:44.
66. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 67:39.
67. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 48:12.
68. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 47:20.
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74. Finlay, *Powermatics*, pp. 15-16.
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76. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 250.
77. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:22.
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79. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 56:5.
80. Canada, Department of Communications [hereafter DOC], *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices: A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada*, p. 53.
81. Canada, DOC, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, p. 9.
82. For examples and discussion of these statements, see Babe, "Emergence and Development of Canadian Communication", pp. 58-60; and Babe, *Telecommunications in Canada*, pp. 9-14.
83. Canada, House of Commons [hereafter Commons], *Debates* (1988), p. 19670.

84. See Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1988) for the remarks of Flora MacDonald, p. 17746. See also Canada, Senate, *Debates* (1988) for the remarks of Jean Bazin, p. 4528.
85. See Canada, Senate, *Debates* (1988) for the remarks of Jean Bazin, p. 4528.
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88. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 16224.
89. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 16257.
90. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 14946.
91. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 5564.
92. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990). See the remarks of Conservative Jim Edwards, p. 5562; and Liberal John Harvard, p. 16127.
93. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990). See the remarks of Conservative Jim Edwards, p. 14946; and Liberal Sheila Finestone, p. 16229.
94. See Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1988) for the remarks of Flora MacDonald, pp. 17745 and 17748; and Pierre Cadieux, p. 19672. See also Canada, Senate, *Debates* (1988) for the remarks of Jean Bazin, p. 4528.
95. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1988), p. 17753.
96. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1988), p. 17753.
97. Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136 [hereafter HCLC-136], *Minutes* (1988), 7:30.
98. Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40 [hereafter HCLC-40], *Minutes* (1990), 6:19.
99. See Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990) for the comments made by Rogers Communications, 4:24; First Choice, 5:47; and the National Film Board, 11:21.
100. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 3:12.
101. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 2:9.

102. Canada, Broadcasting Act (1968), sec. 3 (b).
103. Canada, Bill C-136 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 2 (1).
104. Canada, Bill C-136 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 2 (1)
105. Canada, DOC, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, p. 53.
106. Canada, Bill C-136 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 71.
107. Canada, HCLC-136 *Minutes* (1988), 4:44-45. Given the enormous resources and market power of the telecommunications industry, the CCTA wanted assurances that Bell Canada, companies associated with it, and all other telephone companies would be prohibited from entering broadcasting.
108. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988). First Choice supported the new definition since it believed that satellite-to-cable services should be covered and treated as part of the Canadian broadcasting system. However, the CRTC had concerns that the new definition would raise federal-provincial jurisdictional problems; since the definition departed from a focus on radio communication to include wired distribution, the CRTC was worried that it would be required to regulate the entirely closed circuit systems which fall under federal jurisdiction. See the comments made by First Choice, 6:55; and the CRTC, 6:116.
109. Canada, DOC, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, p. 53.
110. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 4:41-42.
111. Canada, Bill C-40 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 2 (1). The revised definition specified that broadcasting includes "any transmission of programs, whether or not encrypted, by radio waves or other means of telecommunication for reception by the public by means of broadcasting receiving apparatus, but does not include any such transmission of programs that is made solely for performance or display in a public place."
112. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 8:7.
113. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 5:33-34. See also the comments made by First Choice, 5:47, and Western International Communications, 3:22.
114. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 3:58-59.
115. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 9:41.
116. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 9:42.
117. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 9:45.

118 Canada, Broadcasting Act (1991), sec 2 (1).

CHAPTER FIVE

COMMUNITY BROADCASTING AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEMOCRACY

In Chapter Two, reference was made to the struggle of the community sector to find a place within the Canadian broadcasting system. This chapter focuses on the private sector and the community sector with regard to debates about community broadcasting during the public proceedings which led up to the 1991 Broadcasting Act. The analysis suggests that the discourse of technological democracy played a role in the process of establishing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting, but it became the target of a counter hegemony which favoured community broadcasting.

HISTORICAL ISSUES

Technological Democracy and Cable Companies

As we saw in Chapter Four, the discourse of technological causality was associated with the rise of the cable industry in the early 1970s. According to Thomas Streeter, the discourse had significant effects in the United States. We saw that similar developments took place in Canada. With the discourse of technological causality articulated to it, the discourse of technological democracy was also tied to the development of the cable industry in both countries during the early 1970s.

As it emerged in the United States, the discourse of technological democracy reflected several themes. Streeter describes “the hopes for diversity, democracy, and cultural expression embodied in the discourse of the new technologies.”¹ The wires of cable would overcome a lack of diversity in programming which had stemmed from limited spectrum space.² Moreover, the discourse offered “progressive hopes for new forms of electronic democracy.” Through the access that it provided, “cable could increase citizen participation, allow repressed minorities cultural and political expression, and generally help lead society toward a more enlightened future.”³ One aspect of this was a technology-driven shift from the passive to the active which would give control to the public and do away with the need for most governmental control. Summarizing these views, Streeter writes that “cable, in other words, had the potential to rehumanize a dehumanized society, to eliminate the existing bureaucratic restrictions of government regulation common to the industrial world, and to empower the currently powerless public.”⁴ The discourse presented cable as being wonderful for everyone. However, as Streeter notes, it had a material basis: “By describing their business not as a mere ancillary community service but as a new technology, the cable operators might gain new leverage against their commercial opposition, the broadcasters. The discourse of the new technologies might help raise their profits.”⁵ The benefits that were touted by the discourse would differentiate cable operators from broadcasters and encourage people to subscribe to cable services.

These themes were also part of the discourse which took shape in Canada. Many of the themes were reflected in the approach which the Canadian Cable Television Association (CCTA) took when it appeared before the Canadian Radio-Television

Commission (CRTC) in 1971. Marc Raboy has described the CCTA brief to the CRTC. As Raboy indicates, the CCTA added the theme of the public as consumers:

The cable companies' claim to represent the public was rooted in a conception of the public as a market of consumers who had been rejected by Canadian communications policy....They could also make a new and unique claim that the multiplicity of channels they were able to offer responded to a 'public demand for greater viewer choice', liberating the public from dependence on advertisers, and catering to minority audiences with specialized tastes. The industry brief mentioned such possibilities as multiple program scheduling, enabling the viewer to choose a convenient viewing time, and local program origination with community participation ('people talking with people'). Audience fragmentation was not only good for the cable companies, it could be presented as being good for democracy. cable was providing 'a degree of public access that is new in the history of media', and the industry argued that it viewed the public 'as the most important constituent in the broadcasting system.'⁶

In summary, as Raboy notes, "the cable companies had appealed to the dream of technological democracy."⁷ Like Streeter, Raboy points to the material basis of the discourse; audience fragmentation would bring "democracy", but it would also bring the cable companies profits as they acquired subscribers.

In the United States and Canada, then, the arguments of the cable industry extended beyond the discourse of technological causality while still supporting the industry's economic interests. We saw in the previous chapter that the discourse of technological causality had helped the cable industry to obtain a better position vis a vis broadcasters and regulation. However, we have now seen that the arguments of the cable industry were enhanced through the articulation of technological causality to several moral themes which produced the discourse of technological democracy. Consequently, there was a focus on how the technology of cable would satisfy consumer or minority interests by generating such

things as diversity, choice, access, and control.

Cable Companies and the Development of Community Broadcasting

Community broadcasting through cable systems got off to a promising start in the early 1970s. Canada's first community channel was established during 1970 in the town of Normandin, Quebec.⁸ Originally, the community channel on many cable systems had an advisory board of elected community members which oversaw the general functioning and direction of the channel.⁹ Working within this democratic structure, community groups (many of which were committed to achieving social change) produced a great deal of innovative programming

The CRTC did little to ensure that this promising start continued. Issues such as control and funding to community channels were addressed by the CRTC in ways which did not fit its enthusiastic support for the channels. During 1969, the CRTC contended that the community channels provided by cable systems were adding a new dimension to broadcasting by assisting in the development of community identity through locally produced programs.¹⁰ In 1971, the CRTC again emphasized the importance of community channels. However, even though community groups asked to be given licensed control over the channels, the CRTC gave this control to cable companies.¹¹ The CRTC also did not require cable companies to provide funding to community groups or even make provision of a community channel mandatory for cable companies.¹² During 1975, the CRTC finally specified that all but the smallest cable companies must provide a community channel. The CRTC also addressed the issue of funding at that time and considered requiring cable companies to devote 10 per cent of their revenues to their community channel. In the end,

however, the CRTC decided that this should simply be a voluntary rule. Despite the resistance of community groups, the CRTC also upheld its decision to vest licensed control with cable companies¹³

During the mid to late 1970s, community channels went through a number of changes. The programming on the channels, which had once been innovative, became more conventional. Kim Goldberg has suggested that there were several reasons for this. For one thing, the “soft boundaries” of community channels as a “creative concept” started to harden when the channels were institutionalized. More importantly, what could be done through community channels increasingly became limited by the structure in which the channels were embedded. As Goldberg notes, community channels were “a democratic concept without a democratic structure.” As a result of the CRTC’s decision, cable companies held direct control over community channels. More and more cable companies started to exercise this control. Decisions about programming shifted from community advisory boards to employees of cable companies who were hired to run the community channels. Because of this, groups that were committed to social change largely gave up on community channels as an avenue to achieve their goals.¹⁴

In the early to mid 1980s, community channels went through further changes. The community advisory boards virtually disappeared. Where the boards still existed, the members were appointed by the cable companies rather than being democratically chosen by the community. The groups that now used the channels tended to be the well-organized, well-established, non-controversial community groups. The shift to conventional programming also became more obvious. This was facilitated by the appearance of

advertising. In 1986, the CRTC granted a long-standing wish of cable companies to have advertising on community channels.¹⁵

The exceptions to these developments were mostly in Quebec. Unlike the general situation in English Canada, community groups in French Canada still had control over community channels through associations which had a democratic structure based on non-exclusive membership and voting rights. However, since cable companies held direct control over community channels in Quebec as elsewhere, the control enjoyed by these community groups was limited.¹⁶

PRE-LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Cable Companies and Technological Democracy

When the cable industry appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, a number of its arguments reflected themes in the discourse of technological democracy.

Cable companies continued their historical tendency to address the public as consumers. The CCTA made this clear while taking issue with the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy. The Caplan-Sauvageau task force had insisted that research on consumers was irrelevant and asked the cable industry to consider the people of Canada as citizens rather than consumers.¹⁷ During the standing committee's proceedings, the CCTA mocked the orientation of the task force: "We find it significant that the task force chose to not to consult with consumers before making its recommendations....Perhaps they feared what ordinary Canadians actually think about current television services; that is, they are

quite happy with them.”¹⁸ The cable industry frequently referred to the public through the term “consumers” and associated words such as “customers”, “subscribers” or “viewers.” The industry rarely used the term “citizens.”

Cable companies were joined by members of some other cultural industries, chiefly private broadcasters, in focusing on technology-driven, democratic choice which puts control in the hands of the public/consumers. Global put it this way: “Ultimately, the public controls what gets viewed, not this committee and not us. The public votes by the fact that they control the switch on their television sets.”¹⁹ A representative of Maclean Hunter alluded to the idea that communication technologies (such as satellites) have magnified choice for consumers and given the latter control: “There is the viewer, and we can no longer dictate what he or she is going to watch. Whether we like it or not, the viewer has open season, and in my view it is foolish in the long term to think we are going to be able to dictate or somehow censor Canadian viewing habits. All we can do is entice; we cannot dictate.”²⁰ These arguments played a role in debates about cable distribution and Canadian programming since they allowed cable companies or private broadcasters to justify offering profitable American services or programming. The Ontario Cable Telecommunications Association even contended that regulations to prohibit American material were unacceptable since they aimed to restrict “freedom of choice.”²¹ Through connections to the general interests of consumers, the discourse of technological democracy supported the role of the burgeoning private sector and its selection of American material.

Cable companies also made arguments which tied some themes in the discourse of technological democracy specifically to the technology of cable. A few cable companies

emphasized the role of cable technology in facilitating diversity and choice.²² Several cable companies stressed the notion that cable technology - through community broadcasting - enhances cultural expression and enables a focus on minority interests.²³ Finally, as we will see, at least one member of the cable industry addressed the role of cable technology in fostering access via community broadcasting.

Community Broadcasters, the Public, and Democracy

Community broadcasters rejected the cable industry's interpretation of the public as consumers along with the industry's associated view of regulations. The Regroupement des organismes communautaires de communication du Québec (ROCCQ), said that "we feel there are two ways of viewing the Canadian public: either as citizens or as consumers. The view of the ROCCQ is that the public should be considered primarily as citizens rather than consumers. In that sense, we feel it is necessary that certain regulations continue to be imposed."²⁴

Building on this foundation, community broadcasters advanced a view of democracy which differed from that of the cable industry. Community broadcasters did not see democracy in terms of diversity, choice, and other qualities which flow from communication technologies. Rather, they saw it in terms of social processes which communication technologies can assist. The ROCCQ indicated that community television is characterized by "its democratic structure of operation. general assembly, board of directors, various programming and funding committees. In fact, the people acquire their own means of communication through community television and participate in all production or management-related processes."²⁵ The ROCCQ also indicated that "this

democratic structure ensures the participation of the people at every level of decision-making. It is part of a desire to allow the people to participate in television programming in order that the content of that programming reflect the needs and experiences of the people.” In short, the democratic structure of community television helped “to change the passive viewer into an active participant.”²⁶

Further clarifying their vision of democracy, community broadcasters described what they meant by “community television.” The ROCCQ regarded community television to be “a community and local television undertaking with social, cultural and economic objectives, which is actively and formally owned and supported by the community.” The organization elaborated on some components of this definition. The term “community” meant that community television is “open to the community, to its needs, problems, strengths, and achievements.” The term “local” indicated that it “serves a roughly defined local and regional population” and “operates at the grass roots level.” Through “social objectives”, the ROCCQ meant that “we promote the idea of citizens and community groups taking control of their educational, political, economic, and cultural development.” In terms of “cultural objectives”, the organization meant that “community television contributes to the development of our cultural identity and of both Quebec and Canadian culture.”²⁷

Community broadcasters also described the content of the programming on community television. The ROCCQ indicated that the role of programming on community television is “to discuss community issues. For the most part, they are controversial issues of a socio-political or a socio-economic nature.”²⁸ The Societe de communication du Saguenay-Lac Saint-Jean said that it provided programming “on a whole range of subjects

relating to our collective life: the municipality, the economy, culture, social activities, and politics.”²⁹ The organization also said that “disadvantaged people working with limited resources have found in the community television station a means of communication, they have developed remarkable solidarity.” These “disadvantaged people” included women, the young, the old, the disabled, and the unemployed.³⁰

Contradictions Involving Technological Democracy

Community broadcasters clearly offered an alternative discourse. They challenged ideas about the public, regulations, and democracy in the cable industry’s discussion of communication technologies. However, they did not identify the contradictions in the industry’s discussion. Contradictions existed since cable companies did not deal consistently with the notions of the active and the passive.

To understand this, it is necessary to examine some of Marike Finlay’s ideas about the presentation of the active and the passive in discourses on communication technologies. Finlay identifies three major agents in the discourses: communication technologies themselves, corporations, and the public. As she indicates, there are a variety of roles for agents in the discourses. The “active roles” include those of “subject” and “sender” while the “passive roles” include those of “object” and “receiver.”³¹ Finlay points to a problem with the presentation of these roles: “Obviously, if the discourses on new communications technologies are to be believed when they declare that new communications technology will encourage public participation at all levels of society, [the discourses] should grant the active roles to the public. This, however, is not always the case.”³² Finlay suggests that most of the active roles go to the other major agents, either

communication technologies or corporations. The public is sometimes presented in active roles, but this is usually only within the realm of consumption and vis a vis hierarchically superior corporations. More often than not, the public is presented in passive roles or even omitted altogether.³³ It is on this basis that Finlay suggests there is a contradiction within discourses on communication technologies and democracy. As we noted in Chapter Two, she argues that “the contradiction lies between a content of democratization and a procedure of hierarchical exclusivity.”³⁴ Even in references to democratic broadcasting, the context is one of domination and subordination. To a considerable degree, Finlay’s ideas are borne out in the comments which the cable industry made to the standing committee about community channels

The cable industry sometimes presented communication technologies or the public in active roles with regard to community broadcasting. We have already noted how cable companies focused on the role of cable technology in facilitating such things as diversity and cultural expression. The active status granted to communication technologies also occasionally took other forms. For example, the Association des programmeurs de la teledistribution du Quebec described how satellite distribution systems have made possible programming exchanges between community channels.³⁵ The public was less likely than communication technologies to be granted active status. Only two organizations within the cable industry even acknowledged that community groups produce their own programming.³⁶ Just two other organizations referred to the public making use of production facilities or community channels.³⁷

The cable industry also sometimes presented corporations in active roles when

addressing community broadcasting. In so doing, the public was reduced to a subordinate status. Witness how the B.C./Yukon Division of the Canadian Cable Television Association discussed community programming:

Community programming in Canada has grown dramatically in many ways over the course of the past 15 years. However, it was not until about 1980 that the cable industry seized the opportunities that community programming represented to provide a high quality, comprehensive, and much appreciated reflection of community life through the medium of television.³⁸

Here, the cable industry is the explicit, active subject (sender) while the public is the implicit, passive object (receiver) which gratefully acquires what is given. Remarkably, despite the fact that community groups produce their own community programming, the public is stripped of any active role or even a presence. This structuring of roles was also reflected in other ways. Several cable companies referred to community channels as “services” which they provide, thereby emphasizing the active role of the corporate subject as sender.³⁹ The passive role of the public object as receiver was reinforced by Videotron, this cable giant only referred to the public in terms of the number of groups that watch its community channels.⁴⁰ In the roles presented through the cable industry’s discussion of community channels, corporations were dominant and the public was subordinate.

Recognition for the Community Sector

We saw in Chapter Four that communication is regarded as an object rather than a practice in dominant discourses on communication technologies. Consequently, much discussion focuses on ensuring that everyone gets a fair amount of communication. The issue of access is a component of this discussion. As Marike Finlay indicates, “the access

debate hinges on a consideration of communication as a set of objects, instruments, or bits of information that must be equitably distributed.”⁴¹

It is not surprising, then, that the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy placed a great deal of emphasis on the issue of access in relation to community broadcasting. The task force reflected the notion of technology-driven access:

Access to the airwaves, which has for so long faced technical barriers, is now within reach and the new technologies have given a renewed impetus to demands for such access, spurred on by the apparent realization of the old dream of a universal forum in which people in isolated villages become part of the bustling ‘global village.’ Although the reality is perhaps not on such a grand scale, many new forms of access are indeed appearing...⁴²

The task force also put the issue of access at the centre of its argument for giving community broadcasting a place in the new Broadcasting Act.

Community broadcasting has proved to be very useful on occasion in providing access to the system. That is why we recommend that it should be recognized in the act as a distinct sector in the system, on an equal footing with the public and private sectors which it complements. ...It is...important to give community radio and television a statutory basis to allow it to fulfil the role of granting access to the system, a responsibility which the other two sectors, with other calls on their services, have been unable to fulfil.⁴³

More specifically, the Caplan-Sauvageau task force put forth the recommendation that “the Canadian broadcasting system should be recognized as comprising not-for-profit community elements as well as the ‘public and private elements’ already acknowledged in the 1968 Broadcasting Act.”⁴⁴

Before addressing the reactions to this recommendation, it is important to note a point of agreement between the views of community broadcasters and cable companies

Although community broadcasters had offered an alternative to the discourse which was presented by cable companies, they joined cable companies in reflecting the dominant notion of communication as an object to which access must be obtained. The ROCCQ indicated that “the fundamental characteristic of community television is access to broadcasting.”⁴⁵ The organization indicated as well that the democratization of access to the airwaves is what makes community broadcasters different from other broadcasters.⁴⁶ This focus on access as a distinguishing feature of community broadcasting was also expressed by the Association des cablodistributeurs du Quebec. Playing up the role of cable technology in providing choice as well as access, the organization stated that “cable television has become over the years a unique and special medium of communication for Canadians....It provides the population of remote areas with a larger choice of broadcasting services; it also gives citizens access to a local forum for expression and information through community television.”⁴⁷

Community broadcasters and other organizations supported the recommendation of the task force to recognize the community sector. The recommendation was supported by organizations involved with community broadcasting through television and radio.⁴⁸ The recommendation was also favoured by the vast majority of the cultural communities and cultural agencies which mentioned it.⁴⁹

At least in the appearances which it made before the standing committee, the cable industry was completely silent on the specific issue of the recommendation to identify community broadcasting as one of the elements in the Canadian broadcasting system. However, one member of the industry did indicate general opposition to any measures that

involved giving specification to community broadcasting (on the grounds that its development could be restricted).⁵⁰

Although the lack of substantial opposition from cable companies may also have played a role, the dominant focus on communication in terms of access to objects appears to have been influential in the decision of the standing committee to endorse the task force recommendation. Like the task force, community broadcasters, and cable companies, the committee stressed the unique role of community channels in relation to access: “Considering the nature of community programming, which gives access to events and organizations that may be unable to be accommodated by conventional broadcasters, we view the contribution of community channels to the Canadian broadcasting system as a positive one.”⁵¹ The standing committee therefore indicated that the Broadcasting Act should refer to “the Canadian broadcasting system, comprising public, private, and community broadcasting elements.”⁵²

Access to Community Channels

A variety of organizations among the cultural communities had pushed the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy to go beyond the notion of technology-driven access. The task force noted:

The problem remains one of providing an equitable place for everyone in the broadcasting system: Canadians in general; producers; workers and artists in various regions or representing various views, finally, aboriginal peoples, minorities, women and local communities. All these groups stated in our consultations that they had little or no access to the system. The introduction of a new multi-channel environment increases the number of doorways but does not necessarily open them.⁵³

Instead of emphasizing technology-driven access, organizations among the cultural communities clearly focused on social barriers to access.

The Caplan-Sauvageau task force attempted to deal with the social barriers which these organizations faced. Since it saw community broadcasting as a vehicle for providing access, the task force recommended that “the licences of all community radio and television broadcasters should recognize the need of fair access for various ethnic, cultural, interest, and opinion groups.”⁵⁴ More significantly, the task force recommended that a democratic right, “the right of access of all Canadians to the broadcasting system”, be written into the Broadcasting Act.⁵⁵

Community broadcasters in both television and radio supported the task force recommendation to include a right of access in new broadcasting legislation. The ROCCQ regarded the recommendation to be “absolutely fundamental.”⁵⁶ The Association des radiodiffuseurs communautaires du Quebec said that “it is important to recognize that all Canadians have a right of access to the broadcasting system. As far as we are concerned, this statement forms the cornerstone of the work being done by the community communications organizations. It goes without saying that this recommendation is our highest priority.”⁵⁷ Few other organizations commented on the recommendation to include a right of access in the legislation, but the recommendation was supported by those cultural communities and cultural agencies which mentioned it.⁵⁸ Community broadcasters and other organizations within the cultural communities supported the task force recommendation because it helped to deal with social barriers to access. With only one exception, all of the organizations and other witnesses which discussed access to community channels reported

having problems in getting access from cable companies.⁵⁹

The cable industry did not support the task force recommendation regarding the right of access. Several representatives of the industry claimed that they had received few or no complaints about access to community channels.⁶⁰ Some cable companies even indicated that they often had to invite groups to use the channels.⁶¹ The cable industry clearly minimized the notion that there were social barriers to access. However, while presenting access as being quite open, the industry made one comment which suggested that it was not. This comment came from the B.C./Yukon Division of the CCTA. The organization rejected the right of access as it responded to a question from the standing committee about whether the content of the programming produced by community groups could cause problems.

Yes, most definitely it could. Certainly, we are responsible at this present time for what we carry on our community channel. We could have groups coming to us if they had the right to demand access, proposing programming we would not find acceptable for our channel because it was either too controversial or whatever. There have been programming concepts that would raise substantial community concern in almost any community, I am sure.⁶²

This drew attention to the issue of control over community channels, another issue which was dealt with by the task force.

Control over Community Channels

The Task Force on Broadcasting Policy attempted to further contend with the problem of social barriers to access by addressing the issue of control. In this regard, the task force was clearly influenced by the ROCCQ. The task force stated:

The Regroupement des organismes communautaires de

communication du Quebec (ROCCQ), representing some 25 community television organizations in Quebec, made a strong presentation to this Task Force urging a licensing procedure for community television associations. The group made the point that lack of licensing raises questions of legal responsibility for broadcasts. Cable operators have felt inhibited from granting access because of their legal responsibility for content. The ROCCQ would like to see each community TV association have official beneficial and legal status distinct from that of cable operators.⁶³

The task force agreed with the suggestion of the ROCCQ and recommended that the CRTC begin licensing community television associations.⁶⁴

The cable industry objected to the task force recommendation since cable companies would experience a loss of control. The Association des programmeurs de la teledistribution du Quebec stated:

...Caplan-Sauvageau made recommendations which would impact negatively. It would first mean that the cable company loses all right of control pertaining to the product distributed by the community channel. The granting of licences to independent corporations would allow them to distribute on a channel belonging to the cable company and traditionally set aside for its community programming a program for which the same company would have to abandon all vested rights and responsibilities.⁶⁵

The cable industry had support from several organizations. One of the cultural agencies and even some members of the cultural communities joined the industry in opposing the task force recommendation.⁶⁶

Although there may have been several reasons why the cable industry wanted to retain control over community channels, perhaps the most prominent of these reasons involved the industry's desire to move further into programming. During the proceedings of the standing committee, cable companies repeatedly indicated that they should be allowed

to originate specialty services or pay per view services to meet competition from satellites and other communication technologies.⁶⁷ Since they wanted to move further into programming, they could hardly argue that they wanted to be relieved of their responsibility for community programming. Cable companies instead utilized this responsibility to strengthen the case for extending their programming role. For instance, the Cable Television Association of Alberta (CTAA) said:

We are bothered that many seem to have a perception of cable as not voluntarily contributing to the Canadian broadcasting system and not being a logical choice for the creation of new and interesting specialty services....Cable is a strong component of the Canadian broadcasting system, not only because of our technical capability of delivering a multitude of high quality signals, but also because we offer a variety of interesting and unique services that the customer values. We create programming; we assemble programming; and we control how at least some of it is developed. Community programming is one example...⁶⁸

According to the CTAA, then, the “customer” values cable-originated “services” such as community programming and would therefore have a similar response to more services. Several other members of the industry also utilized their role in community broadcasting to argue for a more extensive role in programming.⁶⁹

Not surprisingly, community broadcasters favoured the recommendation of the task force. While endorsing the recommendation, the ROCCQ indicated that control by community broadcasters was necessary to establish democratic access and participation:

It would be interesting to know how many cable companies currently involved in programming have a programming committee that allows for input from the local people. It would also be interesting to know how many cable companies are publicly accountable for the management and programming of the community channel. For all these reasons, and in order to maintain the principles of access and

local participation in the programming and management of the community channel, we feel that responsibility for production and management of the community channel should legitimately be held by non-profit corporations.⁷⁰

Several organizations among the cultural communities and the even cultural industries agreed that community broadcasters should be able to obtain licenses.⁷¹

The arguments for and against the task force recommendation included reference to a conflict of interest. On the one hand, community broadcasters pointed to a conflict between the obligations of cable companies to the community and the economic goals of these companies. The ROCCQ contended that this conflict necessitated democratic control by community broadcasters:

Since the role of community broadcasting is to facilitate and encourage the participation of local people in creating, designing, producing and administering community programming whose objective.. is not merely to achieve economic cost effectiveness, but to meet the communication needs of the local people, there is therefore a conflict of interest with the function of cable companies, which is to make profits. How can we expect the content of community programming to reflect the reality of the local community when the right to make program choices remains the responsibility of an individual who is accountable to the company, and not to the local people?⁷²

On the other hand, cable companies implied that there was no conflict between their obligations to the community and their economic goals. Quite to the contrary, they contended that the cable industry and its economic resources were crucial to the development of community channels and it would therefore be best for community groups if control over the channels remained with cable companies. According to the Association des cablodistributeurs du Quebec, "it is thanks to the cable industry that community

television has reached a degree of operational and financial stability that would be impossible to maintain without the full management of such programming by cable operators.”⁷³ A similar view was expressed by the Association des programmeurs de la teledistribution du Quebec.⁷⁴

Access, Control, and the Absence of Conflict

The standing committee rejected the task force recommendation which called for licencing community broadcasters. The committee stated that “we do not think the interests of cable operators are inevitably in conflict with those of community program producers.”⁷⁵ Indeed, “operating a community channel, with its focus on local access, seems particularly appropriate for a cable television licensee in light of the grass roots relationship between the licensee and the community it serves.”⁷⁶ The standing committee therefore recommended that cable companies should continue to have control by operating and taking responsibility for community channels.⁷⁷

Since the standing committee did not believe that there was conflict between cable companies and community broadcasters, it is perhaps not surprising that the committee also rejected the task force’s recommendation to include a right of access in the Broadcasting Act. The standing committee believed that the issue of access was adequately dealt with by provisions in the existing legislation, including those which pertained to “balance.”⁷⁸

Limitations of the Critical Challenge

Clearly, community broadcasters attempted to challenge the arguments of cable companies. However, in two ways, the challenge which community broadcasters posed did

not go as far as it could have.

First, community broadcasters did not critique the cable industry's presentation of the passive and the active. We have seen that community broadcasters focused on developing a democratic structure which would transform the passive viewer into an active participant. We have also seen that, while cable companies had referred to democratization in relation to community channels, they spoke largely in terms of domination by reserving the active roles for technologies or corporations and relegating the public to passive roles. Community broadcasters might have strengthened their arguments for control over community channels by pointing to the contradiction between democracy and domination in the way that cable companies addressed community broadcasting.

Second, and more problematically, community broadcasters did not go as far as they could have in their arguments since they confined themselves to pushing for the right of access. Their concern with access reflects the dominant view of communication, communication is seen as an object which must be equitably distributed. Community broadcasters therefore argued for equitable access to community channels for community groups, and they called for a right of access in the Broadcasting Act to ensure it. Trying to establish a right of access was certainly a laudable goal, especially in light of evidence that there were actual or potential barriers to access. However, this goal was not enough to guarantee democratic communication.

In order to facilitate such communication, it was necessary to move beyond the right of access. As Marike Finlay notes, "communication rights must shift away from the question of access to objects and towards the right to practice certain discursive

procedures.”⁷⁹ Transforming the concept of communication from an object to a practice, Finlay calls for focusing on the right to communicate. This is not a new notion. As Finlay indicates, it originated during the late 1960s. She writes that “the formulation of a specific right to communicate.. grew out of a felt need to specify which discursive procedures would be involved in a more participatory, interactive, and democratic society.”⁸⁰ Although it has been eclipsed by preoccupation with the issue of access, the notion of a right to communicate has never disappeared; Finlay points out that it was featured in several books and reports during the 1970s and 1980s.⁸¹

The right to communicate is a broader and therefore more useful concept than the right of access. Whereas the right of access is only concerned with the *quantity* of communication - ensuring that everyone gets an equitable amount of it - the right to communicate is also concerned with its *quality*. As Finlay notes, “the right to access would have to come to mean, within the perspective of communication as practice, a certain communicational competence, i.e., a right to communicate in certain ways.”⁸² Thus, people should always have the opportunity to communicate “in terms of specific interactive rules of discourse favouring participation.”⁸³ The notion of the right to communicate therefore aims to alter the existing, hierarchial rules of communication which Finlay describes.

When one participant has the right to initiate communication (technological or other) while the other has not; where one participant is always in the position of answering questions in terms posed by the other; where one party is in control of the context that situates another’s information; where some are excluded by encryption or closed user groups from certain fields of discourse; there we are very far indeed from democratic, participatory, dialogical communication.⁸⁴

These hierarchical rules are often embedded in communication technologies themselves, including the one-way distribution system of broadcasting. Consequently, Finlay argues that it is sometimes necessary to redesign technologies with alternative communication practices in mind.⁸⁵

Even though a different technological structure was not likely to emerge, some form of the right to communicate would still have been more useful to community broadcasters than the right of access. After all, it is possible to have access and still have the content of programming controlled. This point can best be illustrated with reference to advertising on community channels. Cable companies had long desired such advertising. However, as Erik Barnouw has shown, advertising gives sponsors the power to influence the content of programming.⁸⁶ The ROCCQ seems to have been aware of this when it expressed opposition to the introduction of advertising on community channels: "If community television were to adopt mainly commercial practices, their programming would have to be adapted to these commercial practices, and they would no longer be truly community-oriented."⁸⁷ Nevertheless, community broadcasters did not push for the right to communicate. Although the right of access was perhaps adequate to deal with the role of cable companies, the right to communicate was needed to deal with the potential role of sponsors. By focusing on the desire of cable companies for advertising on community channels, community broadcasters could also have enhanced their contention that there was a conflict between the obligations of cable companies to the community and the economic goals of these companies. That in turn may have strengthened their case for control over community channels.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

As Appendix Three indicates, the work of the standing committee was followed by both Bill C-136 and Bill C-40. The issue of community broadcasting was addressed in these bills and the debates about them.

The Absence of Community Broadcasting Organizations

The absence of all organizations which had direct interests in community broadcasting is a striking feature of the debates on both bills. Although it is possible that they submitted briefs, community broadcasters did not appear before the two legislative committees in the House of Commons or the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications. This was also the case with aboriginal broadcasters, who shared with community broadcasters concerns about democratic broadcasting and were in some cases involved in community broadcasting.

The absence of these organizations most likely stemmed from not being invited to appear. The transcripts of the proceedings for various committees make it clear that only certain organizations were invited to make presentations.⁸⁸ The probable exclusion of community broadcasters and aboriginal broadcasters is ironic given the emphasis which they placed on the need for democratic participation. In their absence, other organizations among the cultural communities spoke for them.

Recognition for the Community Sector

The Department of Communications (DOC) dealt with community broadcasting through its policy statement, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices: A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada*, as well as Bill C-136. The issue of access seems to have been influential

in the approach taken by the DOC. After addressing community broadcasting, the DOC's policy statement emphasized "fairness and access" in relation to several general and specific issues.⁸⁹ With regard to community broadcasting, the statement indicated that "the government's policy recognizes the importance of community broadcasting in all its forms. Programming must be responsive to the needs and aspirations of Canadians wherever they live. The 1988 broadcasting bill recognizes the importance of 'local' or community programming wherever and however produced."⁹⁰ Thus, Bill C-136 specified that "the programming provided by the Canadian broadcasting system should...be drawn from local, regional, national, and international sources."⁹¹ The DOC's policy statement argued that "this recognizes community broadcasting but does not confine it in terms of legislative definition. Operationally, it provides the CRTC with a clear rationale for continuing to authorize and licence such activities as community broadcasting and student radio and to encourage the provision of community television on cable channels."⁹²

The approach which the DOC took to community broadcasting was the subject of debate during proceedings held by the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136. Cable companies believed that "local" was a sufficient reference to community broadcasting, as did the CRTC. These organizations contended that it would not be in the best interests of community broadcasters to be mentioned more specifically since this might limit their possibilities.⁹³ However, several organizations among the cultural communities indicated that a community element should have been specifically added alongside the public and private elements of the Canadian broadcasting system.⁹⁴ In their view, a reference to "local" programming was not enough to acknowledge and protect community

broadcasting. As the Federation des francophones hors Quebec stated, “that does not ensure permanent recognition of such broadcasting. We feel that community broadcasting must obtain equal status with public and private sector broadcasting because it contributes just as actively to Canadian broadcasting in general.”⁹⁵

Both the New Democrats and the Liberals tried to obtain recognition for community broadcasting. During clause by clause amendment in the legislative committee, New Democrat Ian Waddell introduced an amendment to specify that the Canadian broadcasting system was comprised of public, private, and community elements. However, his amendment was defeated.⁹⁶ Apparently responding to complaints about the lack of recognition for community broadcasting in Bill C-136, the Conservatives later put an amendment before the legislative committee which included “community programs” as part of an existing reference to “educational programs.” This amendment, which made more specific reference to community broadcasting while preserving the traditional duality between public and private elements, was passed.⁹⁷ The change was not enough to satisfy everyone though. In the House of Commons, Liberal Sheila Finestone noted the “the light weight given to educational and community broadcasting, which have now been moved jointly into a subparagraph.”⁹⁸ Finestone introduced an amendment to place the references to each on separate lines, but her amendment was defeated.⁹⁹ When Bill C-40 was later brought forward, the amendment established by the Conservatives remained the only provision for community broadcasting.¹⁰⁰

The issue of recognition for community broadcasting was addressed during proceedings held by the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40. Cable

companies and the CRTC were now more inclined to agree with a stronger reference for community broadcasting; the CCTA said that it would not have a great deal of difficulty accepting some kind of recognition, and the CRTC indicated that it agreed with including the community sector in the legislation.¹⁰¹ Some members of the cultural communities were apparently satisfied with the reference to “community programs.”¹⁰² However, others continued to push for recognition of a community element alongside the public and private elements of the Canadian broadcasting system.¹⁰³

The New Democrats tried again to get recognition for community broadcasting. During clause by clause amendment in the legislative committee, Waddell argued that community broadcasting could not be described as either public or private. He therefore once again put forth an amendment to specify that the Canadian broadcasting system was comprised of public, private, and community elements. Waddell indicated that the amendment represented “the view of a number of community and multicultural broadcasters who argue that the community sector in its present form should be recognized as being a distinct element of the system.”¹⁰⁴ The amendment was passed this time, and it is part of the 1991 Broadcasting Act.¹⁰⁵

Access, Control, and the Community Sector

An emphasis on the notion of access may be one of the reasons why community broadcasting was eventually recognized as a unique element within the Canadian broadcasting system. We have seen that the notion of access, which is a prominent component in the discourse of technological democracy, was also featured in the alternative discourse presented by community broadcasters and other members of the cultural

communities. As it was during the pre-legislative stages, the issue of access was persistently raised in debates during the legislative stages.

The issue of access was stressed in the positions of the New Democrats and the Liberals. Like many others before them, they referred to the theme of access as they pushed for giving community broadcasting recognition in the Broadcasting Act. New Democrat Ian Waddell made access the core of his argument during the legislative committee's clause by clause amendment of Bill C-136:

The government does mention local programming in paragraph 3 (1) (g), but that is not sufficient in my view to deal with the community sector. Community broadcasters are playing a vital role in giving access to the broadcasting system to - dare I use the word - ordinary Canadians....Just to mention local in passing does not do this sector justice.¹⁰⁶

During second reading in debates on Bill C-40, Liberal Sheila Finestone addressed the theme of access while arguing that the Canadian broadcasting system should be recognized in the legislation as being comprised of public, private and community elements. She indicated that "there is no serious provision in this bill for community broadcasting, which is now a significant part of the system. It gives access to community-based groups and local stories that are not always on the public agenda... I would hope that we would broaden the definition of the system."¹⁰⁷

During appearances before both legislative committees, the cultural communities contributed to the emphasis on access while continuing to stress that democratic access could only truly be achieved through their own control over community channels. As we saw earlier, the ROCCQ had made this linkage between access and control for the standing

committee. When Bill C-136 was being addressed, it was echoed by the Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes (ICEA). The ICEA said that, "on the problem of democratic control of and access to the broadcasting system, we can but deplore that this issue has been virtually ignored."¹⁰⁸ The Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR) agreed. The CRARR argued that "it would be important to be clearer about who are the responsible parties, how the community sector will be financed and by whom, and who will be able to gain access."¹⁰⁹ Similar points were made by a few organizations during the proceedings on Bill C-40.¹¹⁰

The persistent emphasis on access probably helped the cultural communities to eventually win their desired recognition for the community sector, at least in combination with the softening position of cable companies on the issue and the demonstrated willingness of the Conservatives to bend on it.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined debates about community broadcasting. The analysis has indicated that the discourse of technological democracy played a role in the process of establishing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting, but it became the target of a counter hegemony which favoured community broadcasting.

The discourse of technological causality was articulated to the discourse of technological democracy in the arguments of the cultural industries. The discourse of technological democracy historically had a divisive role since, like technological causality, it advantaged cable companies over broadcasters. However, the discourse later played a

different role; it appeared in the arguments of both broadcasters and cable companies since they shared common interests in deregulation and importing American programming or services. Through the discourse of technological democracy, their particular interests were presented as general interests in choice and access, the satisfaction of which was held to flow from the technologies of the burgeoning private sector. The cable industry extended some of these arguments to the issue of community broadcasting, but these arguments displayed a contradiction between *democracy* and *domination*.

The cultural communities - and especially community broadcasters - put forth an alternative to the discourse of technological democracy. To be sure, they did not identify the contradiction in the arguments of the cable industry and their own arguments even reflected the discourse's theme of access. However, community broadcasters and other members of the cultural communities also broke away from the discourse in significant ways. They responded to the discourse of technological democracy with an alternative discourse of democracy. Building on an interpretation of the public as citizens who need to be protected through regulation, they discussed democracy in terms of social processes which communication technologies can assist and called for recognition of the community sector in new broadcasting legislation. They successfully focused the debate on the issue of control rather than technologies. The cable industry responded by presenting its particular interests in control over community channels as general interests. At least in some aspects of the debates about Canadian broadcasting, the discourse of technological democracy clearly did not play an effective role in winning support for the expansion of the private sector since it was challenged by interests in a community sector. The ongoing process of

securing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting met with more success through debates about broadcasting definitions.

The above findings have implications for the theoretical model that was established in Chapter Two. These implications will be considered in Chapter Seven, but it is first necessary to examine another of the discourses in the theoretical model. The next chapter discusses the discourse of technological nationalism.

ENDNOTES

1. Thomas Streeter, "The Cable Fable Revisited: Discourse, Policy, and the Making of Cable Television", p. 196.
2. Streeter, "The Cable Fable Revisited", pp. 183-184.
3. Streeter, "The Cable Fable Revisited", p. 190.
4. Streeter, "The Cable Fable Revisited", p. 181.
5. Streeter, "The Cable Fable Revisited", p. 182.
6. Marc Raboy, *Missed Opportunities: The Story of Canada's Broadcasting Policy*, p. 212
7. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 212.
8. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 202
9. Kim Goldberg, *The Barefoot Channel: Community Television as a Tool for Social Change*, p. 29.
10. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 196.
11. Goldberg, *The Barefoot Channel*, p. 52.
12. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 203.
13. Goldberg, *The Barefoot Channel*, pp. 17 and 52.
14. Goldberg, *The Barefoot Channel*, pp. 18-21.
15. Goldberg, *The Barefoot Channel*, pp. 18-30.
16. Goldberg, *The Barefoot Channel*, pp. 53-54.
17. Gerald Caplan and Florian Sauvageau explained that this was the orientation of the task force when they appeared before the standing committee. See Canada, House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture [hereafter HCSCCC], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1987), 24:31-32.
18. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 28:7-8.
19. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 28:47.
20. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 65:17-18.

21. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 65:157-158.
22. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by Videotron, 62:125-126; and Maclean Hunter, 66:107.
23. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by CUC, 66:126-127, the Ontario Cable Telecommunications Association, 65:171; and Rogers Communications, 47:58.
24. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:29.
25. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:26.
26. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:30.
27. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:25-26.
28. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:27.
29. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 57:97.
30. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 57:102.
31. Marike Finlay, *Powermatics: A Discursive Critique of New Communications Technology*, p. 89.
32. Finlay, *Powermatics*, pp. 89-90.
33. Finlay, *Powermatics*, pp. 94-95.
34. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 16.
35. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 61:152.
36. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the Cable Television Association of Alberta, 43:79; and Maclean Hunter, 66:113-114.
37. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by the Cable Television Association of Alberta, 43:79; and Rogers Communications, 47:66.
38. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 50:88.
39. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by Saskatoon Telecable, 44:89; the B.C./Yukon Division of the Canadian Cable Television Association, 50:94; Videotron, 62:119-120; and the Association des programmeurs de la teledistribution du Quebec, 61:140.

40. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 62:119-120.
41. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 36.
42. Canada, Task Force on Broadcasting Policy [hereafter TFBP], *Report*, p. 153.
43. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 153.
44. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 502.
45. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:25.
46. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:27.
47. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 61:8.
48. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). With regard to community television broadcasting, see the comments made by the Regroupement des organismes communautaires de communication du Quebec, 29:28; and the Societe de communication du Saguenay-Lac Saint-Jean, 57:98. With regard to community radio broadcasting, see the comments made by the Association des radiodiffuseurs communautaires du Quebec, 29:42; Radio Peninsule, 48:27; Vancouver Co-operative Radio, 50:33; and the Community Radio Society of Saskatoon, 44:98.
49. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by the Institut canadien d'education des adultes, 27:51; the Federation des francophones hors Quebec, 30:55; the Societe des Acadiens du Nouveau-Brunswick, 48:13; the Conseil des usagers des medias de la Sagamie, 57:47; the Friends of Public Broadcasting, 22:66; the Wawatay Native Communications Society, 55:148; the Canadian Conference of the Arts, 25:63; and the Government of New Brunswick, 31:10. See also Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, *Response of Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists to the Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy*, p. 33. The only organization which did not support the recommendation was the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which contended that community broadcasting has never needed recognition in the Broadcasting Act in order to thrive. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 25:81.
50. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by Greater Winnipeg Cablevision, 45:60.
51. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:71-72.
52. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:15.
53. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 153.

54. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 504
55. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 154.
56. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:28.
57. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29 42.
58. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). Some organizations strongly supported the recommendation. See the comments made by the Societe nationale des Acadiens, 48:79-80; and the Ministry of Culture and Communications for the Government of Ontario, 64:7-10. Other organizations supported the recommendation in principle, but they were uncertain about how it could be managed. See the comments made by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 25:100. See also Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists. *Response of Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists to the Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy*, p. 6.
59. Canada. HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by the Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre, 55:46; the Regroupement des organismes communautaires de communication du Quebec, 29:30-31; British Columbia Association of Indian Friendship Centres, 51:53; Tom Tsang, 50:99; and the National Committee for Independent Canadian Unions, 65:121. The first of these witnesses had not encountered any problems in getting access, but all of the others reported difficulties.
60. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by the Ontario Cable Telecommunications Association, 65:169; Rogers Communications, 47:66; and Cable Service, 48:62.
61. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by Cable Service, 48:62; and Rogers Communications, 47:66.
62. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 50:97.
63. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 502.
64. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 502.
65. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 61:140.
66. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the Government of New Brunswick, 31:13; the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, 26:41; and the Community Radio Society of Saskatoon, 44:96.
67. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by the Canadian Cable Television Association, 69:108; the Cable Television Association of Alberta, 43:77; Rogers

Communications, 65:182-183; North Eastern Cablevision, 44:88 and 90; and Cable Service, 48:53-54.

68. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 43:76.

69. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the Canadian Cable Television Association, 28:8-9; the Association des cablodistributeurs du Quebec, 61:9-10; Rogers Communications, 65:180; Saskatoon Telecable, 44:88-89; Cable Service, 48:52-53; and Avalon Cablevision, 46:38.

70. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:31-32.

71. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). See the comments made by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, 27:26; the Canadian Conference of the Arts, 25:63; and Tom Tsang, 50:100. See also Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, *Response of Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists to the Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy*, pp. 33-34.

72. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:31.

73. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 61:10.

74. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 61:140-141.

75. Canada, HCSCCC, *A Broadcasting Policy for Canada*, p. 205

76. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:72.

77. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:73.

78. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:38-39.

79. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 251.

80. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 266.

81. Finlay, *Powermatics*, pp. 261-267.

82. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 251.

83. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 267

84. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 276.

85. Finlay, *Powermatics*, p. 277.

86. Erik Barnouw, *The Sponsor: Notes on a Modern Potentate*.
87. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:36.
88. See Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136 [hereafter HCLC-136], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1988), 1:13-19; 6:98-102; Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40 [hereafter HCLC-40], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1990), 1:11-14; Canada, Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* (1991), 11:46-47.
89. Canada, Department of Communications [hereafter DOC], *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices: A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada*, pp. 8-9 and pp. 43-50.
90. Canada, DOC, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, p. 41.
91. Canada, Bill C-136 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 3 (1) (g) (ii).
92. Canada, DOC, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, p. 42.
93. See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988) for the comments made by CUC, 5:79, Rogers Communications, 5:100; and the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, 6:134.
94. See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988) for the comments made by the Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes, 6:33; the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, 3:22; the Federation des francophones hors Quebec, 7:43; and the Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations, 9:10.
95. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 7:43.
96. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 10:12 and 59-60.
97. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 10:14.
98. Canada, House of Commons [hereafter Commons], *Debates* (1988), p. 19676.
99. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1988), pp. 19360 and 19366.
100. Canada, Bill C-40 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 3 (1) (h) (iii)
101. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990). See the comments made by the Canadian Cable Television Association, 8:8-9; and the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, 9:17

102. See Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990) for the comments made by the Centre for Research-Action on Race-Relations, 3:37; and the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, 12:36.
103. See Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990) for the comments made by the Federation des francophones hors Quebec, 8:44; and the Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes, 7:41.
104. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 13:25.
105. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 13:3-4; Canada, Broadcasting Act (1991), sec. 3 (1) (b).
106. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 10:60
107. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1989), p. 5554.
108. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 6 32.
109. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 9:10.
110. See Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990) for the comments made by the Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations, 3:43; and the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, 12:36.

CHAPTER SIX

NATIONAL BROADCASTING AND TECHNOLOGICAL NATIONALISM

Chapter Two briefly outlined the decline of the public sector in the Canadian broadcasting system. Although the public sector was no longer the force that it once was, it was still a matter of considerable importance in debates about Canadian broadcasting. This chapter considers the federal level of the public sector and national broadcasting as they pertained to debates in the public proceedings which led up to the 1991 Broadcasting Act. The analysis suggests that the discourse of technological nationalism played a role in the process of securing the federal state's hegemony over its institutional components and the regions (as well as efforts to strengthen national public broadcasting), but the discourse became the focus of a counter hegemony which eventually led to its transformation

HISTORICAL ISSUES

Technological Nationalism and the Federal State

The federal state has long emphasized the discourse of technological nationalism. As Maurice Charland indicates, this goes back to the 19th century and John A. MacDonald's remarks about the role of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in binding the country together.¹ The discourse later extended from the railroad to the radio and, in this context, it was

expressed by two other prime ministers

The discourse of technological nationalism was apparent in comments which Mackenzie King made about radio broadcasting during 1927. On Dominion Day of that year, King addressed the nation during a radio programme to celebrate Canada. He later described the event:

On the morning, afternoon and evening of July 1, all Canada became, for the time-being, a single assemblage, swayed by a common emotion, within the sound of a single voice. Thus has modern science for the first time realized in the great nation-state of modern days that condition which existed in the little city-states of ancient times and which was considered by the wisdom of the ancients as indispensable to free and democratic government - that all the citizens should be able to hear for themselves the living voice....May we not predict that, as a result of this carrying of the living voice throughout the length of the Dominion, there will be aroused a more general interest in public affairs, and an increased devotion of the individual citizen to the commonweal?²

This quotation illustrates the connection of technological causality to the moral issues of democracy and nationalism. As Charland indicates, the quotation also illustrates a contradiction between democracy and domination which he suggests is inherent to the discourse of technological nationalism. Charland notes that “Mackenzie King’s speech reduces Canada to a community or small city that does not suffer from the isolating effects of distance, regionalism, or cultural diversity. Here, technology would create a *polis* where the proximity of speaker to audience would promote ‘freedom’ and give rise to a ‘democracy’ of a public sharing a commonweal.” However, “the speech identifies an interest in public affairs with ‘devotion’, and...the community called into being is but an audience, subject to a voice. Radio, if it offers community, also offers domination.”³

The discourse of technological nationalism was also apparent in comments that R.B. Bennett made about radio broadcasting during 1932. However, there was no articulation of technological causality to the moral issue of nationalism. Instead, the discourse of technological nationalism was grounded in human agency and the purposeful deployment of communication technologies. Bennett said that, “properly employed, the radio can be made a most effective instrument in nation-building.”⁴ During debate on the bill that became the 1932 Canadian Radio Broadcasting Act, he continued the focus on human agency vis a vis the external threat of the United States and the internal threat of Quebec:

...this country must be assured of complete Canadian control of broadcasting from Canadian sources, free from foreign interference or influence. Without such control, radio broadcasting can never become a great agency for the communication of matters of national concern and for the diffusion of national thought and ideals, and without such control it can never be the agency by which national consciousness may be fostered and sustained and national unity still further strengthened....Furthermore, radio broadcasting, controlled and operated in this way, can serve as a dependable link in a chain of empire communications by which we may be more closely united one with the other.⁵

This quotation, which was an argument in favour of establishing public broadcasting over and above private broadcasting, indicates that the discourse of technological nationalism supported the initial dominant position of the public sector in Canadian broadcasting. However, the quotation also indicates a variation on the contradiction identified by Charland; there is a promise that radio broadcasting will bring both autonomy (since it will be “free from foreign interference or influence”) as well as domination (since it will be “a dependable link in a chain of empire communications”).

As Robert Babe has shown, the discourse of technological nationalism was later reflected in statements made by cultural agencies associated with the federal state. Prominent among these has been the Department of Communications (DOC), one of the federal administrative cultural agencies. Babe documents the existence of the discourse in quotations from various DOC reports and officials.⁶

Resistance to Technological Nationalism

Technological nationalism is based on the idea of uniting the country by overcoming differences. Lorna Roth and Gail Guthrie Valaskakis note that “Canadian government communications discourses have traditionally been structured around the promotion of a common culture with explicitly national objectives.” Regional and cultural disparities have been acknowledged, but “a broad strategy to constitute a national identity has been based on the assumption that these disparities can be surmounted by extension of technology to remote areas and disenfranchised minorities.”⁷ Whether it is grounded in technological causality or human agency, technological nationalism and the strategy associated with it have long faced resistance.

This resistance emerged almost from the beginning. When the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC) started operating in 1932, French and English programming were both provided on the same national broadcasting service. However, a number of people in English Canada, particularly those from the western provinces, objected to hearing French. Consequently, during 1934, the CRBC began providing separate programming for Quebec. After the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) was created in 1936, it institutionalized the division that had been made by creating two separate

services, a French language service and an English language service.⁸ Marc Raboy suggests that the problem of national unity then began to intensify as a result of this:

By 1938, the French language service was effectively autonomous. Because of the language barrier, it had to rely more strongly on local resources and could more easily create a distinctive relationship with its audience. Thus, instead of contributing to 'national unity' in the coast-to-coast sense, the CBC, in spite of itself, began to foster the feeling of difference that would eventually take the form of radical nationalism in Quebec.⁹

As Raboy implies, the problem of national unity deepened further in the decades that followed. The Quiet Revolution began in Quebec during the late 1950s, marking a desire for change and a shift from the "French-Canadian" to the "Quebecois" condition.¹⁰

In the early 1960s, the federal government responded to the resistance that had emerged by placing a greater emphasis on national unity through the CBC.¹¹ The emphasis on national unity was endorsed in the report of Fowler II as well as the White Paper on Broadcasting.¹² A few years later, the 1968 Broadcasting Act made explicit what had long been implicit in Canadian broadcasting legislation; the CBC was specifically directed to "contribute to the development of national unity and provide for a continuing expression of Canadian identity."¹³ Because of the national unity crisis, the public cost of the CBC was allowed to rise throughout the 1970s.¹⁴

However, there were signs that the CBC had become an ineffectual technological tool for establishing national unity. The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) conducted an inquiry into the CBC in 1977, and its report concluded that the public broadcaster had failed to foster national unity for a variety of reasons. Apart from the separation of English and French programming into two

distinct, isolated services, the CRTC report pointed to the centralization of production in Toronto and Montreal as well as excessive reliance on American programming.¹⁵ Another reason may also be cited. As Raboy argues, audience fragmentation associated with the proliferation of new stations, services, and communication technologies meant that the CBC no longer addressed more than a fraction of the federal government's political constituency.¹⁶ Despite all of these factors, the separatist forces lost the Quebec referendum in 1980 and the national unity question subsided for awhile.

The failure of the CBC to bind the country together has not been limited to Quebec. The same contradiction that Raboy noted between the aim and the effect of the CBC has also been noted by Bernard Ostry with regard to all regions of the country:

...every subsequent acceleration of communication in Canada, created and financed to bind the country together more closely, to help the flow of trade and information, and make the regions interdependent, has also entailed the unforeseen effect of strengthening Canada's regional character. It has contributed instead to preventing not only the emergence of a national metropolis but also of a deeper sense of community. And the process has not stopped...[R]egional nationalisms are resurgent.¹⁷

However, unlike the case with Quebec, the resistance of the other regions began to appear only relatively recently. It became evident in 1974 at the CRTC hearings for the CBC's licence renewal. As Raboy notes: "For the first time, advocates of public broadcasting would sharply criticize the shortcomings of the CBC, putting forth a wide range of new possibilities in the process."¹⁸

Much of the concern expressed by various groups focused on the centralization of the CBC. The 1968 Broadcasting Act had been the first piece of broadcasting legislation

to include a provision for the regions. The legislation required the national broadcaster to be “serving the special needs of geographic regions, and actively contributing to the flow and exchange of cultural and regional information and entertainment.”¹⁹ However, groups contended that the CBC had not taken this regional mandate seriously. As Raboy indicates, one of the new themes in the debate on broadcasting was the demand for improved programming to meet regional needs. The arguments on this point came from groups in various regions of the country. People in the regions wanted more regional programming for national distribution (to represent themselves to the rest of the country) as well as more regional programming for regional consumption (to represent themselves to themselves). People in the regions also wanted a greater say in production and distribution by the CBC; there were calls for more decision-making and control at the regional level.²⁰

PRE-LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

The CBC and Technological Nationalism

During the proceedings that were conducted by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, a number of organizations which supported a strong role for the public sector (and specifically the CBC) made statements which reflected the discourse of technological nationalism.

The discourse of technological causality was articulated to technological nationalism in the statements of some organizations among the cultural communities and cultural agencies. As the examples below indicate, these statements focused on the role of technologies, services, or stations in bringing forth a nation. A member of the Canadian

Association for Adult Education indicated that “so few things hold us together, and I think one of them is communications.”²¹ Referring to the expansive geography in Canada, CBC Thunder Bay stated: “Its very size makes a public media service essential to overcome distances and isolation, and to provide and nurture a sense of common interest.”²² The regional office of the CBC in Newfoundland and Labrador made an indirect connection between the public broadcasting system and the railway system which had (according to the discourse of technological nationalism) bound the country together and played a role in Confederation. The regional office saw its CBC stations as playing a similar role when Newfoundland joined Confederation during 1949: “The performance of the local stations has contributed significantly to the transformation to Confederation, in uniting the country and the province and in providing a vital service to many hundreds of small communities scattered over 143,000 square miles.”²³ The Friends of Public Broadcasting made a more direct connection between the CBC and the railway system. Speaking about the CBC, the Friends said: “There is a realization that this is indeed the railway that binds Canada together in the 20th century, and we will be dependent on this and other technological devices in the 21st century.”²⁴

In the statements of some organizations among the cultural communities, human agency was the basis for the discourse of technological nationalism. The Friends of Public Broadcasting provided an example of this as well:

I think many of us would say the CBC is one of the costs of being Canadian. If we want a country which stretches across thousands of miles in a very thin line up against the most sophisticated technological nation in the world, and if we want to maintain any kind of identity resulting in any kind of sovereignty, we have to have

a public broadcasting system that allows us to do that.²⁵

The Canadian Broadcasting League (CBL) provided another example. The CBL included the CBC among “the instruments which a new nation, we in Canada, will forge to strengthen a common memory.”²⁶

All of these organizations wanted to enhance the position of the CBC, and the discourse of technological nationalism figured into their arguments. However, their arguments were not limited to one version of technological nationalism. Through either form of the discourse, the organizations asserted the beneficial, space-binding characteristics of communication technologies. As we will see, more critical perspectives were put forth by a number of organizations.

Problems with the CBC and Technological Nationalism

The discourse of technological nationalism is closely connected to technological mediation. Charland notes that “the Canadian imagination, according to technological nationalism, is a technologically-mediated one which derives from the state and is in opposition to nature as well as regionalism.”²⁷ As Marike Finlay indicates, the notion of technological mediation is significant ideologically since it suggests immediacy. Finlay therefore advises caution when confronted with a discourse which presents technology as a mediator: “The distance is still there between all of those things that technology claims to mediate: the rich and the poor, left and right...The distance must be there for technology to pose as a mediator in the first place. It is perhaps better to admit the distance than to pretend that technology makes an immediacy where there is none.”²⁸ A number of the organizations that appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on

Communications and Culture drew attention to the distance which existed between people in Canada. In so doing, these organizations explicitly identified, or inadvertently pointed to, three problems with the CBC and the discourse of technological nationalism.

First, although Canada has from the beginning been comprised of many cultures, the discourse of technological nationalism has focused on only two of those cultures. As the national unity provision in the 1968 Broadcasting Act suggests, a primary goal within the discourse has always been to unite the two solitudes of English Canada and French Canada. During the public proceedings, this was apparent in remarks made by the Commissioner of Official Languages; he referred to the Canadian broadcasting system, and particularly the CBC, as “an electronic forum reflecting and promoting the cohesion and identity of anglophone and francophone communities in Canada.”²⁹ Various minority groups were unsatisfied with this description of the role to be played by the CBC and the Canadian broadcasting system. The Canadian Ethnocultural Council pointed out that “the CBC’s progress in multiculturalism has been sporadic and uneven, and [the CBC] continues to serve the majority anglo-celtic and francophone communities.”³⁰ The National Aboriginal Communications Society emphasized that “ours is a task to restructure the Canadian broadcasting system, to go beyond the conceptual approach of technological nationalism and to acknowledge and serve the pluralism of this country.”³¹

Second, in contrast to the discourse of technological nationalism, communication technologies and the CBC may have linked the regions more than the country. Two regional services of the CBC inadvertently pointed to this and thereby reinforced the arguments made by Raboy and Ostry. These regional services never mentioned the role of the national

broadcasting service in uniting the country, but they did mention its role in uniting their respective regions. Radio Canada's regional office in eastern Quebec noted the impact of the communications link which it provided:

Since they were isolated, all little communities were extremely vulnerable; now, with such a link, there was solidarity. ..Radio Canada-Gaspésie les Îles has played the role of regional communications agent by linking up municipalities around major issues that will influence their destiny.³²

Similarly, CBC Maritimes said that "the CBC and its people are an integral part of this maritime community, perhaps the only force that can unite the Maritimes."³³

Third, while one version of technological nationalism suggests the neutrality of communication technologies and the CBC, that has not meshed with the conditions of domination (through centralization) encountered by people in various regions of the country. The ideological effectiveness of technological nationalism, as described by Charland, is therefore placed in doubt:

Technological nationalism presents technology merely as a neutral medium facilitating nationhood. However, it is hardly so benign, for it locates the state's very *raison d'être* in the experience of technological mediation....[E]lectronic media extend the economic and cultural influence of centres of production over marginal areas....Technological nationalism...ideologically conceals a set of power relations.³⁴

In the next several sections, we will consider the extent to which organizations challenged the neutrality of communication technologies and the CBC by situating them within power relations.

New Technologies and Decentralization

Two things are worth noting about the discussion of communication technologies

with regard to national broadcasting during the proceedings of the standing committee. First, there was very little discussion of technologies per se on the part of cultural communities or other participants in the proceedings. Second, the discourse of technological causality was apparent in what little discussion there was.

This is clear from the position taken by the Canadian Television Producers and Directors Association (CTPDA). The CTPDA implied that decentralization would flow from new technologies rather than structural change within the CBC:

All networks should have a centre, and Toronto is the logical centre of the English service. We caution, however, against the pitfalls of producing all programs in or from Toronto. New technology makes decentralized production and local decision-making quite efficient and effective without destroying the strength of a single Canadian network defending and displaying our unique Canadian society.³⁵

The CTPDA addressed the implications of new technologies without considering their design and the structural context in which they existed. In no way did the organization connect new technologies to power relations.

However, one regional branch of the CTPDA joined many other organizations in discussing power relations that were tied to the CBC. We will now turn to the issues which they raised.

Centralization of Power and Resources

In the various regions of Canada, there was a great deal of concern about centralization. The regional office of Radio Canada in eastern Quebec noted that "all economic systems tend to gather their resources around major centres and drain the regions."³⁶ The Nova Scotia Coalition on Arts and Culture contended that Canada and its

cultural institutions were no exception; the coalition said that “we see a trend toward the paralysis of federal cultural agencies and also toward their retrenchment at the expense of the regions.”³⁷ Similarly, the Newfoundland and Labrador branch of the CTPDA argued that there has been “a deliberate downgrading of regional participation in public broadcasting and the consequent erosion of the CBC mandate.”³⁸

Several organizations which appeared before the standing committee made the case that this downgrading of participation by the regions was connected to the distribution of power and resources within the CBC. The regional office of Radio Canada in Alberta noted that resources were not equitably distributed between the networks and the various regional services. In its view, “the fact that the networks are protected means that we are less protected. There is a tendency to cut back regional stations to make the networks stronger.”³⁹ The unequal distribution of resources stemmed from the unequal distribution of power within the CBC. The regional office of the CBC in Newfoundland and Labrador wanted the regions to be given some of this power. It called for establishing “entrenched grass roots and increased autonomy.”⁴⁰

The Government of Saskatchewan was well aware of these issues. Its Department of Communications indicated:

The effect of the concentration of power and resources in central Canada is multi-faceted. First, it leads to a central Canadian perception of the country, and this is evident through news and public affairs coverage of the networks. Second, the huge expenditures by the networks in central Canada provide a large economic stimulus to that region which is not available to other provinces. Third, it means that the regions are unable to originate public affairs and dramatic productions because they do not have the resources or power to do so. They therefore are stifled in presenting stories and images of

their region to other areas of Canada.⁴¹

The Government of Saskatchewan concluded that “only through the decentralization of decision-making and the more equitable distribution of resources will Canada achieve the regional balance in broadcasting we all seek.”⁴²

This position was echoed by several other organizations. The Manitoba Film Producers Association stated: “If you really want to see the development of regional production, then of course we are going to require the resources, like any producer anywhere in Canada. But more importantly, we have to have some control. The control has to be decentralized.”⁴³ The Winnipeg Film Group called for decentralization of both funding and decision-making within the CBC.⁴⁴ The Societe des Acadiens du Nouveau-Brunswick wanted Radio Canada to give the regions more resources and autonomy.⁴⁵ The Department of Communications for the Government of Manitoba said that “the CBC is a very centralized network, with responsibility for national programming resting in Ontario and Quebec.” It also said that “in order to make a genuine effort to decentralize broadcast production, substantial structural change within the system is required, and as soon as possible.”⁴⁶

Regional Centralization

The Task Force on Broadcasting Policy had recommended that the existing CBC owned and operated local television stations should concentrate their resources into regional production centres. The task force called for establishing five English production centres, two in the centres of the country (Ontario and Quebec) and three in the regions (Alberta-British Columbia, Manitoba-Saskatchewan, and the Atlantic). The Caplan-Sauvageau task force also called for establishing four French production centres (in Montreal, Quebec City,

Moncton, and Ottawa). These centres would produce programming of all types, primarily for the regions, but also for national exposure.⁴⁷

The task force recommendation to set up regional production centres was the subject of much discussion during the proceedings of the standing committee. Few witnesses expressed clear support for the recommendation, but some saw value in it.⁴⁸ The vast majority of witnesses firmly rejected the proposal for a variety of reasons.⁴⁹ A major basis for debate over the recommendation was the question of whether it would facilitate some decentralization or further enhance centralization.

Several witnesses were uncertain about which of these two possibilities would be produced by the recommendation. The Department of Communications for the Government of Nova Scotia stated:

If the task force recommendation suggesting that the CBC establish five regional centres of production will have the effect of decentralizing decision-making...then we could see it as having a positive impact on regional programming and ultimately the diversity of CBC programming. However, we cannot agree if the intent is to establish centres of excellence by simply taking current activities within each region and concentrating them within one centre as a cost-cutting measure. We would be concerned with where that centralization effort would lead.⁵⁰

Alexa McDonough, the leader of the New Democratic Party in Nova Scotia, saw the same lack of clarity in the implications of the recommendation. Consequently, she said that it had to be addressed with “considerable caution.” For her, the recommendation would only be acceptable if it entailed “a genuine decentralization of decision-making down to the regional level.”⁵¹

Others were not uncertain about the implications of the recommendation and

rejected it because they were convinced that deepening centralization would be the result. The regional office of the CBC in Alberta contended that “the economies of scale that might be gained from such a centralized venture would be far outweighed by the dramatic loss of audience interest.”⁵² The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) argued that “centralizing regional broadcasting is not the answer” because “centralization cuts some regions out of the national dialogue.”⁵³ Similarly, the Saskatchewan branch of the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA) argued that the recommendation “asks the residents of the regions to go back to the days when television programming was largely a one-way street”, and it indicated that “we do not want to listen to that centralized monologue any more.”⁵⁴ The Newfoundland and Labrador branch of the CTPDA maintained that “this kind of centralization can only serve to further curtail and dilute regional production.”⁵⁵

The Presence of a Critical Challenge

We can now make some remarks about the extent to which organizations challenged the neutrality of communication technologies and the CBC by situating them within power relations. The role of communication technologies was addressed by only one of the organizations, and its statements reflected the discourse of technological causality. However, within the regions, cultural agencies (including regional services of the CBC and provincial governments) were joined by members of the cultural communities and even components of the cultural industries (independent producers) in recognizing power relations associated with the CBC. They identified the domination which, according to Charland, the discourse of technological nationalism attempts to conceal.

These organizations presented an alternative discourse. Although they do not appear to have explicitly identified the contradiction between democracy and domination which Charland sees in the discourse of technological nationalism, they did set out an alternative approach to democracy in response to domination. Charland's analysis of Mackenzie King's classic statement made the contradiction in technological nationalism clear; the discourse offered democracy that would arise through technologies and permit citizens to hear the voice of their national leader, but the discourse also implied domination since citizens would simply be an audience that was subjected to a centralized voice. Regional, ethnic, and other interests challenged such domination. Much like the community broadcasters who were discussed in Chapter Five, they put forth a discourse of democracy which was based on social rather than technological aspects. Democracy would come not through technologies, but through structural change which altered power relations and generated public control beyond the national level.

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

As Appendix Three indicates, the work of the standing committee was followed by both Bill C-136 and Bill C-40. The issue of national broadcasting was addressed in these bills and the debates about them.

National Broadcasting and the DOC

The Department of Communications (DOC) paradoxically offered a Thatcherism-influenced private sector thrust as well as support for the CBC in *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices: A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada*. The DOC's policy

statement indicated that “Canada now has a lively and innovative private production sector. There is therefore no longer a necessity for the CBC to produce all its programming, particularly entertainment programming, in-house.” The statement went on to specify that the CBC was also affected by other factors, including the possible need to rely more on distribution technologies such as cable and satellites rather than over-the-air distribution systems. The DOC concluded that “these factors imply change in the way the CBC addresses its mandate. However, even in times of fiscal restraint, they do not reduce the basic importance of Canada having a strong national public broadcaster.”⁵⁶

Within this context, the DOC apparently responded to the reaction of regional and ethnic groups by altering the discourse of technological nationalism. Following Roth and Valaskakis, we have seen that this discourse has traditionally concentrated on surmounting regional and cultural disparities through the extension of communication technologies to remote areas and disenfranchised minorities. However, the focus of the DOC was now on recognizing rather than surmounting the disparities that existed. This was made clear in *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*:

Ultimately, a national, regional, or ethnic culture is largely defined by shared experiences. Our culture is what we have in common. Broadcasting is a major determinant of our culture as Canadians, as Quebecois, as Albertans, as Nova Scotians; as Anglophones or Francophones; as urbanities or rural dwellers. It is of fundamental importance to our political and cultural sovereignty that our broadcasting system be an accurate reflection of who we are, of how we behave, of how we view the world. It plays a major role in defining our national, regional, local, and even our individual identities.⁵⁷

Two things are notable about this passage of the policy statement. First, the discourse of

technological causality was articulated to technological nationalism since the passage indicated that “broadcasting is a major determinant of our culture as Canadians.” Second, the interests of regional and ethnic groups were articulated to technological nationalism by broadening the meaning of “sovereignty.” The discourse of technological nationalism had always defined sovereignty in “Canadian” or “national” terms. While this form of cultural identity remained dominant (because it was prioritized in relation to alternatives), other types of cultural identity were now more readily recognized as components of an overarching sovereignty. This orientation was reflected in the approach which the DOC took to the role of the CBC with regard to the regions and national unity.

The CBC and the Regions

Both the task force and the standing committee made recommendations regarding the CBC’s regional mandate. The regional mandate in the 1968 Broadcasting Act stated that the national broadcaster should be “serving the special needs of geographic regions, and actively contributing to the flow and exchange of cultural and regional information and entertainment.”⁵⁸ The Task Force on Broadcasting Policy was satisfied with this mandate. It argued that, “by and large, the regional issues - the future deployment of plant and human resources, access to the network and so on - are operational in nature and do not necessitate any substantive change in the provision as it stands.”⁵⁹ The House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture essentially agreed.⁶⁰ It called for the existing regional mandate to be fulfilled more than it had been. The standing committee wrote that “to affirm this mandate in a serious way is to reject any centralist or centralized vision of the CBC.”⁶¹ The committee further attacked centralization by opposing the task force proposal

for regional centralization.⁶²

Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices and Bill C-136 both contained important implications for the regions. The DOC's policy statement indicated that a total of \$35 million in additional funding would be provided annually to enhance the CBC's regional services (\$20 million for English programming and \$15 million for French programming).⁶³ Despite the recommendations of the task force and the standing committee, the new broadcasting bill modified the CBC's regional mandate. It called for the programming of the CBC to "reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences."⁶⁴ This change set the stage for a struggle over its meaning and consequences.

On the one hand, some believed that the change to the regional mandate was positive or at least unproblematic. The DOC contended in its policy statement that it was trying to strengthen the regional component of the CBC through the change as well as the additional funding:

The standing committee has argued for increased funding for the CBC and for a stronger emphasis on the regional dimension of the corporation. The government agrees that the CBC must continue to be the centerpiece of Canadian broadcasting. It is with this fundamental principle in mind that the government has decided that the CBC can best serve Canadians by providing quality Canadian programming aimed at large audiences, especially in peak viewing hours, and enabling Canadians in all regions to contribute to both national and regional programming.⁶⁵

The CBC apparently had no difficulties with the wording of the new regional mandate since it said nothing about the mandate in its brief or its presentation to the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136.⁶⁶

On the other hand, some believed that the change to the regional mandate was

negative and highly problematic. The Department of Transportation and Communications for the Government of Nova Scotia stated:

We are concerned that the policy...for the CBC to 'reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences' defines a passive role for the CBC rather than an active one of contributing to the development of regional cultural expression. Our concern is that by using modern communications technology the CBC could reflect, in effect by operating an 'electronic mirror' in Toronto, and thus reduce or eliminate its valuable regional presence.⁶⁷

This is the closest which any of the participants in the public proceedings came to specifying that communication technologies are tied to power relations. Although others did not address the role of technologies, they did indicate concern about the new regional mandate. Concern was expressed by many organizations among the cultural communities. However, the organizations that were most directly affected - those based in the regions - did not appear before the legislative committee (apparently because they were not invited).⁶⁸ In the absence of these organizations, a number of workers' groups and nationalist groups argued that the regional mandate had been narrowed or weakened.⁶⁹ These two sets of groups made several other points as well. First, they argued that the new regional mandate legitimized the centralization which was being carried out by the CBC.⁷⁰ Second, they indicated that the mandate flew in the face of the recommendations made by the task force, various witnesses, and the standing committee.⁷¹ Third, these groups contended that the total \$35 million per year which the DOC was going to put into regional programming meant little (especially given previous cuts to the budget of the CBC).⁷² Most of these arguments were echoed by the Liberals and the New Democrats.⁷³

The resistance which emerged to the change in the regional mandate prompted

Flora MacDonald, the Minister of Communications, to take some action. As the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136 began clause by clause amendment of the bill, MacDonald argued that this change (as well as others) was not significant:

I was struck by the number of instances in which witnesses and commentators were concerned with the alteration of a single word or familiar formulation from the 1968 act. These alterations, made usually in an effort to improve the clarity of drafting style of the legislation, have prompted questions about our intention in making these changes....In most cases the substance and effect of the provision have not in fact been changed. In many respects, with regard to Canadian content and the role of the CBC, for example, this legislation is in fact even stronger than the act it is replacing.⁷⁴

McDonald then announced that she would be making several modifications to the wording of Bill C-136. One of these modifications involved re-instating some of the wording from the 1968 Broadcasting Act to the regional mandate.⁷⁵ The amendment that she made called for the CBC to “reflect Canada and its regions to national and regional audiences, while serving the special needs of those regions.”⁷⁶

Despite this amendment, concern remained about the regional mandate and the role of the CBC in the regions. The revised mandate was carried over into Bill C-40.⁷⁷ As with Bill C-136, regional organizations among the cultural communities did not appear before the legislative committee. However, one of the national organizations that appeared before the legislative committee offered criticism of the regional mandate. The Coalition pour la defense des services francais de Radio Canada stated:

The Coalition is sceptical concerning the interpretation to be given to Section 3 (1)(1)(ii) of the bill. In no way does this section assure regional French or English speaking communities that they will really have available in the near future the infrastructures and resources needed to express themselves or to see themselves in any real sense

reflected in the CBC's programming. The Coalition would like to see Bill C-40 amended so as to provide that the CBC, in its role as a national public broadcasting system, would offer radio-television services which respond to the regional, as well as national, needs for expression of both French and English speaking communities in the various regions of Canada.⁷⁸

The Coalition's point about the need for a regional mandate which protected infrastructures and resources was strengthened by a later development during the public proceedings. As Bill C-40 passed third reading in the House of Commons, the CBC announced that it would be closing 11 local stations in various regions of the country.

The Friends of Canadian Broadcasting reacted to this development when they appeared before the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications. The Friends seemed to suggest that the modestly successful battle to modify the regional mandate had been for nought since it would be ignored and centralization would deepen

Canada is the poorer for these cuts, not just because these locations are now unable to communicate within their viewing areas, but also - and more importantly - because they are no longer able to communicate with the rest of us... These cuts demonstrate an unhealthy trend towards greater independence [sic] upon major metropolitan centres such as Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto, and a corresponding disenfranchisement of Canada's hinterland... They are completely inconsistent with the stated intentions of Parliament under both the existing and the proposed broadcasting statutes.⁷⁹

The Friends clearly drew attention to the contradiction between the rhetoric and the reality of regional broadcasting. Although they were the only members of the cultural communities which had an opportunity to speak about the announced closings during the public proceedings, the Friends were not alone in their opposition. As Marc Raboy notes, the closings sparked "unprecedented protests around the country."⁸⁰

The CBC, National Unity, and National Consciousness

The Task Force on Broadcasting Policy called for altering the CBC's national mandate. The mandate in the 1968 Broadcasting Act stated that the national broadcasting service should "contribute to the development of national unity and provide for a continuing expression of Canadian identity."⁸¹ The task force believed that the reference to Canadian identity indicated "the value of treating the national service as an instrument of Canadian cultural expression." It therefore recommended that this reference remain in the Broadcasting Act. However, in the view of the task force, "the provision that the national service contribute to the development of national unity should be rescinded and replaced by a more socially oriented provision, for example, that the service contribute to the development of national consciousness."⁸²

The task force's idea to replace national unity with national consciousness had an impact. The House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture endorsed the recommendation.⁸³ The recommendation was also reflected in Bill C-136, which stated that the CBC should "contribute to shared national consciousness and identity."⁸⁴ The revised national mandate which appeared in Bill C-136 remained in Bill C-40, and it is now part of the 1991 Broadcasting Act.⁸⁵

Several things need to be noted about the revised national mandate. First, even though the reference to national unity was gone, the mandate remained consistent with the discourse of technological nationalism; as it was noted earlier, R.B. Bennett's classic statement of technological nationalism called for radio broadcasting to be "the agency by which national consciousness may be fostered and sustained and national unity still further

strengthened.” Second, while the reference to national unity disappeared, it should also be noted that the reference to “Canadian” identity disappeared. The removal of both was consistent with the DOC’s focus on recognizing differences (rather than surmounting them) within the goal of sovereignty. It can be concluded, then, that a “new” discourse of technological nationalism had emerged. This discourse accommodated regional or ethnic interests, especially with regard to Quebec. Third, as we will see, at least two discourses helped to support the new national mandate. Both of these discourses emphasized the moral issue of democracy.

Free Expression

To some degree, the shift from national unity to national consciousness was facilitated by a discourse on the value of free expression. The Caplan-Sauvageau task force set the stage for this when it argued that the reference to national unity “suggests constrained attachment to a political order rather than free expression in the pursuit of a national culture broadly defined.”⁸⁶

The issue of free expression was a subject of debate during the proceedings of the standing committee. The CBC implied in its brief to the committee that the reference to national unity did not pose restrictions on free expression:

...this section requires that the national broadcasting service contribute to the development of national unity *and* provide for a continuing expression of Canadian identity. The Corporation has always chosen to interpret this requirement as an exhortation to ensure that its programming services provide a full and fair reflection of Canadian experience and expression. On this basis, CBC has had little difficulty in setting a programming course tuned to this objective. We do find that the proposed change may actually be more confusing and unspecific than existing provisions. The well-

know cliché ‘if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it’ may be apt in the present circumstance.⁸⁷

In contrast, the Canadian Broadcasting League (CBL) argued that free expression was threatened by the existing national mandate. Using news coverage of a referendum in Quebec on separation as an example, the CBL asked: “How are you going to be fair within the Canadian tradition of freedom and at the same time contribute to the development of national unity?”⁸⁸ Although few organizations commented on the CBC’s national mandate before the standing committee, the CBL was joined by at least two other members of the cultural communities - the Friends of Public Broadcasting and the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists - in supporting a legislative change from national unity to national consciousness.⁸⁹

During the proceedings on Bill C-40, a discourse that focused on free expression also appeared in the arguments which some political parties made against the national unity clause. This was the case with the ruling Conservatives. Marcel Masse, who was the Minister of Communications at the time, indicated that “I have removed from the CBC its obligation to promote Canadian unity because it is, first, maintaining this political value artificially, and second, it was a constraint on freedom of expression.”⁹⁰ The issue of constraint on free expression was also raised by the Bloc Québécois when Jean Lapierre used the role of Quebec’s provincial educational broadcaster, Radio Quebec, against those who supported the national unity clause:

Quebecers didn’t give Radio Quebec a mandate to work for Quebec’s sovereignty....Why do they want to make Radio Canada do something they would not approve in the case of Radio Quebec? When the Parti Québécois was in power in Quebec City...did they tell Radio Quebec:

now you are going to pursue the same objectives as the government?
Never...they had too much respect for freedom of the press.⁹¹

A similar argument was made by Lapierre's colleague, Gilles Duceppe.⁹² These were the only interventions which the (then) few members of the Bloc Quebecois made into debates on the Broadcasting Act

Public Broadcasting

A discourse on the value of public broadcasting also assisted the shift from national unity to national consciousness.

An emphasis on public broadcasting has masked the domination of the federal state in Canada. Raboy makes this clear:

The Canadian broadcasting experience shows how the modern nation-state, while acting in the name of such notions as self-determination, cultural sovereignty and public service, can skilfully maintain a set of internal power relations based on the most fundamental social inequality. It shows how an idea - in this case, the idea of the public - can be mobilized in support of a particular political project and how, under the guidance of the state, communications media - in this case, the media of public broadcasting - can become a legitimizing force for alignments of power which have nothing to do with the public in any democratic sense of the term.⁹³

In Raboy's view, the idea of the public has been put to use as "an ideological mechanism of repression."⁹⁴

Raboy makes two key points with regard to this repression. First, as he notes, "public" broadcasting in Canada has historically meant "national" broadcasting. In turn, "national" broadcasting has promoted one vision of a nation.⁹⁵ The "Canadian" nation has been privileged over the "Quebec" nation. Second, the association of the CBC with "public"

broadcasting has disguised its essential character, which Raboy identifies as “state” broadcasting.⁹⁶

The national unity clause made the connection between the CBC and state broadcasting explicit. During debates in the House of Commons on the bill which became the 1968 Broadcasting Act, David MacDonald noted: “When we begin to move into areas such as...national unity, we are in effect moving away from the concept of public broadcasting toward the idea of state broadcasting, whereby the broadcasting system of the country becomes an extension of the state.”⁹⁷

Severing the connection between the CBC and state broadcasting meant eliminating the national unity clause. Significantly, the national unity clause - but not the CBC itself - was associated with state propaganda during the proceedings which led up to the 1991 Broadcasting Act. The Task Force on Broadcasting Policy took the lead:

...we question whether the national unity provision adds anything to the neighbouring provision for a ‘continuing expression of Canadian identity’...[I]t would appear to restrict rather than enhance this broad cultural mandate by placing a prior obligation on CBC journalists to practice a certain way - as a propaganda service, a cynic might say.⁹⁸

No witnesses before the standing committee addressed this point in the task force report, but the standing committee itself agreed with it. The committee argued that “there must be no suggestion in the act that the CBC has any obligation to serve as a propagandist, even for a cause as legitimate as national unity.”⁹⁹ Although it was completely ignored during the proceedings on Bill C-136, the national unity clause and its connection to state propaganda was prominently featured in the proceedings on Bill C-40. Jim Edwards expressed the position of the Conservatives when he indicated that “a broadcasting system should never

be a propaganda instrument of the state.” Consequently, Edwards argued that “we must go to basics and have national consciousness and the promotion of that identity as the fundamental basis of the CBC’s mandate.”¹⁰⁰

The Liberals and the New Democrats responded to the Conservatives by asserting that the CBC was still involved with public broadcasting despite the existence of the national unity clause. According to Liberal Beryl Gaffney, “there is no threat that the CBC will be an instrument of the state. The intention and the effect are for the CBC to be an instrument of the people, of society, of the Canadian nation, not - and I cannot stress this enough - the government or the state.”¹⁰¹ The Liberals and the New Democrats used several arguments to attack the claim that the national unity clause made the CBC an instrument for state propaganda.¹⁰² Although members of both parties were careful to describe the CBC as a public broadcaster, at least one of them slipped out of this discourse. Liberal Shirley Maheu asked: “If the state broadcaster is withdrawing from its promotion of national unity because this mandate is taken away from it, does that imply that this government has also decided to let Quebec go adrift?”¹⁰³

Despite the arguments of the Liberals and the New Democrats, the organizations which discussed the national unity clause during the proceedings on Bill C-40 believed that the CBC should not be tainted by a clause which associated it with state broadcasting. These organizations played up the democratic connotations of public broadcasting. Patrick Watson, the chair of the CBC, told the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications:

...one of the proudest achievements of the Canadian Broadcasting

Corporation is that, of all the publicly funded broadcasters in the world, it seems to be the one that has escaped more clearly and more vigorously than any other, including the BBC, from becoming a state broadcaster. There is a profoundly important difference between the state broadcaster and the public broadcaster. The state broadcaster is an instrument of the will of the state, which means the will of the government of the day. The public broadcaster is, to the best extent it can become, an instrument of the needs of the people. It is there to serve a population and to facilitate the decision-making on the part of that population insofar as it feeds into the political process...[T]he requirement of the public broadcaster to be an instrument of state policy is inconsistent with the ideals that have been set up for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.¹⁰⁴

A similar perspective was offered by the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting. The Friends indicated that the national unity clause is “a source of difficulty for a public broadcaster which is expected to reflect opinions from all elements of the population.”¹⁰⁵ Consequently, the Friends strongly supported the shift to a national mandate that was based on the idea of national consciousness.¹⁰⁶

Within this focus on public broadcasting, the idea of national consciousness was favoured by organizations since it encompassed various interests. The Friends of Canadian Broadcasting suggested that “the goal of shared national consciousness is to develop relations among people within a political community that enable them to work well together to all their ends, including those that can be realized by political means and those that can be realized by other means: economic, social, and so forth.” Thus, the CBC should “reflect and represent the varying notions that there are in the political community for the way in which people develop a sense of togetherness.”¹⁰⁷ Keith Spicer, the chair of the CRTC, even more explicitly suggested that the change to national consciousness was useful for recognizing regional and cultural interests:

I would agree with the government on this one. I think the words ‘national unity’ had a historic value at the time, and we have been through 20 very tumultuous years, now calming down, maybe getting more tumultuous, who knows. I think we have tried to develop a more secure sense of nationhood. There is also the flowering of ethnic identities, multicultural identities, and I guess the whole Meech Lake process, which evokes the importance of regional sensitivities. I think the new wording is probably more appropriate to the times we live in.¹⁰⁸

None of the organizations which appeared before committees during the proceedings on Bill C-40 favoured the national unity clause. However, that did not stop the Liberals and the New Democrats from trying to retain its place in the Broadcasting Act.

Efforts to Retain the National Unity Clause

We have seen that the discourse of technological nationalism underwent a transformation. The “old” technological nationalism, which focused on national unity and surmounting regional/cultural disparities, was reduced to a subordinate status. Articulated to discourses on the value of free expression and public broadcasting, a “new” technological nationalism assumed the dominant status. It focused on national consciousness and recognizing regional/cultural interests

This transformation was clearly reflected in the House of Commons debates on Bill C-40. Although the traditional discourse of technological nationalism did not appear in the arguments of the Conservatives during the debates on Bill C-40, it frequently appeared in the arguments of the Liberals and the New Democrats. Members of both parties reflected the traditional discourse while making a case for retaining the national unity clause in the Broadcasting Act. Both the Liberals and the New Democrats contended that the CBC is “an instrument of national unity.”¹⁰⁹ They also likened broadcasting, particularly through the

CBC, to the railway. For example, New Democrat Lyle Dean MacWilliam stated

. broadcasting touches all of us just about every day. It is an extremely important tool for building a consensus of identity in the country and for building a consensus for national unity...Broadcasting to the 1990s is really what railways were to Canada in the 1800s. It is a mechanism which binds the country together.¹¹⁰

A number of similar statements were made by the Liberals.¹¹¹

While the traditional discourse of technological nationalism was featured in the positions of both the Liberals and the New Democrats, the latter broke away from it more than the former. The Liberals reflected the traditional discourse while supporting the centralization of broadcasting and the domination of the regions. Dennis Mills made this quite clear:

We have a very special opportunity over the next period to make sure that our broadcast systems are here to promote national unity in every respect. We should make sure that we do not as legislators give any position out there that we want to decentralize it and we want the regions to have sort of a priority position.¹¹²

A number of other Liberals also made comments along these lines.¹¹³ In contrast to the Liberals, the New Democrats reflected the traditional discourse while supporting the decentralization of broadcasting and the interests of the regions. Ian Waddell argued that the amount of centralization within the CBC was due to cut-backs in the regions, and “that is taking the CBC away from its goal of national unity.”¹¹⁴ Therefore, while the Liberals believed that national unity would be attained by asserting control over the regions and limiting them only to a subservient role, the New Democrats believed that national unity would be attained by giving the regions a more equitable role.

Despite their disagreement on the issue of centralization-decentralization, both

the Liberals and the New Democrats brought forward amendments to place the national unity clause in the legislation. During clause by clause amendment by the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40, the New Democrats failed to get through an amendment which replicated the national mandate in the 1968 Broadcasting Act.¹¹⁵ The New Democrats tried again in the House of Commons by introducing an amendment that meshed the original mandate with the new one; this amendment, which indicated that the CBC should “contribute to national unity, shared national consciousness and identity”, was also defeated. It was later taken up by the Liberals in the Senate and defeated once more.¹¹⁶ The amendments to retain the national unity clause in the Broadcasting Act failed principally because of the massive majority held by the Conservatives. However, it is also significant that the amendments did not have the support of any organizations which appeared before committees during the proceedings on Bill C-40.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on debates about national broadcasting. The analysis has demonstrated that the discourse of technological nationalism played a role in the process of securing the federal state’s hegemony over its institutional components and the regions (as well as efforts to strengthen national broadcasting), but the discourse became the focus of a counter hegemony which eventually led to its transformation.

The discourse of technological nationalism existed in statements made by cultural agencies which are associated with the centre of the country. The discourse has long been apparent in statements made by these agencies, especially the DOC. Although the

discourse of technological causality was not articulated to technological democracy in the arguments of the DOC, it was articulated to technological nationalism through the claim that broadcasting was a determinant of culture for Canadians. Because it was based on technological causality, this statement mystified the role of the federal state in domination while expressing general interests in a national culture. Although some of the theoretical literature suggests that there is a contradiction between *democracy* and *domination* in statements of technological nationalism, no such contradiction could be found in the textual material which was examined for this study.

An alternative to the discourse of technological nationalism was presented by cultural agencies that were associated with the periphery of the country as well as cultural communities and some other organizations. Although these types of organizations sometimes uncritically adopted the discourse, they also responded to perceived domination. Building on ideas that were similar to the alternative discourse of democracy in debates about community broadcasting, they called for the decentralization of power and resources down to the regional level of national public broadcasting. In response, the DOC later articulated the interests of regional and ethnic groups to the discourse of technological nationalism. Discourses on the value of free expression and public broadcasting (both of which emphasized the moral issue of democracy) also played a significant role in modifying the discourse to accommodate these interests. Although a shift in the discourse worked toward establishing the hegemony of the federal state over its institutional components and the regions, budget cuts imposed by the move away from state intervention undermined the economic conditions for hegemony. A contradiction therefore existed which made it more

difficult (at least with regard to national public broadcasting) for the federal state to secure hegemony.

The above findings have implications for the theoretical model that was established in Chapter Two. Having addressed all three of the discourses which are the focus of this study, we are now in a position to bring the threads of the study together in the next chapter by reviewing and assessing the theoretical model.

ENDNOTES

1. Maurice Charland, "Technological Nationalism", pp. 199-203.
2. Cited in Charland, "Technological Nationalism", p. 204.
3. Charland, "Technological Nationalism", pp. 204-205.
4. Cited in Marc Raboy, *Missed Opportunities: The Story of Canada's Broadcasting Policy*, p. 39
5. Cited in Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, pp. 45-46; cited in Charland, "Technological Nationalism", p. 207
6. Robert E. Babe, "Emergence and Development of Canadian Communication: Dispelling the Myths", p. 58; Robert E. Babe, *Telecommunications in Canada: Technology, Industry, and Government*, pp. 5-6.
7. Lorna Roth and Gail Guthrie Valaskakis, "Aboriginal Broadcasting in Canada: A Case Study in Democratization", p. 229.
8. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 52.
9. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 62
10. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 139.
11. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 8.
12. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 163 and p. 171.
13. Canada, Broadcasting Act (1968), sec. 2 (g) (iv).
14. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 267.
15. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 251.
16. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 267.
17. Bernard Ostry, *The Cultural Connection*, pp. 24-25
18. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 228.
19. Canada, Broadcasting Act (1968), sec. 2 (g) (iii).
20. Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, pp. 228-232.

21. Canada, House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture [hereafter HCSCCC], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1987), 64:43.
22. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 55:85.
23. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 46:81.
24. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 64:27.
25. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 64:29.
26. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 29:10.
27. Charland, "Technological Nationalism", p. 214.
28. Marike Finlay, *Powermatics: A Discursive Critique of New Communications Technology*, p. 70
29. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 69:46-47.
30. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 26:37.
31. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 26:7
32. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 57:16-17.
33. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 47:94
34. Charland, "Technological Nationalism", p.216.
35. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 67:71
36. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 57:16.
37. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 47:18
38. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 46:94.
39. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 43:30.
40. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 46:82.
41. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 44:21.
42. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 44:21.

43. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 45:104-105.
44. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 45:88-89.
45. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 48:14-15.
46. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 45:73.
47. Canada, Task Force on Broadcasting Policy [hereafter TFBP], *Report*, p. 305-308.
48. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by Jack Masters, 55:7; and the British Columbia Film and Video Association, 50:52.
49. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). Two major reasons stand out. Some rejected the recommendation since it called for one region to represent another. See, for example, the comments made by the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians, 64:87; and Gene Long, 46:23. Others rejected the recommendation because it made no provision for French-language production in western Canada. See, for example, the comments made by the Federation des francophones hors Quebec, 30:56; and some regional services of Radio Canada, including Alberta, 43:29; and Manitoba, 45:24.
50. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 47:7.
51. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 47:30.
52. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 43:105.
53. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 46:42-43.
54. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 44:6-7.
55. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 46:95-96.
56. Canada, Department of Communications [hereafter DOC], *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices: A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada*, p. 23.
57. Canada, DOC, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, p. 5.
58. Canada, Broadcasting Act (1968), sec. 2 (g) (iii).
59. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 287
60. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:55.
61. Canada, HCSCCC, *A Broadcasting Policy for Canada*, p. 109.

62. Canada, HCSCCC, *A Broadcasting Policy for Canada*, p. 126
63. Canada, DOC, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, pp. 25-26
64. Canada, Bill C-136 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 3 (1) (n) (ii).
65. Canada, DOC, *Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices*, p. 24.
66. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *CBC Brief to the Legislative Committee on Bill C-136*.
67. Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136 [hereafter HCLC-136], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1988), 7:32.
68. The possibility that regional organizations were not invited is suggested by the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA). ACTRA noted that its regional branches had wanted to appear before the House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136 to discuss the issue of the new regional mandate. The union reminded the legislative committee that “a number of branches of ACTRA requested an opportunity to appear before this committee, and clearly their fundamental objective would have been to talk about this whole issue.” See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 3:14.
69. See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988) for the comments made by the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, 3:7; the Canadian Union of Public Employees, 8:102-103; the Coalition pour la defense des services francais de Radio Canada, 9:24, 38-39; and the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, 6:13.
70. See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988) for the comments made by the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, 3:8; the Canadian Labour Congress, 8:93; the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians, 8:97; the Coalition pour la defense des services francais de Radio Canada, 9:38-39; and the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, 6:13
71. See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988) for the comments made by the Canadian Union of Public Employees, 8:101-102; the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians, 8:97; and the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, 6:16.
72. See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988) for the comments made by the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, 3:8; the Canadian Labour Congress, 8:92; the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians, 8:55; the Canadian Union of Public Employees, 8:101; and the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, 6:15-16.
73. Canada, House of Commons [hereafter Commons], *Debates* (1988). See the remarks of Liberals Sheila Finestone, p. 17753; and Dave Dingwall, p. 17899. See also the remarks of New Democrats Ian Waddell, p. 17756, David Orlikow, p. 17902; and Neil Young, p.

19704.

74. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 10:31.

75. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 10:34.

76. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 10:15.

77. Canada, Bill C-40 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 3 (1) (l) (ii).

78. Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40 [hereafter HCLC-40], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1990), 10:25.

79. Canada, Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications [hereafter SSCTC], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1991), 13:10

80. Marc Raboy, "The Role of Public Consultation in Shaping the Canadian Broadcasting System", p. 467.

81. Canada, Broadcasting Act (1968), sec. 2 (g) (iv).

82. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, pp. 284-285.

83. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:55.

84. Canada, Bill C-136 (Broadcasting Act), First Reading, sec. 3 (1) (n) (iv).

85. Canada, Bill C-40 (Broadcasting Act), sec. 3 (1) (l) (vi); Canada, Broadcasting Act (1991), sec. 3 (1) (m) (vi).

86. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, p. 284.

87. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, *A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada: The Response of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to the Recommendations Contained in the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy*, p. 27.

88. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1988), 29:13.

89. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the remarks made by the Friends of Public Broadcasting, 22:67. For ACTRA's views, see the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, *Response of Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists to the Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy*, p. 15.

90. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 2:11.

91. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 15806.

92. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 15809.
93. Marc Raboy, "Public Television, the National Question, and the Preservation of the Canadian State", pp. 84-85.
94. Raboy, "Public Television", p. 85.
95. Raboy, "Public Television", p. 65.
96. Raboy, "Public Television", p. 64.
97. Cited in Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, p. 178.
98. Canada, TFBP, *Report*, pp. 284-285.
99. Canada, HCSCCC, *Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act*, 36:51.
100. See Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990) for the remarks of Jim Edwards, p. 16259.
101. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 15988.
102. Some Liberals and New Democrats contended that, even with the national unity clause in the Broadcasting Act, the CBC imparted knowledge and understanding of each other rather than propaganda about each other. See Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990) for the remarks of Liberal Ron MacDonald, p. 16264; and New Democrat Dan Heap, p. 15993. Members of both parties also contended that the national unity clause did not make the CBC a propaganda instrument of the state since it did not affect news coverage. See the remarks of Liberals George Proud, p. 15990; John Harvard, pp. 16000 and 16263; Sheila Copps, p. 16004; Sheila Finestone, p. 16248; Mary Clancy, p. 16272; Bob Wood, p. 16279; and John Manley, pp. 16113-16114; and New Democrat Ian Waddell, p. 15803.
103. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 16290.
104. Canada, SSCTC, *Minutes* (1991), 11:24-25.
105. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 7:29.
106. Canada, SSCTC, *Minutes* (1991), 13:10 and 13:14.
107. Canada, SSCTC, *Minutes* (1991), 13:13.
108. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 9:17-18.
109. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990) Liberals expressing this view were Mary Clancy, p. 14950; Don Boudria, p. 14955; Ronald Duhamel, p. 14960; Ron MacDonald, p. 15772; Stan Keyes, p. 15813; George Proud, p. 15990; and Sheila Copps, pp. 16004-16005. New

Democrats expressing this view were Ian Waddell, pp. 14983 and 15803; and Lyle Dean MacWilliam, pp. 16151 and 16288.

110. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), pp. 14948-14949.

111. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990). See also the remarks of John Harvard, pp. 7004 and 16000; Jean-Robert Gauthier, p. 16102; and Jack Iyerak Anawak, p. 16299.

112. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 7010.

113. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990). See the remarks of Ronald Duhamel, p. 14959; and Christine Stewart, p. 16105. Several Liberals quoted or paraphrased an editorial statement which appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen* on May 16, 1990: "The CBC is an agent of Canadian unity. It must remain that way as a bulwark against various decentralization forces." See the remarks of Charles Caccia, p. 15768; Mary Clancy, p. 15807; Beryl Gaffney, p. 15989; George Proud, p. 15990; and Ralph Ferguson, pp. 15999-16000, and Eugene Bellemare, p. 16109.

114. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), p. 14984.

115. Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990), 13:70-84

116. Canada, Commons, *Debates* (1990), pp. 15801 and 16211-16212. See also Canada, Senate, *Debates* (1991), pp. 5318-5329.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has been a sociological study of the public proceedings that were part of the policy formation process which led to Canada's 1991 Broadcasting Act. The study considered a theoretical problem regarding three discourses on communication technologies. More specifically, the theoretical problem involved understanding how the discourses of technological causality, technological democracy, and technological nationalism play a role in the struggle over hegemony among social agents. The public proceedings which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act, and the social agents which participated in those proceedings, provided the empirical basis for grappling with the theoretical problem and establishing the argument of the study.

The argument of the study suggests that: a) the discourse of technological causality played a role in the process of establishing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting; b) the discourse of technological democracy played a similar role while becoming the target of a counter hegemony which favoured community broadcasting; and c) the discourse of technological nationalism played a role in the process of securing the federal state's hegemony over its institutional components and the regions (as well as efforts to strengthen national public broadcasting), but the discourse became the focus of a counter

hegemony which eventually led to its transformation.

Chapter One indicated that grappling with the theoretical problem of the study would make a contribution to knowledge by moving into areas that have been unexplored in the literature. There has been a tendency in the literature to focus on one or two of the discourses rather than all three of them. This has left open the matter of the relationships among the three discourses. There has also been a tendency in the literature to focus on the discourses in relation to one or two dominant social agents (industry and/or government). Although the most powerful social agents are discussed, the least powerful ones tend to be ignored; little is known about workers and other subordinate groups with regard to the discourses on communication technologies.

It is important to examine all three of the discourses in relation to dominant and subordinate social agents. It is necessary to address the powerful social agents *and* the less powerful ones in order to place the focus on the struggle between them. It is also necessary to address all three of the discourses because they are resources which may be linked and utilized by social agents in the struggle. Powerful social agents may, for example, attempt to advance their interests in communication technologies through the notion that the technologies are causal forces which bring societal benefits such as democratic participation and nation-building. However, the interests of powerful social agents may be challenged through alternative discourses on communication technologies that are put forth by less powerful social agents. These issues were analyzed in the study through the concepts of hegemony and counter hegemony. The study therefore deepens our understanding of how three discourses on communication technologies have been taken up in the ideological

struggle between dominant and subordinate social agents.

We can now consider what we have learned about the three discourses in relation to the struggle over hegemony between social agents. The next section examines the theoretical model that was pieced together in Chapter Two (from aspects of the existing literature) and tested through the study.

EVALUATING PRINCIPLES OF THE THEORETICAL MODEL

The theoretical model established three principles. We will review and assess each of these principles in relation to the findings of the study.

Connection

The first principle was that connections between the discourses are most likely to be made in the arguments of the cultural industries and the arguments of the cultural agencies that are associated with the centre of the country. These connections work toward establishing hegemony.

The discourse of technological causality appeared in the arguments of the cultural industries. As suggested by some existing literature, the cultural industries - organizations which were part of private capital - adopted the discourse in arguments for deregulation. This was briefly described in Chapter Four. It was noted, for example, that Greater Winnipeg Cablevision was against regulatory constraints in a "technology and program-driven broadcasting environment."¹ However, the significant finding here is that the cultural industries also adopted the discourse in arguments for *expanding* regulation. Indicating that technological developments were evolutionary and difficult to predict, the

cable industry called for altering the definition of broadcasting in such a way that it encompassed and kept up with technological developments. Among other things, this would bring under regulation companies which had previously been able to escape regulation because their technologies did not fall within broadcasting definitions. It may be the case, then, that the discourse of technological causality plays a complex and contradictory role with regard to debates about regulation.

The discourse of technological causality played a role in the process of securing private capital's hegemony within Canadian broadcasting. Through arguments rooted in technological causality, the dominant cable industry advocated a definition of broadcasting which focused on programming rather than technologies. This fit the economic interests of many cultural industries since it addressed their concerns about unregulated competition through new communication technologies; it ensured that all program services connected to broadcasting would be covered by broadcasting legislation no matter what technologies they utilized. While unifying most of the cultural industries, the cable industry also attempted to incorporate the cultural communities. The cable industry expressed particular interests in altering the definition of broadcasting to accommodate new technologies as general interests; it was implied, for example, that changes to the definition would allow the industry to better meet the needs of Canadians. Although some of the cultural communities took a slightly critical stance, others replicated the cable industry's arguments and its focus on the discourse of technological causality. Several of them saw communication technologies as being responsible for positive changes in society. In part due to the discourse of technological causality, the cultural communities gave their consent to a

definition of broadcasting that would legitimize and deepen the expansion of private capital within Canadian broadcasting by bringing under regulation companies which had previously not been covered in the definition. This suggests the need for revision to the first principle of the theoretical model; technological causality might require connections to general interests, but the discourse does not necessarily require connections to democratic or nationalist sentiments in order to help secure consent among the cultural communities to the growing role of the cultural industries and their technologies within the Canadian broadcasting system.

The discourse of technological causality was articulated to the discourse of technological democracy in the arguments of the cultural industries. The discourse of technological democracy appeared in the arguments of both broadcasters and cable companies since they shared common interests in deregulation and importing American programming or services. Through the discourse of technological democracy, their particular interests were presented as general interests in choice and access. For instance, Global justified importing cheap American programming through reference to the "vote" which viewers make with the switch on their television sets.² The cable industry extended the discourse of technological democracy to its arguments about community broadcasting. Several cable companies indicated, for example, that community broadcasting - through cable technology - facilitated diversity, choice, and cultural expression. However, the discourse of technological democracy played less of a role than technological causality in working toward private capital's hegemony because it was challenged by a counter hegemony.

The discourse of technological nationalism was reflected in the arguments of the cultural industries, but it played a negligible role in terms of efforts to establish the hegemony of private capital. Compared to the other two discourses, technological nationalism appeared far less frequently in the arguments of the cultural industries. The discourse was, however, part of the arguments which the cable industry made against a proposed legislative restriction on its involvement in programming. Rogers Communications stated:

We submit that without the programming efforts of Rogers over the years over various channels, our communities and our nation would be much the poorer. Therefore, with our record, suggestions that we not be involved in programming and that we be excluded from that type of activity of building a Canadian nation are very offensive to us.³

Two points are suggested by this quotation. First, like technological causality and technological democracy, the discourse of technological nationalism was linked to arguments against government restriction (in this case, through legislation rather than regulation). Second, technological causality was *not* articulated to technological nationalism; unlike the other two discourses, technological nationalism was clearly rooted in human agency. That, combined with the relative absence of technological nationalism in the arguments of the cultural industries, may help to explain why there were apparently no connections between technological nationalism and technological democracy in these arguments. It seems, then, that there are a number of similarities and differences between technological nationalism and the other two discourses which might usefully be incorporated into the first principle of the theoretical model.

What accounts for the two crucial differences between technological nationalism and the other discourses? Why did technological nationalism play such a minor role in the arguments of the cultural industries, and why was technological causality not articulated to the discourse when it did play a role? A few possible answers to these questions can be suggested. The discourse of technological nationalism probably did not play a major role in the arguments of the cultural industries because, unlike the other discourses, it did not fit the objectives behind most arguments. The discourses of technological causality and technological democracy were featured in arguments for providing more American services or programming. The discourse of technological nationalism could only play a role in arguments for providing more *Canadian* services or programming. Consequently, the cable industry's arguments about moving further into programming were among the few situations where the discourse might appear. When technological nationalism did appear, technological causality was probably not articulated to it because the cable industry wanted to justify its own role in relation to Canadian content rather than mask it behind communication technologies (as it did in relation to American content). This is an example of how technological causality is turned on and off as it suits the arguments of organizations. To some degree at least, this also helps to explain why technological causality sometimes was and sometimes was not articulated to the discourse of technological nationalism in the arguments of cultural agencies, cultural communities, and others.

The discourse of technological nationalism was apparent in statements made by cultural agencies which are associated with the centre of the country. The Department of Communications (DOC), one of the federal administrative cultural agencies, is of particular

concern in relation to the hegemony of the federal state over its institutional components and the regions. Although the discourse of technological causality was not articulated to technological democracy in the arguments of the DOC, it was articulated to technological nationalism. The DOC indicated that broadcasting was a determinant of culture for Canadians. Because it was based on technological causality, this statement mystified the role of the federal state in domination while expressing general, moral interests. Like technological causality, the discourse of technological nationalism was reflected by some of the cultural communities (in their efforts to strengthen national public broadcasting). However, like technological democracy, the discourse was also faced with a counter hegemony.

Contradiction

The second principle was that contradictions involving the discourses are most likely to be identified and acted upon by the cultural communities as well as the cultural agencies which are associated with the periphery of the country. These contradictions can work against establishing hegemony since they open up space for the alternative discourses of a counter hegemony.

There was a contradiction between the technological and the social in the arguments of the cultural industries. These arguments sometimes featured technological causality, but they also sometimes featured forms of causality that were social rather than technological. The discourse of technological causality was turned on and off as it suited the arguments of the cable industry. The industry shifted between at least four casual forces, ranging from technological forces (various communication technologies) to social

forces (the regulator, the consumer, and the cable industry itself). The cultural communities did not identify the contradiction in the arguments of the cable industry and take the opportunity which it presented to assert the importance of the social over the technological. Since they largely replicated the cable industry's arguments about the definition of broadcasting, arguments which were based on the discourse of technological causality (adaptation to evolutionary technological developments), the cultural communities missed the opportunity to advance an alternative discourse which could have focused on the *practice* of communication and the *design* of communication technologies. This alternative discourse might have been the basis for infusing the definition of broadcasting with social and democratic objectives.

There was a contradiction between democracy and domination in the arguments of the cultural industries but not the arguments of the cultural agencies at the centre of the country. This contradiction involves a focus on democratic communication in the context of hierarchial procedures. With regard to the discourse of technological democracy, the contradiction was reflected in the roles which the cable industry accorded to technologies, corporations, and the public. Technologies and corporations were often presented in active roles when discussing community broadcasting, but the public was often presented in passive roles. As some of the theoretical literature suggests, a contradiction between democracy and domination has long existed within technological nationalism as well. According to Maurice Charland, it existed in Prime Minister Mackenzie King's implicit suggestion that radio would enhance democracy by giving citizens the opportunity to hear their leaders while ensuring domination by making citizens nothing more than members of

a passive audience.⁴ No similar statements could be found in the material examined for this study, but there were nevertheless struggles to develop more democratic arrangements in national public broadcasting as a response to perceived domination. Although a contradiction between democracy and domination was not addressed by the cultural communities and the cultural agencies associated with the periphery of the country, these groups still advanced alternative discourses.

Why were alternative discourses put forth in response to technological democracy and technological nationalism but not technological causality? The key to this may lie in the historical developments that we explored. As we have seen, conflict was prominent in the developments which preceded debates about broadcasting definitions, community broadcasting, and national broadcasting. However, whereas the conflict in the case of broadcasting definitions was between broadcasters and cable companies, the conflict with regard to the other two issues was between private capital or the federal state and various groups with interests in community broadcasting or regional broadcasting. These groups therefore had some background and points of contention to build upon whereas they (or groups similar to them) had no such advantages in terms of debates about broadcasting definitions. Consequently, it was perhaps easy for various groups to get caught up in positive scenarios about communication technologies, the future, and the implications of a technology neutral definition of broadcasting.

The opposition to technological democracy and technological nationalism was similar in some respects. Community broadcasters and several other members of the cultural communities responded to the discourse of technological democracy with an

alternative discourse of democracy. Building on an interpretation of the public as citizens who need to be protected through regulation, they discussed democracy in terms of social processes which communication technologies can assist and called for recognition of the community sector in new broadcasting legislation. In a similar fashion, the discourse of technological nationalism was rejected by some of the cultural communities, components of cultural agencies, and other interests. They pushed beyond it to alternative arrangements. Building on ideas that were similar to the alternative discourse put forward in debates about community broadcasting, they called for the decentralization of power and resources down to the regional level of national public broadcasting.

A more significant finding is the existence of different responses to the opposition involving technological democracy and technological nationalism. The cable industry had expressed particular interests as general interests through the discourse of technological democracy, but it did not accommodate the alternative discourse of democracy. Although the DOC likewise did not accommodate an alternative discourse of democracy, it did aim to accommodate regional and ethnic interests into the discourse of technological nationalism. The “old” technological nationalism, which focused on national unity and surmounting regional/cultural disparities, gave way to a “new” technological nationalism. Articulated to discourses on the value of free expression and public broadcasting, this “new” technological nationalism focused on national consciousness and recognizing regional/cultural interests.

Why did technological nationalism go through a transformation while technological democracy did not? A few possible reasons can be suggested. In the debates

about community broadcasting, the alternative discourse of democracy did not fully break away from the discourse of technological democracy; the notion of access was a feature of both. Since the alternative discourse dealt with the right to access (rather than the more radical right to communicate), it was already limited or contained in some way. A similar situation did not exist with regard to the alternative discourse that was presented in the debates about national broadcasting. Although regional and ethnic interests were subsequently linked to the discourse of technological nationalism, the shifts in the discourse actually began long before most of the debates. The Task Force on Broadcasting Policy initiated some of these shifts in its report. After noting a problem with having the concept of national unity in the legislation, the task force added that, “to Canadians, the concept is also weighted down with unpleasant historical and political baggage.”⁵ Since the time during which the task force prepared its report was a “calm” one with regard to the issue of Quebec, it is worth noting as well that the reference to national unity may no longer have appeared to be as essential as before. All of this suggests that historical factors were significant in the transformation which the discourse of technological nationalism went through.

Compromise

The third principle was that the federal state attempts to secure its own hegemony as well as that of private capital by meshing various interests and discourses into a compromise within broadcasting legislation. The compromise is weighted in favour of private capital and the federal state, but it grants concessions to oppositional interests. Such a compromise seems to have been struck by the DOC when it prepared Bill C-136 (which

was the basis for both Bill C-40 and the 1991 Broadcasting Act).

Private capital was clearly the big winner with regard to broadcasting definitions, and this had positive implications for its hegemony in Canadian broadcasting. That is because the position of the cable industry had unified most of the cultural industries and incorporated the cultural communities. Through arguments based on the discourse of technological causality, the cable industry called for broadcasting definitions that would encompass new communication technologies. The DOC echoed the position of the cable industry, placing in Bill C-136 a “technology neutral” definition of broadcasting that would allow the Canadian broadcasting system to “adapt” to changes in technology. This caught up with the expansion of private capital in Canadian broadcasting by bringing under regulation companies which had previously not been covered by the definition.

Private capital was also a winner with regard to community broadcasting, but accommodations had to be made to contend with a counter hegemony. The notion of access, a prominent component in the discourse of technological democracy, was also featured in an alternative discourse of democracy and arguments for recognition of the community sector. In response, the DOC picked up the theme of access and provided some recognition for community broadcasting in Bill C-136. In part due to further, persistent arguments which situated access as a distinguishing feature of community broadcasting, recognition for the community sector was eventually achieved through amendments. While not disturbing the control which the cable industry had over community channels, this formally opened up a space in the Canadian broadcasting system for alternative forms of broadcasting which were neither public nor private.

The federal state also made accommodations to contend with a counter hegemony that challenged its own position, but there was a contradiction in its approach. The discourse of technological nationalism underwent a shift which informed the approach that the DOC took to Bill C-136. The DOC articulated the interests of regional and ethnic groups to the discourse of technological nationalism. Although a shift in the discourse worked toward establishing the hegemony of the federal state over its institutional components and the regions, budget cuts imposed by the move away from state intervention undermined the economic conditions for hegemony.

FINAL REMARKS

It is important to note that this study provides only a partial explanation for the outcome of the legislation. A variety of other factors, including the consultations between various players that went on outside of the public proceedings, would need to be examined to provide a more complete explanation. Through a textual analysis of the public proceedings and the legislation which followed, the primary intention here has simply been to learn more about three major discourses on communication technologies as well as their potential role in relation to hegemony.

With regard to hegemony, some further points need to be made. The analysis here suggests that, while both private capital and the federal state have taken steps to establish their hegemony (in part through discourses on communication technologies), the former has met with more success than the latter. However, this analysis is confined to the official, legislative process. It does not deal with the level of popular opinion where

hegemony is ultimately secured. Furthermore, it must be kept in mind that the process of establishing and maintaining hegemony is ongoing. The broader success of attempts to secure hegemony therefore remains to be seen.

Although the study has limitations, its findings have raised some interesting questions about discourses on communication technologies and the concept of hegemony. As noted earlier, one of the findings in the study indicated that technological causality does not necessarily require connections to democratic or nationalist sentiments in order to help secure consent. The role of technological causality implies that hegemony works through naturalized common sense, but connections between technological causality and technological democracy or technological nationalism suggest that hegemony *also* works through the “feeling-passion” which Gramsci describes.⁶ All of this opens up questions about the effectiveness of various hegemonic strategies as well as the potential contradictions between a largely unconscious popular conception of the world and one which incorporates the sentiments of the people. Some further questions are raised by contradictions involving the discourses. Running counter to theoretical expectations, one of the findings indicated that alternative discourses emerged in response to technological democracy and technological nationalism even though contradictions in the discourses were not recognized. Is this situation influenced by historical developments, as suggested above, or are other factors also involved? How important is the identification of contradictions to counter hegemonic strategies? Finally, one of the findings involving compromises deserves attention; budget cuts by the federal state undermined the economic conditions for hegemony while a transformation in technological nationalism worked toward establishing

hegemony. This opens up questions which go beyond the focus on ideological issues in this study. What relationships exist between the economic and ideological aspects of hegemony with regard to the discourses?

It might be useful to explore such questions through research which considers discourses on communication technologies in relation to other substantive issues. Remaining within a focus on Canadian broadcasting, there are several possibilities for further research. One option would be to consider how the discourses pertained to debates about earlier legislation which is only touched on here. Another option would be to explore the discourses in terms of discussion about more recent developments in Canadian broadcasting, such as the role of telecommunications companies and the Internet. Either approach would provide a better understanding of whether the three discourses have changed over time and, if so, how. Moving beyond a focus on Canadian broadcasting, there are several other research possibilities. A comparative examination of the discourses in debates about broadcasting within the Canadian context and the context of another country is potentially valuable, as is a study of the discourses with regard to other areas of communications policy. These approaches could help to establish how the discourses pertain to different societies or issues. Any of these research possibilities could further deepen our understanding of discourses on communication technologies.

ENDNOTES

1. Canada, House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture [hereafter HCSCCC], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1987), 45:58.
2. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 28:47.
3. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 65:180.
4. Maurice Charland, "Technological Nationalism", pp. 204-205.
5. Canada, Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, *Report*, p. 284.
6. Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p. 418.

APPENDIX ONE

NOTES ON CULTURAL INDUSTRIES, CULTURAL AGENCIES, AND CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Chapter One provided a brief outline of a scheme that has been used to categorize the participants in the public proceedings which led to the 1991 Broadcasting Act. This categorization scheme was based on three general categories of participants - cultural industries, cultural agencies, and cultural communities - as well as various specific sub-categories. Although Chapter One defined the three general categories of participants, it left the sub-categories undeveloped. This appendix describes the sub-categories and the major organizations within them.

CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

Private Broadcasting Industry

In the public proceedings, the private broadcasting industry was represented by several lobbying organizations. The main one was the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB). As it indicated, the CAB represented “private, free, over-the-air, local-serving, advertiser-supported broadcasters.”¹ Although the CAB represented private broadcasters from across the country, including those in Quebec, it was dominated by English-language broadcasters. French-language private broadcasters were represented by another prominent

organization, the Association canadienne de la radio et de la television francaise. There were also a few provincially-based organizations, most significantly the British Columbia Association of Broadcasters.

Private broadcasters included several networks and companies. The English-language networks were CTV and Global. The French-language networks were TVA and Quatre Saisons. The large companies included Canwest Communications; the CHUM Group, COGECO; CUC, Maclean Hunter; and Western International Communications. Some of these companies were conglomerates with interests in cable as well as other media. A number of small private broadcasters from all across the country also participated in the public proceedings.

Private broadcasters also included various pay TV and specialty services. However, the CAB noted that it did not represent such services.² No other lobbying organizations stood for them either in the early proceedings on new legislation. In the later proceedings, some pay TV and specialty services associated themselves with satellite or cable lobbying organizations. First Choice had joined the Satellite Communications Association of Canada by the time that legislative proceedings on Bill C-136 were underway.³ This was due to the common interest that both were expressing at the time in defeating illegal satellite reception. Superchannel, the Family Channel, and The Sports Network had all become members of the Canadian Cable Television Association by the outset of legislative proceedings on Bill C-40.⁴ This may have been influenced by a desire to more easily secure distribution agreements after it became apparent that Bill C-136 would allow cable companies to establish their own programming services.

Cable Industry

The cable industry was represented by a number of lobbying organizations. The principal organization was the Canadian Cable Television Association (CCTA). The CCTA indicated that it represented “federally-licensed cable television systems across Canada.”⁵ The industry was also represented by some provincially-based organizations. These included the British Columbia and Yukon Division of the CCTA; the Cable Television Association of Alberta; the Ontario Cable Telecommunications Association; and the Association des cablodistributeurs du Quebec.

The cable industry was also represented by several companies. The large companies included CUC; Maclean Hunter; Rogers Communications; and Videotron. Although they were closely associated with cable, some of these companies were conglomerates with interests in broadcasting and other media. A number of small cable companies from various areas of the country were participants in the public proceedings as well.

Satellite Industry

Some segments of the satellite industry were represented in the proceedings by a lobbying organization. This was the Satellite Communications Association of Canada (SCAC). The SCAC explained that it represented “the private and SMATV sectors” as well as “all sectors of the Canadian TVRO industry.”⁶ More specifically, the members of the SCAC included manufactures of satellite equipment, satellite dealers, and distributors of satellite services.⁷ However, the SCAC indicated that its members also included consumers who had purchased satellite dishes. The organization argued that there was no conflict

between representing both the industry and consumers for two reasons. First, both were united on the issue of getting greater access to programming. Second, consumers could benefit from linkages to the industry through the SCAC, they would, for example, have the advantage of knowing what new products are available.⁸

The satellite industry was also represented by several companies. The most important of these companies were Canadian Satellite Communications (Cancom) and Telesat Canada. Cancom is a distributor of satellite services in underserved areas. Telesat is the Canadian satellite carrier. It is a distributor of broadcasting as well as telecommunications signals.⁹

Independent Production Industry

In the private sector, producers of programming are known as independent producers. The independent production industry was represented by several lobbying organizations. The main ones were the Canadian Film and Television Association; the Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers; and the Association des producteurs de films et de video du Quebec. The industry was also represented by several production companies.

CULTURAL AGENCIES

Operating Agencies

Operating agencies are public sector organizations that engage in production and/or distribution. Several of these agencies participated in the public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation. They included Alberta Government Telephone (AGT), the

provincially-owned telecommunications company; the National Film Board; and a number of public broadcasters.

Foremost among public broadcasters is the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), which offers services at the federal level in English and French. The National Office of the CBC; the English and French television and radio networks; the regional offices of the English Services and French Services; and the CBC Northern Service all participated in the public proceedings at some point.

The other public broadcasters were at the provincial level. Four provinces had educational broadcasting which was provided through public agencies. These agencies operated British Columbia's Knowledge Network; Alberta's Access Network; TV Ontario; and Radio Quebec. The four provincial public broadcasters sometimes participated separately in the proceedings, and at other times they collectively presented themselves as the Agency for Tele-Education in Canada. Curiously, the four public provincial educational broadcasters were members of the CAB.¹⁰

Supporting Agencies

Supporting agencies are public sector organizations which provide funding for production. Two supporting agencies at the federal level participated in the public proceedings. These were Telefilm Canada, which funds public and private film or television production, and the Canada Council, which funds production in the arts.

Administrative Agencies

Administrative agencies are public sector organizations that control production and distribution through regulation, policy, or legislation.

Two administrative agencies at the federal level participated in the proceedings. These were the Department of Communications (DOC), which dealt with policy and legislation, and the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), which grapples with policy and regulation.

All of the participants in the public proceedings at the provincial/ territorial level were administrative agencies. They were departments or ministries responsible for culture and/or communications in the governments of Manitoba, Ontario, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and the Northwest Territories.

CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Workers' Groups

Workers' groups were unions, guilds, associations or other organizations that represented workers in both the public and private sectors. The major organizations were the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), the Canadian Union of Public Employees; the Union des artistes; the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians; the Directors' Guild of Canada; and the Canadian Labour Congress

Nationalist Groups

The main nationalist groups were the Canadian Broadcasting League and the Friends of Public Broadcasting (which later became known as the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting). The Canadian Association for Adult Education can also be considered to be among these nationalist groups since it shared with the Friends some of the same members

and even some of the same briefs.¹¹ Since these organizations adopted a Canadian cultural nationalist orientation, their primary interests involved pushing for Canadian content in broadcasting. However, they have also reflected other interests (such as those of consumers' groups and minority groups)

Another convergence of interests among various participants was reflected in the Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA). The CCA was an umbrella organization whose members included the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, the Canadian Film and Television Association, the Union des artistes, and the Friends of Public/Canadian Broadcasting.¹² Consequently, the CCA represented an unusual combination of interests among the private broadcasting industry, the independent production industry, workers' groups, and nationalist groups.

Minority Groups

A number of organizations represented francophones, aboriginal peoples, other ethnic or racial minorities, and women. The most important organizations were the Federation des francophones hors Quebec; the Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations; the Canadian Ethnocultural Council; the National Watch on Images of Women in the Media (MediaWatch); and the Common Committee on Mass Media in the 1990s. The latter was a coalition of women's organizations connected to the media, including the ACTRA National Committee on Women's Issues.¹³ Another organization in this category was the Institut canadien d'éducation des adultes (ICEA). Although the ICEA sometimes took positions that were similar to its anglophone counterpart (the Canadian Association for Adult Education), its interests were more francophone-oriented.

Consumers' Groups

There were several consumers' groups that played a role in the public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation. The most important of these groups was the Consumers' Association of Canada (CAC). However, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and one of its provincial counterparts, the British Columbia Public Interest Advocacy Centre, played a significant role as well. They represented various consumer interests, particularly seniors and other low-income consumers.¹⁴ Broadly defined, consumers' groups also included several organizations which represented the deaf and children.

Aboriginal Broadcasters

Relying largely on government funding, aboriginal broadcasters were involved in the production and distribution of programming for aboriginal groups. The main lobbying organization was the National Aboriginal Communications Society (NACS). The NACS was an umbrella organization that represented 21 aboriginal communications societies as well as other organizations, many of which made individual presentations during the public proceedings. The members of the NACS included the Inuvialuit Communications Society, the James Bay Cree Communications Society; the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories; the Okalakatiget Communications Society; the Wawatay Native Communications Society; the Societe de communication Atikaneqw-Montagnais; the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation; and the Misinipi Broadcasting Corporation.¹⁵ Another umbrella organization was Television Northern Canada (TVNC). TVNC was a consortium that was trying to get a dedicated satellite transponder for aboriginal broadcasting. Its members included the National Aboriginal Communications Society; the Inuvialuit

Communications Society; the Native Communications Society of the Western Northwest Territories; the Okalakatiget Communications Society; the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation; Northern Native Broadcasting; and Taqramiut Nipingat. Its members also included the CBC Northern Service; the Government of the Northwest Territories; and the Government of the Yukon.¹⁶

Community Broadcasters

Aboriginal broadcasters and community broadcasters shared interests in democratic broadcasting. However, they have been categorized separately here since they have different organizational elements.

Community broadcasters were radio and television broadcasters operating at the community level with the help of resources such as government funding, membership fees, and limited advertising. Most were francophone because community broadcasting was more fully developed in Quebec. The main lobbying organizations were the Regroupement des organismes communautaires de communication du Quebec, which represented community television in Quebec, and the Association des radiodiffuseurs communautaires, which represented community radio in Quebec. Some community radio stations outside Quebec, both francophone and anglophone, also participated in the public proceedings on new broadcasting legislation.

ENDNOTES

1. Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136 [hereafter HCLC-136], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1988), 2:27.
2. Canada, House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture [hereafter HCSCCC], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1987), 27:5.
3. See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988) for the comments made by First Choice, 6:56, and the Satellite Communications Association of Canada, 6:72.
4. Canada, House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40 [hereafter HCLC-40], *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* [hereafter *Minutes*] (1990). See the comments made by the Canadian Cable Television Association, 8:7.
5. Canada, Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* (1991), 12:30.
6. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 30:5.
7. Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988), 6:69.
8. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 30:6 and 11.
9. According to Telesat Canada, "it must be recognized that Telesat Canada is neither a Crown corporation nor a government department, but rather a commercial enterprise that must operate profitably to sustain the Canadian satellite system." Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987), 69:110.
10. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, 27:6.
11. Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987). Compare, for example, the appearances made by the Friends of Public Broadcasting, 22:64-68; and the Canadian Association for Adult Education, 27:40-43. Essentially, the same brief was presented. Moreover, Frank Peers was a representative of both organizations during the proceedings of the standing committee.
12. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the Canadian Conference of the Arts, 25:58.
13. See Canada, HCLC-136, *Minutes* (1988) for the brief submitted by the Common Committee on Mass Media in the 1990s, 8A:4.

14. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the B.C. Public Interest Advocacy Centre, 50:40. See also Canada, HCLC-40, *Minutes* (1990) for the comments made by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, 3:5-6.

15. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the National Aboriginal Communications Society, 26:8 and 12; and the Societe de communication Atikamekw-Montagnais, 57:84.

16. See Canada, HCSCCC, *Minutes* (1987) for the comments made by the Department of Culture and Communications for the Government of the Northwest Territories, 43:143; and Television Northern Canada, 67:13.

APPENDIX TWO

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF CANADIAN BROADCASTING LEGISLATION

- 1928 The Liberal government of Mackenzie King appoints the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, which is chaired by John Aird (the Aird commission).
- 1929 The report of the Aird commission is released. The report recommends creating a public company to set up and operate public radio stations. The report also recommends the elimination of all existing private radio stations.
- 1932 Under R.B. Bennett's Conservative government, the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Act is passed. The legislation establishes the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC), a three-person public commission rather than the public company which was recommended by the Aird commission. The CRBC is given the power to undertake and regulate radio broadcasting. It is also given the power to eliminate private radio stations by appropriating them. However, the CRBC soon begins to encounter problems which stem from a lack of financial and operational autonomy.
- 1936 The Canadian Broadcasting Act is passed while King's government is once again in power. The legislation replaces the CRBC with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), a public corporation with a considerable amount of financial and operational autonomy. Like its predecessor, the CBC is given the power to undertake and regulate broadcasting (through its Board of Governors). It is also given the power to appropriate private stations. However, like the CRBC, the CBC never uses this power. Private stations therefore become a permanent part of the Canadian broadcasting system.
- 1949 The Liberal government of Louis St. Laurent appoints the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, which is chaired by Vincent Massey (the Massey commission).

- 1951 The report of the Massey commission is released. Among other things, the report addresses a growing argument from owners of private radio and television stations that an independent regulator is needed since the CBC is unfairly both a competitor and a regulator. This argument is rejected in the report.
- 1955 St. Laurent's government appoints the Royal Commission on Broadcasting, which is chaired by Robert Fowler (the Fowler commission, or Fowler I).
- 1957 The report of the Fowler commission is released. Among other things, the report recommends creating a Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG). Since the CBC's power to regulate broadcasting is simply to be shifted to a related agency, Fowler I rejects the argument for an independent regulator.
- 1958 Under the Conservative government of John Diefenbaker, the Broadcasting Act is passed. The legislation establishes the BBG. However, in contrast to the intention of Fowler I, the legislation places the CBC and private broadcasters on an equal footing before the BBG and therefore sets up an independent regulator. The BBG soon begins to encounter problems partly because the legislation fails to clearly specify the regulator's powers or the goals for public and private stations.
- 1964 The Liberal government of Lester Pearson establishes the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting, which is chaired by Robert Fowler (the Fowler committee, or Fowler II).
- 1965 The report of the Fowler committee is released. The report recommends creating a stronger regulatory agency. It also recommends clarifying the goals for the CBC as well as the entire broadcasting system.
- 1966 Pearson's government produces a White Paper on Broadcasting.
- 1968 The Broadcasting Act is passed while Pearson's government is in power. The legislation sets out the goals for the CBC as well as the entire broadcasting system. The legislation also replaces the BBG with the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC). The CRTC is a new independent regulator which has stronger and more sharply-defined powers.
- 1969 Through the Government Organization Act, the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau establishes the Department of Communications.
- 1976 Trudeau's government adds telecommunications to the responsibilities of the CRTC through the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission Act (the CRTC Act).

- 1977 Trudeau's government makes a failed attempt to combine all telecommunications under a single piece of legislation. The Telecommunications Act would have replaced the Broadcasting Act, the Radio Act, the Telegraphs Act, and the CRTC Act.
- 1978 Two more attempts to establish a Telecommunications Act are made by Trudeau's government.
- 1980 Trudeau's government establishes the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, which is chaired by Louis Applebaum and Jacques Herbert (the Applebaum-Herbert committee).
- 1982 The report of the Applebaum-Herbert committee is released. Among other things, the report recommends establishing new broadcasting legislation.
- 1983 The Department of Communications releases a paper, *Towards a New National Broadcasting Policy*.
- 1984 Trudeau's government makes a failed attempt to pass an Act to Amend the CRTC Act, the Broadcasting Act, and the Radio Act.

APPENDIX THREE

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CANADIAN BROADCASTING LEGISLATION

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|--------------------|---|
| September 5, 1984 | The Conservative government of Brian Mulroney comes to power in a federal election. |
| September 17, 1984 | Mulroney appoints Marcel Masse as Minister of Communications |
| May 8, 1985 | Masse establishes the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, which is chaired by Gerald Caplan and Florian Sauvageau (the Caplan-Sauvageau task force). |
| July 15, 1985 | The Caplan-Sauvageau task force begins to consult with interested organizations and individuals in a series of public and private meetings across the country. |
| December 5, 1985 | The task force completes the last of its meetings with organizations and individuals. |
| June 30, 1986 | A new Minister of Communications is introduced as Mulroney replaces Masse with Flora MacDonald in a cabinet shuffle. |
| September 22, 1986 | The <i>Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy</i> is released |
| January 29, 1987 | The task force report is tabled in the House of Commons. The report is referred to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture for study. The standing committee is authorized to travel across the country during its investigation, and the committee is required to submit its recommendations on drafting broadcasting legislation by April 15, 1987. |
| February 5, 1987 | The standing committee meets with MacDonald to discuss the task force report. Due to the deadline that it faces, the standing committee decides to proceed with its examination of the report in two phases |

February 19, 1987	The standing committee begins to meet with witnesses in the first phase of its inquiry (which focuses on legislative issues).
March 25, 1987	The standing committee completes the first phase of gathering evidence from witnesses on the task force report
April 27, 1987	The deadline which was given to the standing committee for completing its recommendations on drafting new broadcasting legislation is extended to May 6, 1987.
April 28, 1987	The standing committee submits its preliminary report on legislative issues regarding a new Broadcasting Act, <i>Interim Report on the Recommendations of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy: Speciality Services and Some Proposed Legislative Amendments</i>
May 6, 1987	The standing committee submits its final report on drafting broadcasting legislation, <i>Recommendations for a New Broadcasting Act</i>
May 26, 1987	The standing committee begins to meet with witnesses in the second phase of its inquiry (which focuses on policy issues).
August 26, 1987	MacDonald tables in the House of Commons the government's response to the two reports submitted by the standing committee.
September 22, 1987	The standing committee meets with MacDonald to discuss the government's response to its reports.
December 15, 1987	The standing committee finishes the second phase of gathering evidence from witnesses on the task force report.
February 9, 1988	The standing committee begins consideration of a draft report to the House of Commons on broadcasting policy.
May 24, 1988	After making amendments over the course of three months, the standing committee adopts the final version of its report.
June 9, 1988	The standing committee's report on policy issues, <i>A Broadcasting Policy for Canada</i> , is tabled in the House of Commons.

June 23, 1988	Several items are tabled in the House of Commons: the government's response to the standing committee's report on policy issues, along with additional comments on the two earlier reports; a policy statement, <i>Canadian Voices, Canadian Choices: A New Broadcasting Policy for Canada</i> ; and Bill C-136, which is a proposed new Broadcasting Act. Bill C-136 is given first reading
July 19, 1988	It is moved that Bill C-136 be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee. Debate on the motion is adjourned.
July 25, 1988	After debate, Bill C-136 is read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.
August 10, 1988	The House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136 meets with MacDonald to discuss the bill. Over the next few weeks, the legislative committee meets with witnesses.
August 29, 1988	The legislative committee completes the last of its discussions with witnesses.
August 30, 1988	The legislative committee carries out clause by clause amendment of Bill C-136.
August 31, 1988	The legislative committee submits its report on Bill C-136. The report makes 52 amendments to the bill.
September 14, 1988	Bill C-136 enters report stage in the House of Commons with 91 motions from Members of Parliament which call for further amendments. Debate on the motions begins and takes places over several days.
September 26, 1988	Votes are taken on deferred motions.
September 27, 1988	It is moved that Bill C-136 be read the third time and passed. Debate on the motion is adjourned.
September 28, 1988	After debate, Bill C-136 is read the third time and passed by the House of Commons.
September 29, 1988	Bill C-136 is given first reading in the Senate. It is moved that the bill be read the second time. Debate on the motion is adjourned.

September 30, 1988	After debate, Bill C-136 is read the second time. A motion that the bill be read the third time and passed is negatived. However, a motion which refers the bill to the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications is agreed to.
October 1, 1988	A federal election is called and Bill C-136 dies.
November 21, 1988	The Conservatives win the election. However, MacDonald is unsuccessful in her riding and loses her seat in the House of Commons.
January 30, 1989	Mulroney re-appoints Masse as Minister of Communications.
October 12, 1989	Bill C-40 is tabled in the House of Commons. A slightly modified version of Bill C-136, Bill C-40 is given first reading.
November 3, 1989	It is moved that Bill C-40 be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee. Debate on the motion is adjourned.
December 15, 1989	After debate, Bill C-40 is read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.
January 31, 1990	The House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40 meets with Masse to discuss the bill. Over the next several weeks, the legislative committee meets with witnesses.
March 12, 1990	The legislative committee completes the last of its discussions with witnesses.
March 15, 1990	The legislative committee begins clause by clause amendment of Bill C-40.
March 16, 1990	The legislative committee completes clause by clause amendment of Bill C-40.
March 22, 1990	The legislative committee submits its report on Bill C-40. The report makes 14 amendments to the bill.
October 31, 1990	Bill C-40 enters report stage in the House of Commons with 50 motions from Members of Parliament which call for further amendments. Debate on the motions begins and takes place over several days.

December 4, 1990	Votes are taken on deferred motions. It is moved that the bill be read the third time and passed. Debate on the motion is adjourned.
December 5, 1990	After debate, Bill C-40 is read the third time and passed by the House of Commons.
December 14, 1990	Bill C-40 is given first reading in the Senate.
December 18, 1990	It is moved that the bill be read the second time. Debate on the motion is adjourned.
December 19, 1990	After debate, Bill C-40 is read the second time. It is moved that the bill be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications. The motion is agreed to.
January 14, 1991	The Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications meets with Jim Edwards, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Communications, to discuss the bill. Over the next week, the committee meets with witnesses.
January 22, 1991	The standing committee meets with Masse to discuss the bill.
January 24, 1991	The standing committee submits its report on Bill C-40 to the Senate. The report makes 3 amendments to the bill.
January 30, 1991	It is moved that the report be adopted. Debate on the motion is adjourned.
January 31, 1991	After debate, the motion to adopt the report is negatived.
February 1, 1991	It is moved that the bill be read the third time and passed. Bill C-40 is read the third time and passed by the Senate.
June 1, 1991	Bill C-40 comes into force as the new Broadcasting Act.

APPENDIX FOUR

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACFTP	Association of Canadian Film and Television Producers
ACRTF	Association canadienne de la radio et de la television francaise
ACTRA	Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television, and Radio Artists
AGT	Alberta Government Telephone
ATEC	Agency for Tele-Education in Canada
BCAB	British Columbia Association of Broadcasters
BBG	Board of Broadcast Governors
CAB	Canadian Association of Broadcasters
CAC	Consumers' Association of Canada
Cancom	Canadian Satellite Communications
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CBL	Canadian Broadcasting League
CCA	Canadian Conference of the Arts
CCTA	Canadian Cable Television Association
CFTA	Canadian Film and Television Association
CRARR	Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations
CRBC	Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission
CRTC	Canadian Radio-Television Commission or Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission
CTAA	Cable Television Association of Alberta
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees
DBS	Direct Broadcast Satellite
DOC	Department of Communications
HCSCCC	House of Commons Standing Committee on Communications and Culture
HCLC-136	House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-136
HCLC-40	House of Commons Legislative Committee on Bill C-40
HDTV	High Definition Television
ICEA	Institut canadien d'education des adultes
MediaWatch	National Watch on Images of Women in the Media
NABET	National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians
NACS	National Aboriginal Communications Society
NFB	National Film Board

OCTA	Ontario Cable Television Association
ROCCQ	Regroupement des organismes communautaires de communication du Quebec
SCAC	Satellite Communication Association of Canada
SRC	Societe Radio Canada
SSCTC	Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications
SMATV	Satellite Master Antenna Television
PC	Progressive Conservative
TFBP	Task Force on Broadcasting Policy
TSN	The Sports Network
TVNC	Television Northern Canada
TVRO	Television Receive Only
WIC	Western International Communications

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