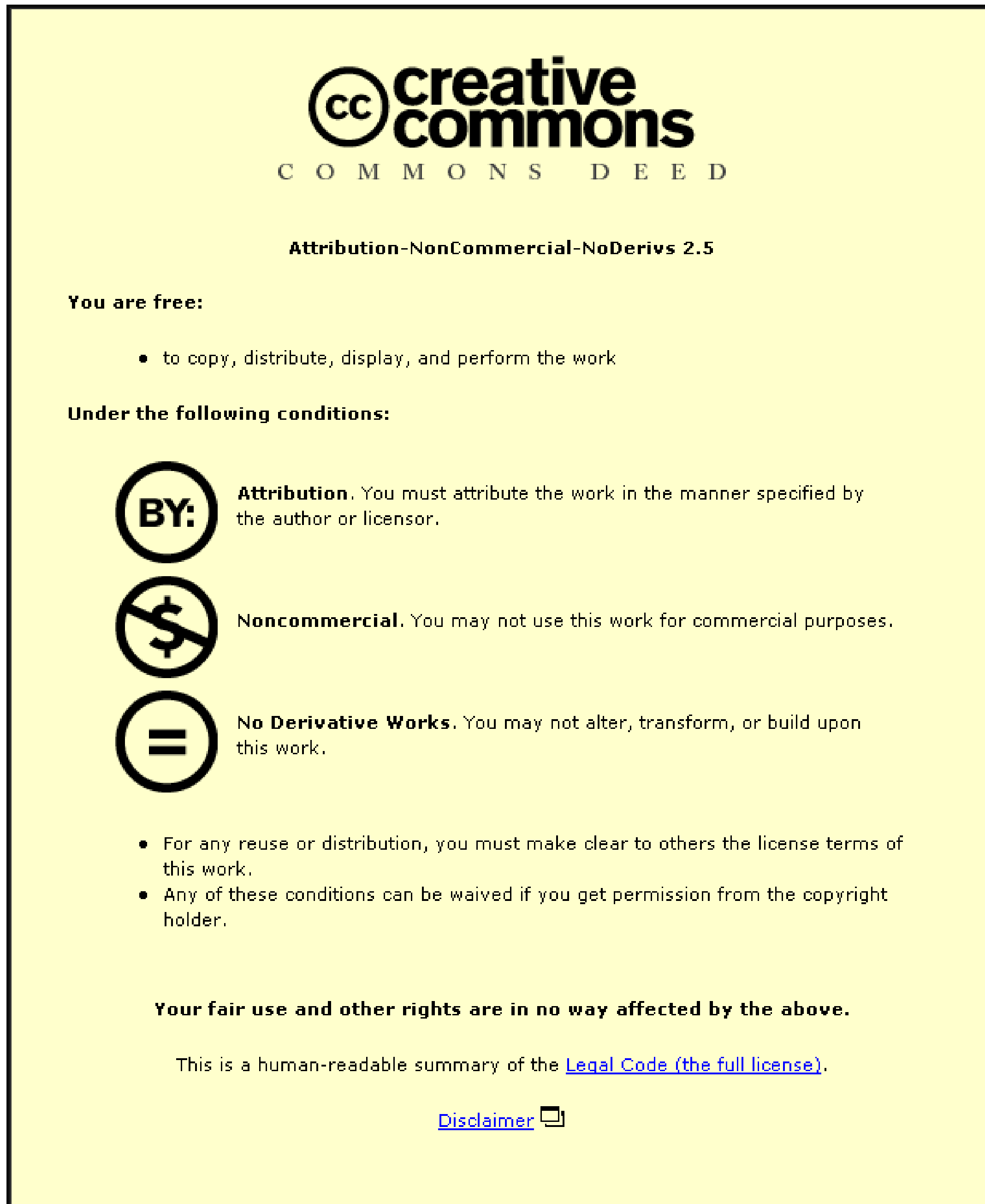


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**Ideology and Popular Radio:
A Discourse Analytic
Examination of
Disc Jockeys' Talk**

by

Rosalind Gill

A doctoral thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy
of the Loughborough University of Technology

April 1991

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Declaration

This is to certify that I am responsible for the work submitted in this thesis, that the original work is my own except as specified in acknowledgements or in footnotes, and that neither the thesis nor the original work contained therein has been submitted to this or any other institution for a higher degree.

A version of Chapter 7 has been presented as a conference paper and is published as "Justifying injustice: Broadcasters' accounts of inequality in radio" in Burman, E. and Parker, I. (Eds.) (1991) Discourse Analytic Research: Repertoires and readings of texts in action, Routledge, London.

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction: 'Taking entertainment seriously'	1
Chapter 1: Media Studies and Ideology	16
-Mass Society Theory	19
-The Frankfurt School	23
-Pluralist Approaches	28
-Marx on Ideology	32
-Culturalist Marxism	38
-Althusser's Structuralism	51
-CCCS and the 'turn to Gramsci'	62
-The Political Economy Approach	77
-Discussion	88
 Chapter 2: Radio as Media Text	 93
-Understanding Radio-Andrew Crisell	96
-Local Radio and Private Profit- L. R. W.	100
-Public Service Broadcasting in Contemporary Britain- Paddy Scannell	108
-Sounds Real/Radio Voices - Australian Talkback radio	116
-DJ Talk- Martin Montgomery	127
-Women and Radio	132
 Chapter 3: Discourse, Rhetoric and Ideology:	
A Discussion	141
-Discourse Analysis: Central Idea	142
-The Rhetorical Approach	152
-On Discourse, Ideology and Contradiction	163
-On Power, Ontological Commitments and Whether 'it will all come out in the wash'	169
-On Relativism, Postmodernism and Discourse	173

Chapter 4: A Short History of Radio	176
-The Beginnings of Radio	177
-The Government and the BBC	181
-The Reithian Ethos	186
-Radio in the Home: From 'Unruly Guest' to 'Good Companion'	191
-The BBC and the War	197
-Radio After the War	203
-The Threat from Pirate Radio	205
-The Lobby for Commercial Radio	209
-Radio One	213
-British Pop Radio: Towards the 1990s	222
 Chapter 5: Postmodern Radio? DJ Talk on Radio One	 231
-Daytime Radio One: An Overview	236
-Postmodernism: A Whirlwind Tour	243
-Radio One: Postmodern Radio	259
-Ideology and Popular Radio	270
-Discussion	301
 Chapter 6: 'Housewife Radio' ? Constructing the Gendered Audience	 304
-'Doreen': Constructing the 'Average Listener'	307
-'Housewife Radio'	313
-Addressing the Listener	317
-Audience Research: 'Men, Women and Housewives'	320
-The 'Housewife' Audience: A discursive Accomplishment	325
-Conceptualising 'Housewife' Talk	332
-Interpretative Repertoires: Some Criticisms	335
-A 'Housewife Repertoire' ?	341
-Giving the listeners what they want ?	

An Analysis of DJs' Claims	345
-Discussion	362
 Chapter 7: Gender Inequality Within a Radio Station:	
An Analysis of Broadcasters' Accounts	370
-Accounting for Inequality (1):	
'Women Just Don't Apply'	378
-Accounting for Inequality (2):	
Audience Objections: 'It's a Bit Strange to Have a Woman Talking to You'	387
-Accounting for Inequality (3):	
Sex Differences: 'Certain Women Can't Do What Men Do'	393
-Accounting for Inequality (4):	
Women's Voices: Too 'Shrill', Too 'Dusky' and Just Plain 'Wrong'	410
-Accounting for Inequality (5):	
It's Always Been Considered 'Housewife Radio'	417
-Explaining Change: 'It'll Turn Around'	433
-Discussion	442
 Chapter 8: Conclusion	447
 Appendix 1: Sample On-Air Transcript (Radio One)	451
 Appendix 2: Radio Matchdale: Shareholdings and Profits	454
 Appendix 3: Radio Matchdale: Audience Research	455
 Appendix 4:	
Interview Schedule	450
Transcript Notation	461
Broadcasters' Interviews	463
 References	562

ABSTRACT

Situated within contemporary debates about language, ideology and the media, this thesis represents an attempt to try out and develop recent approaches to language within social psychology, and to argue that popular radio can be understood as ideological in several respects.

Attempting to forge a position between marxism and post-structuralism, the thesis argues that discourse analysis should eschew a total relativist position and should adopt a critical definition of ideology, which sees ideology as maintaining assymetrical power relations.

The thesis consists of a detailed analysis of disc jockeys' on-air talk on BBC Radio One, looking at how particular views of the world are constructed and maintained by disc jockeys in their patter, and at how relations of inequality are brought off as natural and inevitable.

The research also analyses several interviews with broadcasters, examining the way they see their role and their audience, and looking in particular at the centrality of constructions of gender.

Finally the research examines the accounts of disc jockeys and Programme Controllers for the lack of women in popular radio, highlighting the flexibility of sexism and drawing attention to features of the accounts offered which would have been ignored by more traditional approaches.

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INTRODUCTION

TAKING ENTERTAINMENT SERIOUSLY

'Think positively - just five days till the weekend'
(Capital Radio Disc Jockey)

This thesis does not fit easily within disciplinary boundaries. It sits uncomfortably between sociology, social psychology, communications studies and cultural studies. This reflects my own intellectual development and causes problems at job interviews where I am repeatedly asked what is distinctly sociological or psychological about my work, and am questioned about my commitment to increasingly policed disciplinary boundaries. Conducted in a multi-disciplinary Social Science department, the research was supervised by a social psychologist but concerns a topic traditionally studied by sociologists or researchers in communications studies, and works with an approach which owes much to literary criticism, but which has been articulated primarily in relation to the sociology of science and to social psychology.

As if this were not enough, the thesis is also positioned awkwardly in relation to theoretical debates, being situated in the sets of questions and arguments, the problematic, between marxism and what is broadly known as post-structuralism. The notion of post-structuralism when used as a blanket term for the work of Derrida, Foucault and Lacan seems to obscure many important differences between those writers' work; I use it here to refer not to

single authors but to a series of questions and perspectives about subjectivity, meaning and epistemology.

I write as someone who identifies herself as a marxist and a feminist, attempting to rethink my position in relation to post-structuralism. Whilst I experience this as a difficult personal intellectual and political struggle, my position is of course far from unique, but is part of the way in which marxism is being forced to confront its own claims to truth and indeed marxists begin to start theorising their own determination (Grossberg & Nelson, 1988). Although not explicitly raised, part of the sub-text or intellectual background to this thesis, then, concerns the question of what it means to be a marxist in an 'age of relativism'. This raises questions which are not simply of intellectual importance, but also of political significance. It is on the terrain of politics that post-structuralism is at its most problematic. If post-structuralism has interrogated many traditional marxist assumptions, then post-structuralism itself needs confronting with a series of questions about power and social change, about the way in which relativism can serve to 'freeze' social relations in their present oppressive forms, about empowerment and about the possibility of agency from 'decentred' subjects.

I offer no definitive answers to these problems; the aim is simply to situate the research discussed in this thesis. In my reading I have found such attempts to locate research within different problematics invaluable. I am indebted to writers such as Tony Bennett and Perry Anderson, and especially to Stuart Hall, for not simply arguing that intellectual debates do not take place in a vacuum, but for helping me to understand the relationship of 'theory' to changes within the British Left, reactions to Stalinism and

the translation into English of key texts which changed the intellectual landscape.

My debt to Stuart Hall is also clear from the approach which I develop in this thesis. My interest in radio does not derive from a desire to identify what is distinctive about the medium in relation to, say, television or drama (cf Crisell, 1986), nor am I primarily concerned with radio because of the opportunities it affords to study monologue (cf Montgomery, 1986) or the orderliness of broadcast talk (cf Goffman, 1981). Rather my interest comes from an understanding of the social formation which sees the media as playing a central role in the circulation and securing of ideological representations and definitions. / As Hall (1986, 1988) has argued, a theory of articulation allows the possibility of thinking about the relationship between different parts of the conjuncture non-reductively, whilst also avoiding the idea of a necessary non-correspondence. Correspondences are seen as historically produced, as the sites of struggle, and the issue is shifted to questions about ideological effects. I am interested, then, in the ideological significance of pop radio. / I use 'ideology' in its critical sense to refer to systems of belief or thought which maintain asymmetrical power relations and inequalities between social groups (Thompson, 1984).

Whilst much work in communications studies has demonstrated a concern with the ideological aspects of television and the press (eg. Hall, 1973; Murdock, 1973; Glasgow Media Group, 1976, 1980, 1982, 1985; Brunsdon & Morley, 1978; Connell, 1980; Hartley, 1982; Masterman, 1984), radio seems to have been ignored. Indeed research on radio seems to focus primarily on its past (Briggs, 1961, 1965, 1970, 1979; Scannell, 1986; Scannell & Cardiff, 1982, 1991;). Undoubtedly the reasons for this are complex and concern the priorities of funding bodies, the position of radio as

a 'secondary medium' (Crisell, - 1986), the popular impression that radio had its hey-day in the 1940s and has now been superceded in importance by television, the comparative 'glamour' of television research, and even, perhaps, the pervasiveness of the stereotype of the 'typical' radio listener as a housewife in the home (Karpf, 1980).

The reasons for the neglect of pop radio are likely to include, in addition, the fact that it is viewed primarily as entertainment, and the particular conception of ideology used by researchers in communications studies. Most critical research on the media has been concerned with news, documentary and current affairs reporting on television and in the press. Research has examined the reporting of particular events - eg demonstrations, strikes, wars (Murdock, 1973; Glasgow Media Group, 1976, 1980, 1982, 1985; Curtis, 1985; Newsinger, 1991), phenomenon - eg crime or welfare (Davis, 1973; Roshier, 1973; Golding & Middleton, 1982) or groups - eg women or gay men (Butcher et al, 1974; Pearce, 1973; Davies et al, 1987); journalists' and broadcasters' professional ideologies and their understanding of news values (Cohen & Young, 1973); and the political economy of broadcasting and the press (Murdock & Golding, 1977; Murdock, 1981). Despite many differences of emphasis and approach in this work, what unites it is a concern with 'serious' or 'factual' programming. In contrast, entertainment (with a few exceptions eg Winship, 1978, McRobbie, 1978) seems to have been seen as somehow non-ideological, something that is highlighted by the fact that as late as 1986 (just before I started my research), Tony Bennett spent considerable space justifying his interest in popular culture and entertainment as being of proper concern (cf Frith 1983, 1988).

The absence of critical interest in entertainment has had important consequences for media studies, the most serious of which has been the space it has allowed for a new kind of 'cultural criticism' (or rather 'appreciation'). If critical researchers' lack of attention to entertainment - eg. soaps, game shows, disc jockey (DJ) programmes - implicitly suggested that they were of little ideological significance, then this trend has been amplified in the 1980s with a whole range of studies designed to 'rescue' and celebrate popular culture and entertainments. This research does not simply argue that, say, soaps and game shows are not of ideological interest, but asserts that they are progressive or even positively subversive! A glance through some recent publications in cultural studies throws up a huge array of programmes and experiences deemed to be radical or subversive - Madonna, Mills & Boon books, shopping, The Price is Right, as well as most soaps (eg. Modleski, 1982; Fiske, 1989, 1990; Paglia, 1991). As Judith Williamson has argued:

'It used to be an act of daring on the Left to claim enjoyment of Dallas, disco-dancing, or any other piece of mass popular culture. Now it seems to require equal daring to suggest that such activities, while certainly enjoyable, are not radical... Left-wing academics are busy picking out strands of subversion in every piece of pop culture from Street Style to Soap Opera (1986 p.14)

Like Williamson, I take issue with this type of work. Whilst I believe that an understanding of the pleasures offered by entertainment (and indeed by news or so-called serious programming) is profoundly important, work which simply champions as subversive those things we find pleasurable seems to me to do nothing to further that understanding. All too often it rests upon a conception of the subject as somehow essentially radical, finding pleasure only in resistance (eg Brown, 1990). Such a

conception misses all the crucial and difficult questions about the way ideology and pleasure intersect, and refuses to acknowledge that the ideologically oppressive may also offer its pleasurable moments. We do both ourselves and our theories a disservice by claiming that everything that we like is radical: in psychological terms it seems profoundly unhealthy (to use the old psychological health metanarrative); in political terms it serves to deny us a vocabulary with which to critically discuss cultural forms.

It is interesting that much of this new research appears to rely upon inferences from academics' readings' of texts. After years of criticisms of work which relies on textual analysis, it seems particularly ironic that we have 'progressed' to inferring audience readings, rather than producing analyses of how real classed and gendered subjects understand cultural products. In a recent article by John Fiske, for example, about The Price is Right and Perfect Match (Australia's Blind Date) - programmes which he characterises as having the most 'progressive gender politics' on television (!) (p.139) - working class women's liking for these programmes is asserted and 'explained' apparently without any reference to real working class women whatsoever (Fiske, 1990).

It is possible to read the celebratory feel of some work in cultural studies and the attempts to champion cultural products as radical in terms of the disillusionment of the Left throughout the 1980s, which translated into a need to find examples of resistance. However, as the writer Hanif Kureishi has argued, uplifting though such claims may be, it is important to recognise the dangers of 'cheering fictions' (BBC 2 Late Show discussion, after publication of The Buddha of Suburbia, 1990)

Despite these trends within cultural studies, the neglect of radio seems difficult to understand in view of the sheer amount of time we spend listening. Recent figures suggest that 90% of the UK population listens to the radio for more than 20 hours per week (Laurance 1991). This makes a respectable comparison with an average television viewing figure of 25 hours per week. Most radio listening is to pop radio, with BBC Radio One accounting for more than a quarter of all listening and Independent Radio for nearly a third (the JICRAR figures for the weekly reach of the independent stations discussed in this research was 41%). Clearly, then, many people spend considerable lengths of time with radio, yet there has been hardly any analysis of this 'the cinderella of media studies' (Scannell, 1988a). Such neglect takes on an added significance in the light of the proposed expansion of radio, set out in the 1987 Green Paper Radio: Choices and Opportunities, the subsequent White Paper and the recent Broadcasting Bill. Among the changes proposed is the effective deregulation of radio, the establishment of (at least) three new national commercial stations and the setting up of 'hundreds' of local, neighbourhood and community stations. As we stand on the brink of the biggest expansion and changes in radio in the UK's history we are in the position of knowing almost nothing about the kind of radio we already have. The research presented here represents a small contribution to redressing this.

My own interest in radio originated in the years I spent as a teenager listening to Radio One and Radio Caroline. I came to them late - or at least later than most of my friends - having been brought up on Radios Three and Four - and was discouraged from listening to them: Radio Caroline because it was (in the eyes of my marxist father) commercial (ITV was frowned upon for the same reason) and Radio One because it was 'pap' or 'rubbish'. I listened

nevertheless and enjoyed listening - to the music at least. But I frequently felt angry about things the DJs said. The perpetual 'jokes' or remarks at women's expense angered me in particular, as did many other comments which I now understand with the concept of ideology - the pervasive suggestions that life or social relations would always be like this, and the assumptions that inequalities were natural, legitimate and inevitable - which seemed to form a backdrop to almost all the DJs' talk. When I discussed my anger about this with friends few of them understood or agreed: 'it's only a bit of fun' or 'it's just entertainment - it's not meant to be taken seriously' were typical reactions - reactions which I soon discovered with alarm were shared by many researchers in communications studies!

This research can be understood, then, as an attempt to go beyond both the wholesale writing off of popular radio as 'pap' (a position which does not take radio seriously, and negates analysis) and the view that it lacks significance because it is 'mere entertainment'. The aim is to fashion an analysis which takes pop radio seriously.

When I started the research I had three substantive aims. With the focus on BBC Radio One, I wanted to produce an analysis of the ideological aspects of DJs' on-air talk. I was particularly concerned with gender, but was critical of the 'images of women' approaches both because of their simplistic understanding of representation, with its tendency towards liberal questions about bias and distortion, and because of their exclusive focus on women - which left representations of men and masculinity unproblematised. Most significantly I was critical of this type of approach for treating 'images of women' as separate from everything else that is going on in a text, as if it were analytically distinct. My argument is that the

construction of gender is inseparable from all the other ideological features of DJs' talk.

My second aim was to interview DJs and producers from Radio One to investigate how they saw their role, how they chose what to talk about on-air, how much autonomy they felt they had, their conception of their audience and its needs/wants of them, and a whole range of other issues. The object was to produce a sociological analysis of how they understand their role and made sense of what they do.

Finally I wanted to do a survey of Radio One listeners which, a la David Morley's Nationwide study, would investigate the relationship between 'structural' variables like age, sex and class and 'cultural' involvements and identifications such as education, trades union membership or sub-cultural affiliations, and the ways in which DJ programmes were 'read' (heard) or interpreted.

Clearly, these aims were completely unrealistic. I realise now that I had unwittingly sketched out a lifetime's work, not a PhD ! The process of doing the research became one of continually narrowing down my objectives. The first complete day of Radio One's output which I transcribed played a significant role in this - the transcript took six entire days to produce and covered 80 pages of A4. A combination of dawning realism about the amount of time I had, a lack of funds for a large audience survey and the difficulties I had in gaining access to celebrity Radio One DJs mean that the research presented in this thesis takes a very different form from that I had envisaged. Chance also played a part when a third year undergraduate, Sue Reilly, asked to work with me on radio for her dissertation and was able to arrange interviews with local DJs, allowing me access to her tapes. In this thesis I spend two chapters analysing themes from these interviews with DJs and

Programme Controllers (PCs). Although the interviews dealt with a whole range of topics, here I focus on two issues - broadcasters' views of their audience and their role in relation to it, and the accounts they offered for the lack of women DJs at the radio stations.

The remaining analytic chapter is an examination of the ideological features of DJs' on-air talk on Radio One. Again the focus of this chapter is much circumscribed. One striking omission is a consideration of the music played on Radio One; I have chosen to focus exclusively on the DJs' talk. This means that a whole range of issues fall beyond the scope of this thesis - examination of music policy, the relationship between record companies and radio stations, how music is chosen, how the musical day is formatted, the use of particular styles to target particular groups and the relationship between the DJs' talk and the music played. Some of these issues have been addressed by other research, particularly those relating to music selection, playlisting, chart-rigging and hyping and record company influence more generally (Frith, 1983, 1988; Barnard, 1989; Garner, 1990;), but clearly there is a need for research which looks at both music and talk, at the entire flow of programming (Williams, 1974). Music plays a key part in defining the identity of radio stations, in designing who listens, and, in the case of commercial radio, in not simply producing a target audience but also creating an ambience in which adverts fit comfortably and successfully; music relates to DJs' talk in a variety of ways - reinforcing some remarks, seeming to undermine others, acting as a resource for others still and serving to buffer and compartmentalise potentially contradictory programme segments.

This research does not attempt to integrate an analysis of music and DJ talk and must be seen as a preliminary study.

A further aspect of this is the generality of the concern with DJs' talk. This means that I do not always attend to differences within or between programmes. The aim has been to give a general sense of some of the ways in which DJs' talk is ideological. Further research should undoubtedly be concerned with looking in more detail at specific programmes, features and styles of talk.

If the central aim of this thesis is to produce an analysis of the ideological features of DJs' talk, a subsidiary objective is to 'try out' and develop a new approach to the study of spoken and written texts. During the period I have been doing my research I have been profoundly influenced by a number of recent approaches to the study of language and discourse - especially those of Fairclough (1989), Henriques et al (1984), Parker (1989) and Thompson (1984, 1988). In particular my work draws on two recent approaches to discourse and rhetoric - those of Potter & Wetherell (1987) and Billig (1987). It would be disingenuous to present myself as a 'rational consumer', somehow shopping around for the most suitable approach - any materialist researchers should surely be aware of the material conditions of writing and research, which for me included the privilege of working with Mick Billig and Jonathan Potter at a time when they were developing their approaches to rhetoric and discourse. Equally, however, it would be wrong to suggest that I drew on their analytical concepts 'just because I worked with them'. Their approaches seem to me to offer a coherent and principled way of studying written and spoken texts of all kinds.

To date these approaches have been articulated primarily in relation to traditional social psychological concerns. My aim in this thesis is to attempt to use and develop them for material more usually studied by workers in communications and cultural studies. If discourse analysis

is to become an important approach within the social sciences, it will need to go beyond discursive reformulations of psychological concepts, and develop ways of theorising notions such as power and social structure. This thesis is a very limited contribution to that project.

Chapter One is a consideration of the ways in which the notion of ideology has been discussed by workers in what can be broadly known as cultural and communications studies. In this thesis I make no formal distinction between cultural and communications studies, but prefer instead to speak of different approaches. The chapter surveys the mass society perspectives and their Left inflection in the work of the Frankfurt School, and pluralist approaches, before going on to discuss Marx's writing on ideology and the work of writers who situate themselves within that problematic: the 'culturalists' (especially Williams and Thompson), the 'structuralists' (particularly Althusser), the work of researchers centrally concerned with the relation between political economy and ideology in mass communications, and finally the ideas of Gramsci as used by workers at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies and developed in particular by Stuart Hall.

Chapter Two looks specifically at work on radio and, after a brief introduction, reviews in detail five pieces of work (all written in the 1980s) which take radio as their topic. Since writing this chapter, two other books have appeared which would have merited discussion - Stephen Barnard's On the Radio: Music Radio in Britain and Peter M. Lewis and Jerry Booth's The Invisible Medium: Public, Commercial and Community Radio. Rather than adding them in to the chapter, I have drawn on these books at other points in the thesis - in particular in Chapter Four - signalling their concerns (see also Gill, 1991 for a lengthy discussion of Barnard's

work). The final part of the chapter deals with work which is specifically concerned with women and radio. Like the rest of the chapter, the aim of this section is not merely to raise critical points, it is also intended to provide background information about the nature of popular radio in Britain and to begin raising some important questions about it.

Chapter Three is a straightforward introduction to the approach being used in this thesis. As such it provides a summary of discourse analytic concepts and of the rhetorical approach, locating them in the more general development of interest in language and ideology.

The fourth chapter consists of a brief history of radio which looks at key moments in its development in the UK and pays particular attention to the emergence of commercial radio and Radio one. There is also a discussion of the recently proposed changes in radio.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven form the analytic core of the thesis. Chapter Five is a consideration of the ways in which DJs' on-air talk is ideological. Arguing that traditional approaches to the study of media texts are not appropriate to the fragmented collage of items that make up DJ talk, the chapter draws on the notion of postmodernism to discuss the material. It is argued that there are many features of DJs' talk which may be understood as postmodern, but that this does not mean that they are not also ideological. The chapter considers the extent to which 'postmodern ideology' may work differently from 'modern ideology', and attempts to highlight the tensions between seeing DJs' talk as a modern or postmodern text. It looks both at instances of pastiche, nostalgia, historicism, and surface depthlessness and at seemingly systematic examples of DJs' presenting existing social relations as natural and

inevitable and silencing or marginalising 'disruptive' perspectives.

Chapters Six and Seven look not at DJs' on-air talk but at their talk in interviews. Chapter Six considers the responses of DJs and Programme Controllers (PCs) at two Independent Radio stations to questions about their role and their audience, examining how they discursively construct their audiences as female, and the way in which the notion of 'giving listeners what they want' is drawn on to justify a patronising and sexist presentation style characterised by the broadcasters as 'flirting'. This chapter also considers some of the problems with the analytic concept of 'interpretative repertoire' (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell & Potter, 1988a & b) by trying to apply it to DJs' talk about 'housewife radio'. The chapter concludes with a discussion of further problems with discourse analysis, centering on the issues of ontological commitment and power.

Chapter Seven consists of a detailed analysis of the accounts offered by DJs for the lack of women DJs both at their own stations and in radio more generally. It is argued that rather than espousing a particular attitude all the broadcasters had available to them a whole range of different ways for accounting for the lack of women DJs, which they drew on to do different work in the interviews. Each type of account is examined in detail, pointing to the way in which these accounts of inequality also work as justifications for that same inequality: even as the broadcasters claimed to want women DJs, they produced accounts which justified their continued exclusion from prime time pop radio.

Finally there is a brief discussion which draws together some of the themes from the research and suggests some possible directions for future work.

CHAPTER 1

MEDIA STUDIES AND IDEOLOGY

'The history of all hitherto existing work on ideology is the history of intellectual struggle. 'Determination' and 'relative autonomy', 'economism' and 'idealism', 'reductionism' and 'ideologism'... stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a radical reformulation of the question as a whole, or, more usually, in the common ruin of the contending theorists.'

(with apologies to Marx and Engels).

The concept of ideology has been variously described as 'slippery', 'vague', 'trite' and even 'useless' (Frazer, 1988). As David McLellan has argued in his famous and much quoted book:

'Ideology is the most elusive concept in the whole of social science...It is an essentially contested concept, that is, a concept about the very definition (and therefore application) there is acute controversy' (1986, p1)

In this chapter I will not be attempting an exhaustive review of this concept from De Tracy onwards, but rather will be discussing ideology as it relates to media studies. I use the term media studies less to signify a distinct sub-discipline, than to avoid weighing in to the morass of debates posed between what have become known as Communications Studies and Cultural Studies. To the extent that these two bodies of work have significant differences, then my aim in this chapter is to look at perspectives from each of them - that is to look at both the culturalist, structuralist and Gramsci-inspired approaches of Cultural

Studies and at work which places more emphasis on the political and economic determinants of media products. However, whilst stopping short of the arguments of some commentators who suggest that there are few incompatibilities between any research on the mass media - seemingly opposed perspectives simply being attempts to look at different moments in the 'circuit' of culture (eg. Johnson, 1986) - I would argue that the differences between the cultural and communications approaches have been exaggerated. As James Curran (1990) has argued:

'Both worked within a neo-Marxist model of society; both perceived a connection, whether weak or strong, between economic interests and ideological representations; and both portrayed the media as serving dominant rather than universal societal interests.' (p.139)

Added to this argument, it seems to me that there are now at least as many differences within Cultural Studies as existed between the cultural and communications schools in the late 1970s and early 1980s when the polarisation was at its most fierce.

It is the area of overlap identified (above) by Curran (1990) that interests me in this chapter. The object is to discuss some of the ways in which 'ideology' has been understood by those working in the 'critical' or 'radical' traditions of media studies. The focus will be on attempts to theorise ideology in relation to the mass media rather than on a consideration of empirical research. There is no space to subject the different approaches to detailed examination; instead the aim in this chapter is to situate the research presented in this thesis within a wider intellectual tradition. That is, the chapter's purpose is to orientate the reader to the theoretical background of the research, not to provide an exhaustive critique of various formulations of ideology.

Such a discussion does not fit well in a narrative form, with its implications of the supercession of one approach by another. The development of ideas is always much more fragmented and contradictory than a smooth narrative implies. Several such narratives exist elsewhere. They have been written with various purposes - for example to contrast the American and European approaches, to highlight differences between theoretical and empirical traditions or to explain the 'turn to Gramsci' (Barrett, 1979; Bennett, 1982, 1986; Johnson, 1979, 1986; Hall, 1980a, 1986a). What I want to do in this chapter is to discuss what Hall (1986) has called the key moments, the 'breaks'

'where old lines of thought are disrupted, older constellations displaced and elements, old and new, are regrouped around a different set of premises and themes' (p.33)

I will consider four bodies of work - which have become known as culturalism, structuralism, the political economy approach and the reading of Gramsci associated primarily with Stuart Hall - which I see as constituting the core of the critical tradition. Finally I will briefly consider work informed by psychoanalysis, post-structuralism and postmodernism, which is identified by some as continuing this tradition (Ryan, 1982; Foster, 1985; Franklin et al, forthcoming), but whose position, I shall argue, is far more ambiguous. First, however, I want to discuss three approaches to the study of the media, communications and culture which influenced (in very different ways) the development of a critical tradition - mass society approaches, the ideas of the Frankfurt School and pluralist approaches. Although the Frankfurt School could properly be included within discussions of the critical marxist tradition, I have chosen to highlight the way it has contributed to other perspectives. By considering these three bodies of work I hope to give some indication of the

context of the development of work in the critical marxist tradition and to highlight some of its distinctive features.

Mass Society Theory

The loosely defined outlook which became known as mass society theory dates back, at least, to the eighteenth century. Its terms were first defined in relation to the rapid changes which were taking place in production and social organisation, and, in particular, to the growth of urban commercial culture, interpreted at the time as posing a threat to traditional cultural values (Hall 1982). It was towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, that the mass society debate was at its most intense.

Mass society theory does not constitute a unified and integrated theoretical perspective, but rather can be seen as consisting of a number of intersecting and overlapping themes - the decline of the community, the social atomisation of 'mass man'(sic), the rise of mass culture , pessimistic reactions to the development of political democracy, popular education, industrialisation and the emergence of mass communications. The articulation of these themes was not limited to one or two scholars but can be traced back over nearly two centuries via theorists from diverse backgrounds and often with distinct ideas. Tony Bennett, for example, lists

'to name but a few, cultural theorists such as Matthew Arnold, T.S.Eliot, Friedrich Nietzsche and Ortega y Gasset; political theorists such as John Stuart Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville; the students of crowd or mass psychology from Gustave le Bon to Wilhelm Reich and Hannah Arendt; and finally, such representatives of the Italian School of sociology as Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca,' (1982, p32)

as having contributed to the development of mass society theory. It is worth noting that Bennett draws a distinction between 'mass society theorists proper' and those who have merely contributed to the tradition.

One of the difficulties with any discussion of mass society theory is in defining who lies within and who outside the tradition's boundaries. The boundary line tends to be 'fuzzy round the edges', often merging with related or parrallel theoretical traditions. It is easy to see, for example, how the concerns of Durkheim about the shift between organic and mechanical solidarity overlap with those of the mass society theorists. For this reason, it is probably best to view mass society theory as a sweeping intellectual tradition rather than a distinct body of theory.

Some of the effects of the historical transformations which were believed to have resulted in the emergence of a mass society were seen as primarily political in nature. One of the most important themes concerned the threat which was seen to be posed by the extension of franchise to larger sections of the population. This concern was expressed by Nietzche and Ortega who believed that the 'natural' balance between elites and masses was being overturned by the advent of parliamentary democracy, the education of the working classes and, more generally, by the dissolution of the traditional relationships which positioned the masses at the bottom of a hierarchical social structure. (eg Nietzche, 1973) Other writers too - eg. J.S. Mill - expressed worry about 'the tyranny of the majority'.

Another important theme was the idea that the breakdown of ties between people and the increasing social atomisation was leading to an increased vulnerability of the masses to false appeals and propoganda. At its most

pessimistic this line of thinking sees a link between 'mass man' and the rise of totalitarian movements (eg. Arendt, 1958). Hannah Arendt and Carl Friedrich sought to explain both Nazism and Stalinism in terms of irrational forces entering into politics. These irrational forces were the result of weight being given to the views of the masses at a time when they were isolated, alienated and easily manipulable by elites. As Bennett (1982) puts it

'Rootless, lonely, directionless, "mass man" thus constituted ready-made fodder for totalitarian parties to the extent that the chiliastic ideologies these espoused offered him a means by which he might overcome his puniness and isolation, the psychic pain of responsibility, by merging his will with that of a mass movement.'
(p.36)

A further profound belief of mass society theorists was that they were witnessing social homogenisation. Central to this was the idea that differences between classes, regions, professions and other social groups were being dissolved by education and the developing mass communications, and that this was leading to a social, moral and intellectual uniformity (Arendt, 1958). Far from seeing popular education and the mass media as positive developments these were viewed as catering to the lowest common denominator and resulting in a general mediocrity.

Another current of mass society theory emphasised the end of community, of *gemeinschaft*. Social ties were said to be breaking down and there was less face-to-face contact. This, in its turn, left people vulnerable to the commercialised influences of the mass media. Old cultures were seen as being demolished, to be replaced by a new type of culture - mass culture. Mass culture was viewed as weak, insipid, debased, fabricated and imposed from above (MacDonald 1957). But it was also seen as sufficiently pervasive to undermine and contaminate both the 'high

culture' of the educated elite with its moral and aesthetic excellence, and the spontaneous, autochthonous, celebratory and organic culture of the 'folk' (MacDonald 1957).

What then were the implications of this view for research into the media ? An answer to this question can be found by examining the work of the *Scutiny Group*, which is exemplified by F. R. Leavis and Q. D. Leavis. This work was fiercely condemnatory of 'mass culture', arguing that cultural values had been debased and that culture could only be sustained by a small minority capable of keeping faith with the great works. The history of the reading public, as Bennett (1982) puts it, is seen as the history of deteriorating standards.

Mass society theory 'works' by constructing a series of contrasts between past and present - the past with its organic communities and communal social relationships is counterposed to the present with its isolation, anomie and alienation. Yet these contrasts inevitably fail. It is a tradition which spans one hundred and fifty to two hundred years, and it has proved impossible for mass society theorists to say when the past ended and the present began. Clearly, the contrasts rest on a very romanticised conception of the past (Williams, 1985). Moreover, mass society theorists have provided no account of either the transition from past to present, the processes by which it occurred, or the relationship of parts of the social formation to each other which might help to explain this.

Despite this it was a tradition which profoundly influenced the intellectual climate for more than a century, and whose effects can still be felt. The significance of it for this chapter will be seen in the discussions of the Frankfurt School and 'Culturalism', both of which have been

influenced by it, though in very different ways. The former is discussed in the next section.

The Frankfurt School

With the Frankfurt School, mass society theory was given a Left inflection. Established in 1923 in Germany the Institute for Social Research (which became known as the Frankfurt School) was conceived initially as a centre for the study of Marxian theory, but, as will become clear, it has always had a somewhat ambiguous relationship with mainstream western marxism (eg Held, 1980).

The distinct perspective of the Frankfurt School, which drew on both mass society ideas and marxism, can best be examined in relation to three major social and historical experiences.

First, there was the sense of profound disillusionment shared by Horkheimer, Adorno and others at the School, that the Revolution in Russia in 1917 had not spread to the rest of Europe (Held, 1980). On the contrary, there had been a downturn in the activity of radical social movements, and revolution looked less and less likely. As Billig puts it, they were

'...faced with the problem of understanding why the coffin of capitalism had not been lowered into its grave and most crucially why the grave-diggers themselves had not performed their allotted task' (1982,p86).

To answer this question they turned to the analysis of culture and ideology.

Secondly and related to this, the Frankfurt theorists were deeply worried about the apparent economic and political stability which reigned in the post war Western world . The

development of a strong state with planning and regulatory functions and the tendency towards monopoly capitalism witnessed in the twentieth century seemed far from sounding 'the knell of capitalist private property' (Marx 1946, p789). Rather, contrary to Marx and Engels's predictions, modern capitalism appeared to the Frankfurt theorists to be alive and well and worryingly durable. To explain this the Frankfurt School drew on and developed the ideas of Friedrich Pollock. Pollock had taken as his starting point the ideas of Marx and Engels but had broken with them over the issue of the inevitability of class conflict (Pollock, 1941). He argued that the shift from private capitalism to what he called 'state capitalism' in the twentieth century meant that activities were co-ordinated by conscious plan instead of the natural laws of the market (Pollock, 1941, p217) and thus that class antagonism was no longer inevitable. The development of state capitalism, according to Pollock, had necessitated a demise in the principles of liberalism and individualism. These were replaced by a new social principle, that of authoritarianism. The Frankfurt School took as its task the analysis of this irrational authoritarianism (Adorno et al, 1950).

The third major impact on the development of the Frankfurt School was the profound and enduring impression made on them by their experience of fascism (Adorno et al, 1950). Deeply pessimistic, the work of the Frankfurt School sometimes gave the impression that fascism was the epitome of modern capitalism, or at least the logical development of the authoritarianism of (state) capitalism. Thus when exiled to the USA in 1942 they took with them the message that 'it could happen here too' (Hall 1982, p.58). For the Frankfurt School, then, the crucial issue was to account for how society could have reached this appalling state.

The above is, of course, a mere thumbnail sketch. (For fuller discussions see Jay, 1973; Bottomore, 1984; Held, 1980: and for a more social psychological emphasis Billig, 1982.) The Frankfurt School have produced a wealth of literature, making powerful contributions to the critique of positivism and the study of authoritarianism and fascism. Here I will only be examining their work on ideology and 'the culture industry'.

The Frankfurt School emphasised the cultural manifestations of capitalist society above all other aspects. In several famous articles Adorno and Horkheimer produced a searing attack on 'the culture industry' seen as an omnipotent medium of mass domination; 'enlightenment as mass deception' (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1977). They devoted considerable attention to the 'pulp' culture produced by the American film and music industries, and the mechanisms by which it had its numbing, narcotising and lobotomising effects (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1977). Of particular interest in relation to this thesis on popular radio is Adorno's furious denunciation of popular music (1943).

As Bottomore (1984) has argued, these attacks can be partly interpreted as the outcome of the 'cultural shock' experienced by members of the Frankfurt School as they encountered American commercial radio and television. Herbert Marcuse, although not strictly a member of the Frankfurt School, shared many of the concerns of it in his *Ideologiekritik* (Hamilton, 1984) and clearly experienced a similar culture shock on arrival in the USA. Writing of mass culture he argues

'perhaps the most telling evidence can be obtained simply by looking at television or listening to the AM radio for one consecutive hour for a couple of days, not shutting off the commercials and now and then switching the station' (1970, pxvii)

In One Dimensional Man Marcuse argues that the apparent rationality of production in advanced capitalism 'sells' the social system and makes it immune from criticism. Consumers become bound to the social system:

'...the irresistible output of the entertainment and information industry carry with them prescribed attitudes and habits, certain intellectual and emotional reactions which bind the consumers more or less pleasantly to the producers and, through the latter, to the whole. The products indoctrinate and manipulate; they promote a false consciousness which is immune against its falsehood...Thus emerges a pattern of *one dimensional thought and behaviour* in which ideas, aspirations and objectives that, by their content, transcend the established universe of discourse and action are either repelled or reduced to the terms of this universe.'
(Marcuse, 1968, pp 26-7)

It is the media which is seen as closing the universe of discourse by excluding perspectives which challenge the existing social order. The very language of the media is 'functionalised' (Marcuse, 1968, p85) and denies the possibility of conceptual thought.

As well as looking at the narcotising effects of the mass culture industry, the Frankfurt School also argued that the media had invaded and distorted traditional bourgeois 'high' culture, denuding it of what they believed was its critical function. High art and culture had hitherto had an oppositional function, they argued, by embodying contradictions

'A successful work of art... is not one which resolves contradictions in a spurious harmony, but one which expresses the idea of harmony negatively by embodying the contradictions, pure and uncompromised, in its innermost structure. Art...always was, and is, a force of protest of the humane against the pressure of domineering institutions... no less than it reflects their substance.' (Adorno, 1974)

But, with 'Bach ...in the kitchen...Shelley and Baudelaire, Marx and Freud in the drugstore' (Marcuse 1970,p64) this oppositional dimension had been 'flattened out' (Marcuse, 1970,p64) and incorporated. This idea that the capitalist social system 'works' ideologically by not simply concealing contradictions but by actually incorporating opposition is an important one, which has been developed in the situationist concept of *recuperation* (Debord, 1983; Vaneigem, n.d. a & b; Knabb, 1981) and has been discussed by Raymond Williams (1973) and used in some feminist analyses of the media (eg Baehr, 1980).

For the Frankfurt School, unlike the conservative mass society tradition, the issue was not the destruction of 'high' culture per se, but rather the implications of this for radical opposition to the social order. Mass culture was thus seen as a fall from the earlier transcendent values of 'high' culture.

The ideas of Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse have had significant influence on subsequent marxian perspectives. The importance the School accorded to ideology and culture has been a notable check on the 'economism' which sometime appears within marxism (Hamilton 1984), although it has been argued that this was achieved only by resorting to a version of Hegelianism: radical social change was viewed as a distant prospect because the consciousness of the need for change was not present, rather than because of material conditions.

As Bennett (1982) has argued the reaction of the mainstream Left has been equivocal - particularly in regard to the 'retreatism' of the Frankfurt School.

'Counterposing to "that which is" an ideal conception of "that which ought to be", but unable to locate any concrete social mechanisms whereby the gap between the two might be bridged,

the result of their criticism was merely to leave everything as it is' (1982,p42).

The distinctively philosophical tenor of the approach was countered in the late 1960's and 1970s by the turn to culturalist and structuralist conceptions of marxian theory as we shall see later in the chapter. Next, however, we consider pluralist approaches.

Pluralist Approaches

When the Frankfurt School began their exile from fascism in the USA, they were confronted with a very different theoretical and methodological tradition, centered around the place of the media in liberal democratic societies. From a liberal pluralist perspective, power in society is seen as diffused among a diversity of separate and competing interests, none of which was dominant. The media constitutes just one of these groups/interests and is seen as forming an important 'fourth estate'. The media is conceptualised as playing an important role in liberal democratic societies by constituting a source of information and power that is independent of government and, indeed, could be used to put pressure on it:

'Custodian and representative of the public interest, vigilant against abuses of state and municipal power and ready to expose self-seeking and corruption among bureaucrats and civil servants' (Murdock, 1981)

As well as being independent from state control, another way in which the media secures its independence, pluralists argue, is through the separation of ownership and control (Whale,1977) In relation to newspapers, for example, it is argued that the 'age of the press barons' is over and newspaper owners are less and less likely to interfere in

editorial decision-making. On top of this, it is claimed, ownership is itself becoming more diffused.

As Murdock has pointed out, pluralist views of the media bear a striking resemblance to media workers own 'professional ideologies' (1981, p), (although, ofcourse an integral part of such ideologies would be denying their existence as such.). John Whale, for example, refuses to accept that the product 'news' is the result of much more than chance:

'Newspapers could almost be called random reactions to random events. Again and again the main reason they turn out as they do is accident'. (Whale, 1977)

The most decisive influence on newspapers' content, Whale argues, are their readers:

'The reader has again and again been shown to wield more power over the content and survival of newspapers than proceeds from any other single quarter (Whale, 1977 p.150)

This notion of consumer sovereignty has attracted considerable critical reaction, as have other tenets of the pluralist position. Pointing out that large numbers of readers do not guarantee the success of a paper, James Curran (1981) has pointed out that two papers which were forced to close in the 1960s each had a circulation which far outnumbered the combined readership of The Guardian, the Times and the Financial Times. Curran argues

'[T]o suggest, as did Sir Denis Hamilton (Editor-in-Chief of Times newspapers) that "the Herald was beset by the problem which has dogged nearly every newspaper vowed to a political idea: not enough people wanted to read it", is to ignore one inconvenient fact - the Daily Herald, when it closed, had over five times as many readers as The Times.' (1981, p.119)

The demise of papers like the Herald and the News Chronicle, Curran points out, had more to do with their working class readership and inability to attract sufficient advertising. Advertising is not only a crucial determinant of papers' ability to stay afloat, but can also profoundly impact on papers' content - when The Guardian became the only paper to condemn Suez it lost 40% of its advertising revenue almost immediately and found itself in severe financial difficulties.

Similarly the idea that newspapers are 'accidents' has received much criticism. Analyses of media content have revealed that far from diversity, coverage of a number of areas (eg industrial relations, welfare and crime) is remarkably consistent (Cohen & Young, 1977; Golding & Middleton, 1982; Glasgow Media Group, 1976, 1980, 1982, 1985). To quote Murdock :

'Despite the immediate appearance of a constant flux, the underlying repertoires of stereotypes and styles of presentation appear to be remarkably resilient and resistant to change' (1981)

Reporting often seems to rely on a stock of stable mythological characters (Young, 1977) and an 'extraordinarily narrow' range of political perspectives (Bennett, 1982, p.41).

Most importantly the pluralist idea that ownership of the media and communications industries is becoming more dispersed does not stand up to scrutiny. As Murdock & Golding (1977; Golding & Murdock, 1979; Murdock, 1981) have argued there is much evidence to suggest that ownership of the media is becoming more concentrated in the hands of relatively few corporations not more dispersed. Despite the rhetoric of the Thatcher years concerning the 'share-owning democracy' and the impact of major flotations, the

proportion of shares owned by individuals in the UK has decreased from 65.8% in 1957 to 20% in 1988 (Retail Marketing Unit, 1990).

In terms of research, that informed by the pluralist perspective was empirical, behavioural and scientific (Hall, 1982). An early focus was on the 'effects' of the media. These were conceived of as direct influences on individuals which would show up empirically as behavioural changes. The ideal experimental test, it is argued, was 'hypodermic' in nature (Carey, 1977) and the favoured model of influence was the political campaign (eg. Lazarsfeld et al, 1948; Berelson et al, 1954).

One of the most widely drawn upon narratives in media studies is the story of how this ('simplistic and individualistic') 'effects' research 'gave way' to a more sophisticated and sensitive 'uses-gratifications' approach (see eg. Morley, 1980; Curran et al, 1982; Howitt, 1985). This challenged the idea of an omnipotent media exercising unidimensional influence and argued for a view of individuals as manipulating rather than being manipulated by the mass media (eg Klapper, 1960).

This narrative has recently been challenged by James Curran (1990) who has described as 'breathtaking' the familiar caricature of early 'effects' research. To illustrate his point Curran discusses a number of studies conducted in the 1940s, showing how many of their concerns prefigure those of what he calls 'the new revisionism' - eg. a concern with how and why people understand media texts in different ways, how sub-cultural formations influence audience readings, and the significance of peer-group mediation.

Curran argues that there is no longer such a stark polarisation between pluralist research and work from what

he calls the 'radical' camp. Indeed there are significant continuities between pluralist research and that which identifies its roots in the marxist tradition (eg. the work of David Morley). This is partly because the pluralists have shifted their focus of interest: much more interest is now being shown in the wider role of the media in the political system, cultural integration, the formation of social identities and the relationship between the media and social change (Curran,1990). It is also, Curran argues, because the new 'revisionists' have moved to occupy the position previously taken by pluralists - and discrete audience reception studies are proliferating.

The polarisation between the liberal and marxist approaches was, however, repeatedly stressed throughout the 1970s and 1980s. This was partly a pedagogic move associated with the many Readers produced by the Open University. More crucially, though, it was a way of asserting the centrality of marxism to the study of the media. As such it was extremely successful, and most debates are now posed within marxism rather than between marxism and other approaches. It is to this critical tradition that I devote the rest of this chapter.

Marx on Ideology

Before going on to look at some recent marxist approaches to the study of ideology and the media, it is worth attempting to say something about the ideas to which they all acknowledge a profound debt.

The concept of ideology is one of the least elaborated in Marx's writing (Larrain,1979; Bennett,1982; Billig,1982; McLellan,1986). Rather than a sustained and comprehensive account what we have is a series of programmatic outlines

of his concerns. As Engels wrote in a letter to a friend after Marx's death

'There was one subject Marx and I always failed to stress enough in our writings...we neglected the formal side - the ways and means by which these notions, etc come about - for the sake of content.' (Engels letter to Mehring 14th July 1893, quoted in Billig 1982 p35)

In order to elucidate Marx's thinking on the subject one has to piece together Marx's writing from a variety of sources, sometimes finding inconsistencies and contradictions (Billig, 1982; McLellan, 1986). This has led to some confusion and to a plethora of competing interpretations. But, as Larrain (1979) has argued

'A system of thought which brings together idealism and materialism, philosophy and economy, science and revolution is bound to present problems of interpretation.' (1979 p35).

Marx's most sustained treatment of ideology is to be found in The German Ideology. Written in his twenties (with Engels) The German Ideology is an accessible critique of French notions of ideology, the political economists of the period and of individualistic, psychologistic explanations of ideology (Billig, 1982). Most importantly, however, Marx and Engels were attacking the 'German ideology' of the Young Hegelians. These disciples of Hegel, Marx and Engels argued, had mistakenly started from consciousness, from ideas, and proceeded from this to an investigation of material reality.

'The Young Hegelian ideologists, in spite of their allegedly "world-shattering" statements, are the staunchest conservatives... It has not occurred to any one of these philosophers to inquire into the connection of German philosophy with German reality, the relation of their criticisms to their own material surroundings' (Marx & Engels, 1970 p.41)

The Young Hegelians had got things the wrong way round, Marx & Engels argued:

'In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven...Life is not determined by consciousness but consciousness by life.' (Marx & Engels, 1970 p.47)

This then is the basis of Marx's attack on German Idealism. Consciousness must be explained from the contradictions of material life. And, crucially, people cannot solve in consciousness those contradictions which they are unable to solve in practice.

In The German Ideology Marx and Engels outlined an alternative - materialist - theory of ideology. The following passage is one of the most celebrated 'summaries' of their position:

'The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, ie. the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. the class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it... In so far, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age; thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch (1970,p.60-1)

In this passage we see two other features of Marx and Engels' understanding of ideology: the idea that control over the production and distribution of ideas is held by those who own and control the material means of production and the idea that ideology plays an important role in

maintaining class relations, thus serving the interests of the ruling class.

These passages, in so far as they have been taken in part to represent Marx and Engels' thinking on ideology have been the subject of an enormous amount of debate (which will be explored in more detail in the remainder of this chapter) In particular two issues have dominated debate. The first is the issue of determination. Marx and Engels' assertions concerning the determination of 'consciousness' by material life have been taken by some commentators to mean that Marx was a rigid determinist who believed that people's ideas and actions were determined by economic forces beyond their control. Marx's argument in the 1859 Preface is also often taken as further evidence of this with its claim about material life conditioning consciousness:

'The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence but their social existence that determines their consciousness' (Marx, 1970 p.20-21)

To interpret it this way, however, is to fundamentally misunderstand Marx's position. Marx used the notions of determination and conditioning not in a narrow, rigid way, but to suggest setting limits, exerting pressure and closing off options (Williams, 1973; Hall, 1977; 1986). Indeed the relationship between determination and autonomy constitutes a major theme in his work - expressed famously at the beginning of the Eighteenth Brumaire:

'Men make their own history but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past' (1954, p.10)

The second (related) debate centres around how the 'base-superstructure' metaphor in Marx's work should be understood. Golding and Murdock (1977) have argued that many commentators have taken too literally the metaphor of the real economic base (like the foundations of a building) upon which was constructed a social, legal and political superstructure. They stress that Marx's conception of capitalism is a dynamic one, necessitating detailed specific and concrete analyses.

Part of the reason for this debate - which has taken place among marxist scholars as much as between marxists and non-marxists is the language used to describe the base-superstructure relationship, particularly in The German Ideology. It was in The German Ideology that Marx and Engels used notions like 'reflex', 'camera obscura', 'phantoms in the human brain' and 'sublimates of their material life process' (1970, p.47). This has led some marxists to argue that The German Ideology is a rather simplistic work which cannot be taken to represent Marx's position in his mature writings (Larrain, 1979; Bennett, 1982; McLellan, 1986). Larrain (1979) has argued that because The German Ideology was written in the period of the major epistemological break in Marx's work it therefore has a rather ambiguous status.

In Marx's more mature work, the issue is posed less in terms of the base-superstructure metaphor than in terms of his central distinction between essences or real relations and phenomenal forms. In this formulation ideology can be said to be a consciousness which remains fixed in the external appearances that conceal the real social relations. What is crucial is that ideology is neither an invention or illusion, nor a negation of reality but rather is reflecting something real itself. Ideology is seen as the projection into people's consciousness of ideas

produced by their practice. Ideology seizes on the (real) appearances and gives them the impression of independence and autonomy. As Hall (1977) has put it (1)

'To understand the role of ideology we must also be able to account for the mechanisms which consistently sustain, in reality, a set of representations which are not so much false to, as a false inflection of the "real relations" on which in fact they depend.' (p.324)

Hall (1977) illustrates this point by examining the way Marx handles the contradiction between the social character of labour and the individual nature of its realisation under capitalism.

'The market of course really exists. It is not the figment of anyone's imagination. it is a mediation which enables one kind of relation (social) to appear (ie. really to appear) as another kind of relation (individual)' (Marx, quoted in Hall 1977 p.323)

This example shows how the ideological nature of the market is not false in the sense that it does not exist, but it is false in that it does not express the full social relations on which capitalism rests.

The distinction between real relations and phenomenal forms is central to Marx's theorisation of ideology in his later works. We can, however, see many continuities from his earlier work. Staying with the market example, it is clear that 'the market' has the simultaneous function of transforming one relation into its opposite (cf camera obscura), by making exchange appear as or stand for relations of production and exchange, making production disappear from view (cf 'concealment' in The German Ideology). (Hall, 1977)

This has been a brief and partial sketch. The debates and issues raised by Marx's theorisation of ideology will be developed and discussed in the remainder of this chapter as I consider the writing of contemporary marxists on culture, ideology and the media.

Culturalist Marxism

The notion of 'culturalism' is used to draw attention to the similarities between the work of a number of writers including Raymond Williams, Edward Thompson, Christopher Hill and, less frequently, Richard Hoggart and Eric Hobsbawm. I use it here - with considerable ambivalence - to signal some of the continuities of interest between the work of Williams and Thompson.

There are a number of reasons for my reservations about the notion of culturalism to describe these writers' work. One is the categorical denunciation of the term by Thompson in the debates which followed publication of The Poverty of Theory (1978). Thompson's venomous attack on Richard Johnson for applying the term to his work would be enough to make even the most self-confident writer apprehensive about ever uttering the word again. Nevertheless it is a notion that has been drawn on repeatedly and has gained considerable descriptive currency (Hall, 1986).

A second and more significant concern relates to what Barrett et al (1979) have called 'dichotomous theorising' - the tendency to polarise culturalism against structuralism, accentuating their differences and ignoring shared interests. Dichotomous theorising, Barrett et al argue, has had the effect of stifling productive debate. However, as they would concede, not all references to culturalism are destructive. There was not a plea to abandon the term completely - indeed one of the contributions to Ideology

and Cultural Production consists of an examination of the culturalist/structuralist debate (Johnson, 1979) - but rather to use the terms in more sensitive and intellectually and politically productive ways.

The third reservation relates to the danger that use of the term culturalism may obscure differences between the work of Williams and Thompson. These differences are considerable, having been articulated most famously in Thompson's New Left Review review of The Long Revolution in 1961, and reaffirmed in the exchanges around The Poverty of Theory (Samuel, 1981) (see also Williams' account and responses in Politics and Letters). Similarly the notion may lead one to overlook differences and discontinuities within the work of Williams and Thompson. Williams, for example, has pointed out that he changed his position considerably in relation to Thompson's criticisms. He also concedes a failure to theorise gender adequately in his earlier work (Watts, 1989).

The danger of obscuring differences is a real one. In this brief discussion I make every attempt not to hide or do violence to differences within or between the work of Williams and Thompson. Nevertheless I do use the notion of culturalist marxism because it allows me to draw attention to important similarities of concern and emphasis in this work, and, as such, helps to situate the intellectual development of media/communications studies.

The publication of Hoggart's The Uses of Literacy and Raymond Williams' Culture and Society in the mid 1950s changed the intellectual landscape. Very different books, both dramatically interrupted the cultural debate. If Hoggart cannot be said to have broken with the elitist and idealist notions of culture used by writers like the Leavises, then his attempt to 'read' working class culture

for the changes wrought by mass literacy must nevertheless be seen as a significant departure. Williams' book in contrast was concerned with a tradition of bourgeois thought and 'wrote the epitaph' of the culture tradition - challenging the very high/low culture distinction (Hall, 1986). Although EP Thompson's book The Making of the English Working Class did not appear until several years later, it too is held to belong to this 'moment'. More self-consciously marxist than Williams' early work (which displayed considerable ambivalence towards marxism) Thompson's analysis of popular traditions and the formation of class culture between 1790 and 1830 was an implicit attack on a kind of evolutionism, on Stalinism and on economic reductionism. The critique of the latter was shared by Williams, and in both their work questions of culture, consciousness, agency and experience were foregrounded. Whilst not without problems, their attack on what they both identified as a kind of reductive economism in some of Marx's work, and in particular their argument with the base-superstructure metaphor, allowed them to treat questions of culture in their full specificity, not as reflections of a prior and determining base. One of the most important consequences of this move was that it created a space from which a new area of study and practice opened: it enabled the formation of 'cultural studies' as a distinct problematic, associated with the New Left (Murphy 1989). Perry Anderson has put forward a materialist reading of this 'moment' for the New Left

'As material deprivation to a certain degree receded, cultural loss and devastation became more evident and important. The chaos and desolation of the urban environment, the sterility and formalism of education, the saturation of space and matter with advertising, the atomisation of local life, the concentration of control of the means of communication and the degradation of their content, these were what became the pre-occupations of the New Left' (1965 p.15)

In Culture and Society and in subsequent work Williams was concerned with five 'key words' - industry, democracy, class, art and culture - each of which was held to bear witness to a

'general change in our characteristic ways of thinking about common life' (1958 p.13)

Of these, by far the most encompassing was 'culture'. Williams saw in the history of this word the entire history of change in the period 1780-1950. The theory of culture is

' a theory of relations between elements in a whole way of life' (1958, p.11)

There are at least two main ways in which Williams uses the notion of culture. The first understood culture in terms of the ideas through which societies make sense of their experiences. Culture in this sense is 'ordinary' and is shared and sociable - not being restricted to 'the best of what has been thought and said'. In some (especially early) formulations this leads to a rather non-conflictual notion of culture as something which somehow cuts across class antagonisms to be shared by whole language communities (see for example Williams' critique of the notions of 'bourgeois' culture and 'working class' culture in Culture and Society pp.307ff). The second way in which culture is used is to refer to 'a whole way of life' (1958 p.11). Not just some practices, Williams insisted, not just 'housing, dress and modes of leisure' (1958 p.311), but something which penetrates all practices. The extent to which this definition is not distinct from but blurs with the former can be seen from the following quote from The Long Revolution:

'Since our way of seeing things is literally our way of living, the process of communication is in fact the process of community: the sharing of common meanings, and thence common activities and purposes. The offering, reception and comparison

of new meanings leading to tensions and achievements of growth and change' (1965, p.55)

Here, then, Williams draws no distinction between our ideas about the world and our practices: 'our way of seeing things is literally our way of living'.

The use of notions of culture changed and developed throughout Williams' work. In response to Thompson's criticisms in 1961 'way of life' became 'ways of life' - although not 'ways of struggle' as Thompson had suggested. In Politics and Letters Williams (1981) describes the feeling of no longer recognising the man who wrote Culture and Society. Nevertheless these two broad notions persisted.

Closely related to the notion of culture, and equally central to Williams' work, is the idea of structure of feeling. Like culture, the structure of feeling seems to be used by Williams in a plethora of different ways. In a recent article as part of a tribute to Williams, Peter Middleton (1989) argues that there are two main senses to structure of feeling. One is a 'methodological requirement':

'Williams wants to have a descriptive term for textual features that are intertextual within a specific historical moment but cannot be described in either wholly formal terms or paraphrased as assertions about the world' (p.52)

The other use comes from a desire to say something about the lived experience of historical processes from the point of view of the participants. Williams argues that when one is trying to account for aspects of social change - for example the emergence of new dramatic forms - textual and sociological analyses are not sufficient. The notion of structure of feeling was to draw attention to the

experience of culture or struggle. Indeed, in Marxism and Literature William's suggests that 'structures of experience' could be substituted for 'structure of feeling' (1977 p.132).

The stress on experience, on lived social relations, is also central to Thompson's work. The Making is an attempt to recover the lived historical experience of classes which 'official history' has neglected. As he famously puts it in the preface:

'I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the "obsolete" hand-loom weaver, the "utopian" artisan and even the deluded follower of Johanna Southcott, from the enormous condescension of posterity. Their crafts and traditions may have been dying. their hostility to the new industrialism may have been backward looking. Their communitarian ideals may have been fantasies. Their insurrectionary conspiracies may have been foolhardy. But they lived through these times of acute historical disturbance, and we did not. Their aspirations were valid in terms of their own experience; and, if they were casualties of history, they remain, condemned in their own lives, as casualties' (1980 p.12 my emphasis)

Hall (1986a) has argued that Thompson uses the notion of experience in three different ways - sometimes to mean 'consciousness', the collective ways in which people 'handle' their given conditions; sometimes as the domain of the 'lived', the mid term between 'conditions' and 'culture'; and sometimes as the objective conditions themselves - against which particular modes of consciousness are counterposed (p.39). Like Williams, Thompson reads structures of relations primarily in terms of how they are 'lived' or experienced. Where he differs from Williams is in the importance which he affords to class. Thompson writes of class as a 'historical relationship' (1963 p.8)

'I do not see class as a "structure", nor even as a "category", but as something which in fact happens (and can be shown to have happened) in human relationships' (p.8)

For Thompson, one of the central questions was the relationship between class experience which

'is largely determined by the productive relations into which men are born - or enter involuntarily'

and class consciousness

'the way in which these experiences are handled in cultural terms: embodied in traditions, value systems, ideas and institutional forms' (1963 p.9)

Clearly this is a vital question - it echoes the distinction made by Marx between class in itself and class for itself. The problem, as I shall argue later, in the way it is addressed by Thompson concerns his various understandings of the notion of experience and his humanist articulation of class.

If Williams had a less central place for class in his analyses from Thompson, he certainly had a far more sophisticated understanding of language. Both Williams and Thompson were engaged in a protracted critical 'argument' with structuralism. For Thompson this metamorphosed into the attack on Althusserian marxism represented by The Poverty of Theory. For Williams, in contrast, a central part of the critique of structuralism concerned its theory of language. In Marxism and Literature Williams produced his most sustained criticisms of structuralist theories of language and meaning, attacking them for scientism and abstraction - what Volosinov (1973) called 'abstract objectivism'.

For Williams, language was understood as the repository of history (cf the earlier point I raised about his understanding of culture). He saw words (or signs) not as stable units whose meaning is determined by the system of which they are a part but rather as a variable sign whose meaning derives both from its past development and use, and from its dynamically continuing relations with other signs in the present (Crowley, 1989). This then was an attempt to fashion a materialist understanding of language - grounded in a marxian conception of history as conflictual (cf Volosinov [1973]), where a conflictual set of meanings was seen as both reflecting and determining practice. This tension is picked out neatly in the introduction to Keywords:

What can really be contributed is not a resolution but perhaps, at times, just that extra edge of consciousness. In a social history in which many crucial meanings have been shaped by a dominant class, and by particular professions operating to a large extent within its terms, the sense of edge is accurate. This is not a neutral review of meanings. It is the exploration of the vocabulary of a crucial area of social and cultural discussion which has been inherited within precise social and historical conditions and which has to be made at once conscious and critical - subject to change as well as to continuity - if the millions of people in whom it is active are to see it as active: not as a tradition to be learned; nor as a consensus to be accepted; nor a set of meanings which, because it is "our language", has a natural authority; but as a shaping and reshaping, in real circumstances and from profoundly different and important points of view: a vocabulary to use, to find our own ways in, to change as we find it necessary to change it, as we go on making our own language and history' (19 pp.24-5)

What we see here is both the argument that meaning has been shaped by a dominant class (cf Marx and Engels in The German Ideology) and the stress on the possibility of changing meanings as we change/make history.

We see in this perhaps one of the most valuable aspects of Williams' and Thompson's work - the affirmative stress on the development of consciousness, the moment of struggle and the possibility of actually making history. What is at issue, however, is whether this stress on agency is taken too far and the notion of determination is evacuated completely. This is one of three critical points I will now discuss in relation to culturalism.

First I want to interrogate the notion of 'experience' as it is used by Thompson and Williams. One of the imperatives of this work is to respect the authenticity, validity and dignity of the experiences or cultures that are considered. This has produced 'histories' of great vitality and interest, in which the voices of those previously silenced are brought to life. The flip side of this, however, is a critique of all 'abstraction' and 'theory' (although Thompson sometimes argues that he is against only Theory, not theory, eg. 1981). Abstraction is held to do violence to the real authentic voices to whom the historian simply 'listens'. Theory, Thompson argues, means that one would not

'have to research history at all, because the theory would anticipate the results. I have explained, in the Poverty of Theory why I reject this notion of theory - in explaining everything in one complex gulp it leaves the actual history unexplained' (1981 p.405)

The fact that this critique of theory can be understood in terms of the ongoing critical engagement with structuralist work in no way lessens its problems. As Johnson (1979) has argued, the problems are those which arise with most 'empiricisms': the actual practices of analysis or 'listening' are inadequately described, the method provides no real demonstration of the validity of the results. Recourse is made to secret or 'guilty' theoretical premises

or abstractions which are inevitably made. Thompson neither provides any explanations of the nature of the 'models' proposed nor any elucidation of the way in which the 'evidence' or the 'facts' are compared. The empiricist implication is that 'the facts' somehow speak for themselves.

In practice the (reconstructed) subjective experience of the oppressed is used as the final judge - theirs are the authentic voices against which other versions of history are compared. Yet as Hall (1981) has pointed out, the category of experience can never be an unproblematic one for marxism: all experience is penetrated by ideological and cultural categories. Thompson's (1981) attempt to overcome this problem with the developmetⁿ of two categories of experience - experience (1) referring to conditions and experience (2) to how these are perceived in consciousness - serves only to blur significant distinctions.

A second problem related to this antipathy to abstraction^t, concerns the place of the broad question of determination in the work of Thompson and Williams. Both were opposed to the base-superstruct ure metaphor in Marx's writing - or rather to a particular reading or inflection of this metaphor which they identified in much marxist work - and both were opposed to what they saw as economic reductionism. Against the base-superstructure metaphor, Thompson argued for an understanding of the 'social process' as 'the dialectical intercourse between social being and social consciousness':

'Capitalist society was founded upon forms of exploitation which are simultaneously economic, moral and cultural. Take up the essential defining productive relationship...and turn it around, and it reveals itself now in one aspect (wage labour), now in another (an acquisitive ethos) and now in another (the alienation of such intellectual faculties as are not required by the

worker in his productive role' (Thompson, 1965 p.356)

A similar position is taken by Williams, who argues that it is necessary to study the complex interactions between the spheres of culture, polity and economy

'without any concession of priority to any one of them we may choose to abstract' (1965 p.62).

This quote from The Long Revolution is phrased in such a way not only to reject the terms of base-superstructure, but to make the entire notion of economic determination seem completely arbitrary! The problem with the notion of 'complex interaction' or dialectical relation, as Johnson (1979) has pointed out, is that it is not a usable conception:

'to give it some explanatory purchase we would have to be able to specify the conditions of the dominance of the one set of relations over the other - of consciousness over being or vice versa' (p.63)

In practice, Golding and Murdock (1979) have argued, Williams

'is constantly tugged back towards acknowledging the pivotal position of the economic structure and the determinations it exerts on cultural production' (p.202)

His concrete analyses pay close attention to the determining impact of the concentration of ownership and control of the media on the nature of mass communications - something which leads him to call for an extension of public ownership of communications industries.

The strength of Williams' and Thompson's critique of 'economism' lies in both the opportunities it allows to treat questions of culture in their full specificity, and

in the space it gives to people's experience of struggle and ways of explaining change - captured in the first paragraph of The Making

'Making because it is a study in an active process, which owes as much to agency as to conditioning. The working class did not rise like the sun at an appointed time, it was present at its own making' (1963 p.8)

The problem arises when the notion of determination is evacuated completely and when there is a refusal to speak of levels or instances so that culture and economy simply become 'sides of a coin'.

One of the problems in reading the work of Thompson and Williams in this way, however, is that their ideas changed repeatedly. In his important essay 'Base and superstructure in Marxist theory', for example, Williams criticises a narrow and rigid reading of determination, but he explicitly stresses that he does not want to lose the notion altogether to the notion of social totality. He uses Gramsci's theory of hegemony to rethink the base-superstructure metaphor. William's reformulation of determination is in turn taken up by Thompson who, writing after the publication of The Poverty of Theory, spoke of

'the discriminations which Raymond Williams and I have made as to determination in its sense of "setting limits" and "exerting pressures"' (1981, p.405)

As Nicholas Garnham (1988) has noted 'the problem of determination' is one which haunted Williams' work and was never fully resolved.

The third criticism concerns the issue of class. As I noted earlier, class is a central 'category' in culturalist work. It appears, however, in a very specific form. Class is

thought of as a set of relations between people. As such class relations are understood in interpersonal terms. As Johnson (1979) has pointed out there is little stress on what these relations are over (means of production and surplus value). Class is constructed

'in a manner that systematically marginalises one (economic) aspect of this category, viz the connection between classes and relations of production in particular modes of production (1979 p.65)

What the notion of class does in culturalist work is essentially to displace the idea of relations of production with a humanist, psychologised stress on 'relationships'. Economic relations are theorised only in terms of experience. Thus exploitation is analysed as a feeling but not as a socio-economic process in Thompson's work, whilst Williams cautions against an 'external' understanding of class in favour of a stress on 'class feeling' (1958 p.312). Again this problem can be understood as part of a failure to abstract.

'In effect, culturalist histories are an amalgam of two of Marx's dicta, the first severely truncated: "men make history"; "All history is the history of class struggle". But how are such classes constituted? How do they come to be in antagonistic relation? Is anything possible by such human agency? What sets limits to this creativity? What, indeed, constitutes men and women as social (class-ed and sex-ed) beings in the first place?' (Johnson, 1979 p.66)

Despite the immense value and importance of their work, culturalists provide no adequate answers to these questions.

Althusser's Structuralism

Whilst Williams and Thompson referred at times to ideology, for them the significant categories were those of culture and experience. Althusser's work, in contrast, places immense importance on the theorisation of ideology. Central to an understanding of this is Althusser's reading of Marx concerning the relative autonomy of the super structures from the base

'Marx has at least given us the "two ends of the chain" and has told us to find out what goes on between them: on the one hand, determination in the last instance by the (economic) mode of production; on the other, the relative autonomy of the superstructures and their specific effectivity' (1977 p.111)

Society, for Althusser, is thought of as a totality which 'very schematically' can be reduced to three instances; the economy, politics and ideology (1977 p.231). Like the economy and the polity, Althusser argued, ideology is an 'organic' part of every social totality.

'Human societies secrete ideology as the very element and atmosphere indispensable to their historical respiration and life' (1977 p.232)

Thus even a communist society could not do without ideology because even a communist society would have to 'adapt' people to their conditions of existence. However, Althusser made a distinction between ideology in general - which was common to all societies - and particular ideologies. In a class society

'ideology is the relay whereby, and the element in which, the relation between men and their condition of existence is settled to the profit of the ruling class. In a classless society, ideology is the relay whereby, and the element in which, the relationship between men and their conditions of existence is settled to the profit of all men' (1977 p.235-6).

Althusser's theorisation of ideology can be understood as part of his central concern with reproduction. The notion of reproduction comes from Capital where it is used in a broad sense to refer to the reproduction of the social relations of possession and exploitation and indeed the mode of production itself. Althusser uses it in a more circumscribed way, concerned primarily with the reproduction of labour. This, he argued, involves not simply the physical production and reproduction of workers capable of and obliged to sell their labour, but also the social and cultural reproduction necessary to secure the legitimisation of the dominance of capital. It is in this process of reproduction which ideology is held to play a key role.

In Althusser's early work ideology is described as

'a system of representations, but in the majority of cases these representations have nothing to do with "consciousness": they are usually images and occasionally concepts, but it is above all as structures that they impose on the vast majority of men, not via their "consciousness" (1977 p.233).

In this short passage we see three important emphases in Althusser's work. The first is the notion of ideology as a system of representations (or systems of representations - as it appears in some translations). This stress is a refutation of the idea that ideology is made up of isolated images or representations

'it is their system, their mode of combination and disposition which gives them sense, it is their structure which determines them in their sense and function'

Because ideology is a system or systems with a structure it can be studied as an objective phenomenon and a distinct instance (Larrain, 1979).

The second important point is the idea that ideology works through structures. What Althusser is criticising is the notion that ideologies are simply ideas. Instead, he argues, ideologies are materially located in practices and structures - an argument he develops more fully in the later Ideological State Apparatuses essay.

The third, related, point is Althusser's critique of both the association of ideology with consciousness, and the notion of false consciousness. The notion of false consciousness, he argued, rests upon an assumption that there is one true (ascribed) ideology per class, and is based upon an empiricist relationship to knowledge. Althusser argued:

'In ideology men do indeed express, not the relationship between them and their conditions of existence; but the way they live the relation between them and their conditions of existence: this presupposes both a real relation and an "imaginary", "lived" relation' (1977 p.233)

Ideology, then, is not a (false) representation of the real world, but a representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. Hall (1985a) has argued that we must understand the word 'live' in this formulation very broadly. It refers to the fact that it is not possible to simply experience 'the real' in some unmediated way outside culture, meaning and representation. By 'live' Althusser means the ways in which we experience the world; this formulation forms an important part of his attack on humanism.

Some of the same emphases are present in Althusser's later work on ideology in 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' (henceforth the ISA essay). Commentators differ in the extent to which they see continuities and breaks in Althusser's writing. Larrain (1979) for example

see considerable similarities between Althusser's writing in For Marx and in the ISA essay, whilst Hall (1980a, 1985a, 1986a) usually constructs a narrative in which the later Althusser represented by the ISA essay is dealt with first to 'give way' to the 'more sophisticated' theorisations in 'Marxism and Humanism' and 'Contradiction and Overdetermination'.

One of the most significant continuities of interest is the stress on the materiality of ideology. The difference is the way this is argued through in the ISA essay. The problem for a non-idealist, a materialist, theory is how to deal with concepts and representations (ie with what can be understood as mental events) in a non-idealist and a non-vulgar materialist manner. In the ISA essay Althusser resolved this by thinking of ideology as a practice, located in particular social institutions, organisations or apparatuses. This shifted the emphasis away from ideas to practices, which existed as social phenomena.

Althusser distinguished between two types of state apparatuses - the repressive state apparatuses (RSAs) and the ideological state apparatuses (ISAs). The RSAs - the police, the courts, prisons and the army - function 'by violence', at least ultimately, since administrative repression may take non-physical forms (1984 p.17). In contrast the ISAs - which included the religious ISA (the system of different churches), the educational ISA (the system of different public and private schools), the family ISA, the political ISA (the 'political system' including the different parties), the trades union ISA, the communications ISA (press, radio, television, etc) and the cultural ISA (literature, the Arts, sports, etc) - functions 'by ideology' (1984 pp.17-19). Althusser's writing in the ISA essay is often caricatured in summaries so it is important to make it clear that he did not draw an

absolute distinction between the apparatuses and nor did he claim that an ideological role was the only one played by apparatuses like the family (see footnote 1984 p.17).

'The ISAs function massively and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic (There is no such thing as a purely ideological apparatus) (1984,p.19).

The central role of the ISAs is to guarantee the reproduction of the relations of production.

'Each of them contributes to this single result in the way proper to it. The political apparatus by subjecting individuals to the political state ideology...the communications apparatus by cramming every "citizen" with daily doses of nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism, moralism, etc by means of the press, the radio and television...The family apparatus...but there is no need to go on' (1984 p.28)

Singled out for particular consideration by Althusser is the educational apparatus, which, he argues, has replaced in its functions the previously dominant ISA, the Church.

'It takes children from every class at infant school, and then for years, the years in which they child is most "vulnerable", squeezed between family state apparatus and the educational state apparatus, it drums into them, whether it uses new or old methods, a certain amount of know-how wrapped in the ruling ideology (French, arithmetic, natural history, the sciences, literature) or simply the ruling ideology in its pure state (ethics, civic instruction, philosophy' (1984 p.29)

A 'mass' of pupils is ejected at various ages or levels of education

'practically provided with the ideology which suits the role it has to fulfil in class society' (1984 p.29)

The notion of the ISA is, as I noted above, an attempt to fashion a materialist theory of ideology which sees ideas as materially located in social organisations or institutions. Hall (1985a), however, has pointed to the problems which result when Althusser's condensed argument - 'Disappear - the term ideas' - is taken too literally to mean that ideology has nothing whatever to do with ideas. Hall argues that this emphasis suffers from a 'misplaced concreteness':

'The materialism of marxism cannot rest on the claim that it abolishes the mental character - let alone the real effects of - mental events (ie. thought) for that is, precisely, the error of what Marx called a one-sided or mechanical materialism' (1985 p.100)

Rather than 'abolishing' ideas and thought, what Althusser demonstrated in the ISA essay is that ideas have a material existence.

The other novel and profoundly significant thesis of the ISA essay is Althusser's Lacanian emphasis on the importance of the Subject in ideology:

'There is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects...the subject is the constitutive category of all ideology' (1984 p.45)

The relationship between the subject and ideology runs in two directions:

'I say: the category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology, but at the same time and immediately I add that the category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of constituting concrete individuals as subjects' (1984 p.45)

The 'obviousness' that we are all subjects is for Althusser 'the elementary ideological effect' (1984 p.46).

Recognising ourselves as subjects is an act of ideological recognition - recognition because we are 'always already' subjects. The mechanism through which ideology is held to operate is that of interpellation:

'all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects by the functioning of the subject' (1984 p.47)

Using the example of a street scene Althusser argues that when one turns around in the street in response to the shout 'hey you there!' one becomes a subject.

'Why? Because he has recognised that the hail was "really" addressed to him, and that it was really him who was hailed' (1984 p.48)

The problem with this analogy, Althusser concedes, is that it suggests that in the moment before being hailed the individual was not a subject. In fact, Althusser argues, even before each hail the individual was already a subject:

'Ideology has always already interpellated individuals as subjects, which amounts to making it clear that individuals are always already interpellated by ideology as subjects' (1984 p.49)

This argument leads to one final proposition - that concrete individuals are always already subjects (p.50). Indeed, concrete individuals are 'abstract' with respect to the subjects which they always already are. Althusser explains this paradox by reference to Freud's work on the birth of children, arguing that even before its birth the child is already a subject in the specific familial ideological configuration in which it is 'expected'. The child, in many senses can be said to have a 'pre-appointment' (p.50).

One of the criticisms most frequently levelled at Althusser's work is the charge of functionalism. This is particularly relevant in relation to the ISA essay in which ideology is presented as perfectly adapted to the functions and interests of the ruling class, smoothly reproducing existing social relations. The problem with this formulation is that the notion of class struggle or of any kind of resistance is completely written out. Moreover it presents the dominant class as itself coherent and uncharacterised by differences or contradictions.

Althusser was obviously aware of these problems, which in some form or other affect all marxian attempts to theorise ideology (something I indicated in my 're-write' of a famous passage from the Communist Manifesto at the start of this chapter). There are several points in the ISA essay where he attempts to bring struggle back into the analysis, as for example, when he asks the pardon of all teachers who are attempting to 'turn their weapons' against ideology, and in examples like the following:

'This concert is dominated by a single score, occasionally disturbed by contradictions (those of the remnants of former ruling classes, those of the proletarians and their organisations)' (1984 p.28).

The problem is that 'contradictions' tend to be brought in as throwaway one-liners and do not really disturb the pervasive functionalism of the argument (but see also the Post-script to the ISA essay).

A related criticism concerns the profoundly anti-historical thrust of Althusser's work. In particular there is a problem with Althusser's distinction between, and theorisation of the relationship between, ideology in general and particular ideologies. Ideology in general is held to transcend, and remain immutable across, the

different modes of production - as Althusser puts it in the ISA essay: 'ideology has no history' (1984 p.45). As such it is an abstract unhistorical category. However the theory of particular ideologies is supposed to depend upon the theory of ideology in general. The problem is, as Larrain (1979) has argued:

'There is no possible connection between the abstraction of ideology in general and concrete ideologies such that by starting from the general one can deduce the conditions of the concrete (p.160)

The theory of ideology falls prey to a kind of idealism in relation to the constitution of the subject. In order to avoid the problems which he claims plague humanism, Althusser rejects the notion of the constitutive subject, arguing instead that subjects are constituted by ideology. What results, however, is kind of hypostatized notion of ideology, in which ideology replaces the subject as a new essence. As Larrain (1979) has pointed out:

'One might see in this inversion the elements of a Hegelian conception in which historical class ideologies and human subjects become manifestations and instruments by means of which ideology in general (the Idea, one may say) unfolds itself' (p.161)

A further problem with the notion that subjects are constituted by ideology in general is that it tells us nothing about how concrete individuals are constituted as subjects by particular ideologies - ie how we are constituted as classed, gendered subjects. Althusser's arguments concerning how individuals recognise themselves in ideology rely on a reading of Freud and Lacan which takes early unconscious psychoanalytic processes - in particular the entry into language and the Symbolic - as central to this process. The problem with this is that it assumes that we become positioned into a whole series of

specific historical and ideological discourses early in infancy. As Hall (1985a) has argued, we are not entirely stitched into place ideologically

'exclusively at that moment alone when we enter the "transition from biological existence to human existence"...It seems to me wrong to assume that the process which allows one to speak or enunciate at all - language as such - is the same as that which allows the individual to enunciate him or herself as a particular gendered, raced, socially sexed, etc individual in a variety of representational systems in definite societies (p.106)

The lack of historical character in Althusser's work is also a feature of his concept of Science. Ideology, in Althusser's work, is counterposed to Science which is theorised as belonging to some realm beyond or above class struggle or social contradictions. Whilst the opposition between Science and Ideology is a feature of most of Althusser's writing, the precise formulation of Science changes. In his later work Science's position beyond ideology is thought in terms of the centrality of the subject : Science is scientific (non-ideological) because it is a subject-less discourse (1984 p.45). What is common to all Althusser's formulations is that the opposition is conceived in abstract terms - as a 'transcendant' battle between truth and error. There is no room in this analysis for a (revolutionary) practice that could solve this contradiction - instead the opposition is presented as inevitable and never-ending. What is missing is Marx's emphasis on transformation - the idea that whilst science could help is to understand the world, the point is to change it (Larrain, 1979).

The final critical point which I want to raise in relation to Althusser's work concerns his theorisation of the state. Althusser's use of the term ISA to refer to institutions

like the family, the media and religious and cultural organisations has tended to overlook very important distinctions between state and non-state institutions. Althusser's definition of a state apparatus is a functional one:

'It is unimportant whether the institutions in which they are realised are "public" or "private" What matters is how they function. Private institutions can, perfectly well, "function" as Ideological State Apparatuses.' (1984 p.18)

The problem with this - as well as buying into the functionalism discussed earlier - is that it obscures all sorts of difficult questions about the relationship between the state and civil society. It suggests that all state institutions are state institutions which simply reproduce the dominant ideology. What it cannot explain is why relatively autonomous civil institutions 'spontaneously' reproduce ideology. As Stuart Hall (1985a) puts it in relation to the media:

'After all, in democratic societies, it is not an illusion of freedom to say that we cannot adequately explain the structural biases of the media in terms of their being instructed what to print or allow on television. But precisely how is it that such large numbers of journalists, consulting only their "freedom" to publish and be damned, do tend to reproduce, quite spontaneously, without compulsion, again and again, accounts of the world constructed within fundamentally the same ideological categories? (pp.100-101)

Whilst there is considerable scope for argument about the answer to this question - and even the terms in which Hall has posed it (eg how 'spontaneous' is the reproduction of the ideological field? is there really no compulsion? how can we understand the relationship between the political economy of media organisations and the professional ideologies of broadcasters or journalists?), the problem with Althusser's work is precisely that he forecloses all such questions. Despite his debt to Gramsci, instead of a discussion of the relationship between state institutions and those which are, at least technically, independent of the state we are told that the very distinction is 'bourgeois' and we get in its place an unhelpful functionalism.

CCCS and the 'turn to Gramsci'

The problems with, and the relative merits of, culturalism and structuralism have been the subject of countless debates. As I noted earlier culturalism and structuralism tended to be presented as polar opposites, between which researchers had to make a choice and declare an allegiance (Barrett et al, 1979). By the late 1970s, cultural studies was seen by some as being at an 'impasse' (Johnson, 1979), stuck between these 'two paradigms' (Hall, 1986a).

One route out of this impasse, which has since come to define a distinctively British cultural studies tradition (Sparks, 1989; Chen, 1991;), took the form of a particular reading of Gramsci. This move is associated primarily with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at Birmingham - and its Directors Stuart Hall & Richard Johnson) and with some members of the Open University Popular Culture Course Team - especially Tony Bennett. Its influence on British media studies has been profound: as

Colin Sparks (1989) has argued it is now a tradition which most media studies graduate students in Europe and North America work through.

It is important to stress that this tradition is based on a particular reading of Gramsci. This is not the place to attempt a summary of Gramsci's thought; what I am concerned to demonstrate is how Gramsci has been read and appropriated by Hall and others. As Hall (1988b) has noted, one of the things which attracted him to Gramsci was precisely 'the un-fully theorised nature of his work'

'It enables me to appropriate him more easily. He doesn't dominate the concepts I borrow from him because his concepts aren't embedded in a full textual apparatus...I have to work on it to see what he could have meant. So I find that Gramsci prevents me from becoming a disciple or a ventriloquist or a believer' (p.70)

f Like the structuralists, Gramsci is read as resisting the tendency to align cultural and ideological questions with class and economic ones in any straightforward way. His work is taken as a repudiation of all forms of reductionism (Hall, 1980a; Bennett, 1986). Societies are seen as complex social formations, as historical blocs, necessitating concrete and specific analysis in order to elucidate the relations between 'structure and superstructure' (Gramsci, 1971 p.177).

The concept most central to the 'turn to Gramsci' (Bennett, 1986) is that of hegemony. Hegemony is used by Hall to mean far more than simply ideological and cultural power (Hall et al, 1980; cf Williams, 1976). Rather it refers to

'all those processes whereby a fundamental social group which has achieved direction over the "decisive economic nucleus", is able to expand this into a moment of social, political and cultural leadership throughout civil society and the state' (Hall, 1980 p.35)

From this description it is clear that hegemony 'retains its base in the way the productive life of societies is organised' (Hall, 1980 p.36) but it also raises as critical issues the cultural and ideological processes involved in making this the basis of a 'profound revision of the whole social formation' (1980 p.36). Hegemony is never permanent, but is always temporary and, crucially, contested. This emphasis avoids the functionalist problems with Althusser's notion of the reproduction of the dominant ideology and restores the importance of struggle.

What Gramsci offers us, Hall and others argue, is a non-reductionist way of thinking about the classic issue of determination, the relationship between the base and the superstructure. Against the formulation in The German Ideology (the ruling ideas...), Hall argues that class position and material factors are necessary but not sufficient starting points in the analysis of any ideological formation.

'It is...possible to hold both the proposition that material interests help to structure ideas, and the proposition that position in the social structure has the tendency to influence the direction of social thought, without also arguing that material factors univocally determine ideology or that class position represents a guarantee that a class will have the appropriate forms of consciousness' (1988a p.45)

Hall has attempted to rethink the connections between different levels in the social formation with the concept of articulation. Developed by Laclau and Mouffe (1976) the theory of articulation argues that there is no necessary, determined, absolute connection between different practices, and is a way of asking how ideological elements come to be connected under certain historical conditions.

'An articulation is thus the form of the connection that can make a unity of two elements, under certain conditions...You have to ask, under

what circumstances can a connection be forged or made? So the so-called "unity" of a discourse is really the articulation of different, distinct elements which can be re-articulated in different ways because they have no necessary "belongingness" (Hall, 1986 p.53)

The theory of articulation, then, is an attack on the idea that there is any necessary relationship between, say, position in relation to the means of production and ideology. It refuses the idea not of correspondences but of necessary correspondences. Rather than seeing correspondences as given, Hall thinks of them as historically produced, the result of politics.

'The class/ideology identity marxism assumes in the beginning is, for me, the end result, the product of politics. Politics must construct the meanings and deliver the group to the slogans, not assume that the group always "really" knew the slogans and always believed in them. They didn't! It's quite possible for a class to be mobilised behind other slogans. Can one develop a political practice that makes those slogans or those ways of defining the world make sense to that group at the right moment? That is what gives political practice a certain necessary openness. Somebody else, might have a more effective politics and organise the class around some other slogan; then the connections get forged in a different way' (Hall, 1988b, p.60)

One result of this theory of articulation is that it shifts the question away from the issue of determination of ideology onto the question of ideological effects.

If Hall thinks politics has a necessary openness, then he stops short of the position which he sees as characterising much recent work in discourse theory. It is this which leads him to criticise not just Foucault and Hindess and Hirst but also Laclau and Mouffe's later book Hegemony and Socialist Strategy

'[I]n the last book, there is no necessary reason why anything is or is not potentially articulable with anything. The critique of reductionism has apparently resulted in the notion of society as a totally open discursive field' (Hall, 1986 p.56)

The mid 1980s saw many attempts by Hall to distance himself from discourse theory and post-structuralism, refusing what he saw as their position of necessary non-correspondence between levels and practices.

'I accept the critique of the vulgar marxist theory of ideology in terms of reductionism. But I don't go so far as to say that, therefore, there are simply disparate, fragmented discursive chains, one after another, endlessly slipping past one another. I'm trying to think that relationship in a way that brings them back together, but not as a simple unity or identity' (Hall, 1988b p.60)

As well as developing a theoretical position, Hall has produced, over the last two decades, substantive analyses of youth subcultures, media texts and ethnicity and identity. Perhaps his most sustained analysis, however, is his work on 'Thatcherism', which was pre-figured in Policing the Crisis and has spanned many books and articles throughout the 1980s. The analysis of Thatcherism allowed his work to become properly 'conjunctural' and historical, effacing the lack of concrete historical analysis in the structuralist tradition. I will say a little bit about it in the remainder of this section in order to highlight the other key terms of Hall's reading of Gramsci.

Hall is interested in understanding Thatcherism as a 'hegemonic project'. This is not the same as saying that Thatcherism has achieved hegemony, and nor does it mean that Thatcherism is a purely ideological phenomenon - since Hall's understanding of hegemony involves stressing the

importance of the 'decisive nucleus' of economic activity (Hall, 1985). However, Hall defends his project as one which treats ideology in its full specificity. This is merely, he argues, a case of 'bending the stick' in the opposite direction for a change (1988c).

Ideology is understood as a discursive phenomenon, conceptualised in terms of the articulation of different elements. Thus rather than ideological struggle being about contestation between fully formed, coherent world views it is seen, following Volosinov (1973), as being a fight over existing multi-accentual ideological signs eg. 'democracy', 'choice' or 'nation'.

'Contestation often has to do with the engagement around existing ideological symbols and slogans, winning them away from the connotative chains of association they have acquired, which build them into languages that seem to construct topics so that they deliver an answer that favours one end of the political spectrum' (Hall, 1988b p.58)

Thatcherism represents a particular articulation of elements. Ideologically it is seen as forging new discursive articulations between

'the liberal discourses of the "free market" and economic man, and the conservative themes of tradition, family and nation, respectability, patriarchalism and order' (Hall, 1988c p.2)

Hall's point is that these ideological elements are not brought together in some fully worked through systematic way, but rather that Thatcherism is about the remaking of common sense: 'it's aim is to become the common sense of the age' (1988c p.8). Ideology, for Gramsci, is theorised as having two domains - philosophy (or theoretical ideologies) and common sense. The role of 'organic ideologies' - those that seek to propagatae themselves

throughout a social formation - is to intervene in the terrain of ordinary, contradictory, episodic common sense:

'to interrupt, renovate and transform in a more systematic direction the practical consciousness of the masses, the given dispositions of their mental life' (Hall, 1988b p.55)

Common sense is a structure of popular ideology, a 'spontaneous conception of the world' which embodies the traces of previous systems of thought which have become sedimented into everyday reasoning. Like Gramsci, Hall is interested in the relationship between philosophy (or theoretical ideology) and common sense, in the process of sedimentation:

'I am interested in how grand theories of sovereignty, among people who have never read a word of Jefferson or Hobbes, nevertheless link with ideas of what is "right" about our country and where our country stops and where its boundaries symbolically should lie' (1988b p.59)

In relation to Thatcherism he is interested in the relationship between the formal statements of policy and theory from think tanks like the Adam Smith Institute and the Institute for Economic Affairs and the spontaneous common sense of ordinary people. The complexity of this relationship is made clear in Hall's response to a question in the discussion following presentation of 'the Toad in the Garden':

'It is perfectly true that much of the everyday monetarist economics the Thatcherites speak is not very internally consistent as a theoretical system, so theoretical economists can dismantle it in a moment. This lack of intellectual rigour doesn't make Thatcherism go away, partly because it operates elsewhere - in more common sense ways at the point where it connects with the ongoing, more episodic and contradictory common sense of the people' (1988b p.59)

What this conception stresses is the kind of success that Thatcherism has had in civil society.

'Thatcherism's "populism" signals its unexpected ability to harness to its project certain popular discontents, to cut across and between different divisions in society and to connect with certain aspects of popular experience. Ideologically, though it certainly has not totally won the hearts and minds of the majority of ordinary people, it is clearly not simply an "external" force, operating on, but having no roots in, the internal logics of their thinking and experience. 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...Ideologically it has made itself, to some degree, not only one of "them", but, more disconcertingly, part of "us" (1988c p.6).

Above all, the notion of hegemony has allowed Hall a way of thinking about popular consent to Thatcherism. He has been concerned with understanding the specific character of Thatcherism's populism - something he has thought via the (Poulantzas-inspired) idea of 'authoritarian populism' (Hall, 1985b). Hall, then, has been interested in precisely how and in what ways Thatcherism has been able to articulate different social and economic interests within its hegemonic project. Central to this has been the development of a non-essentialist theory of agency. Hall's is a non-humanist reading of Gramsci. Since the mid 1970s he has been explicitly concerned with theories of subjectivity:

'Anyone who is genuinely interested in the production and mechanisms of ideology must be concerned with the production of subjects and the unconscious categories that enable definite forms of subjectivity to arise' (1988a p.49)

The late 1970s and 1980s saw a series of attempts (most notably in Culture, Media, Language) to engage with psychoanalytic and post-structuralist theories of the

subject. Whilst profoundly informed by Althusser's reading of Lacan - and especially the notion of interpellation - Hall has repeatedly distanced himself from what he saw as a kind of transhistorical essentialism in some psychoanalytic theory. In Hall's discussions of Thatcherism we see these concerns made concrete. He argues that the New Right have been involved precisely in the work of producing new subject positions and transforming subjectivities.

'The whole discourse of Thatcherism combines ideological elements into a discursive chain in such a way that the logic or unity of the discourse depends on the subject addressed assuming a number of specific subject positions. The discourse can only be read or spoken unproblematically if it is enunciated from the imaginary position of knowledge of the self-reliant, self-interested, self-sufficient taxpayer - possessive individualist man (sic); or the "concerned patriot"; ...or the "respectable housewife"; or the native Briton...' (1988a p.49)

What is at issue is how this interpellative process is understood. Hall refuses the idea that ideological positioning occurs once and for all during the period of Oedipal identifications (see criticisms of Althusser).

'What Thatcherism poses is the problem of understanding how already positioned subjects can be effectively detached from their points of application and effectively repositioned by a new set of discourses.' (1988b p.61)

Against Lacanianism, then, Hall argues for a properly historical theory of subjectivity and interpellation.

One of the criticisms most frequently made of Hall's work is that he is claiming that the phenomenon he analyses are purely ideological. Thus, for example, critics of his work accuse him of arguing that Thatcherism is simply a hegemonic project (Jessop et al, 1984). Hall has responded

to this criticism, in his own words 'ad nauseam' (Hall, 1985b). At a general level, he has stressed repeatedly that

'We should not mistake an ideological reading for an analysis of the conjuncture as a whole' (1988a p.41)

Whilst, dealing sepcifically with criticisms of his work on Thatcherism, he has pointed out that critics have mistaken his own 'delimited project' for a 'more ambitious one' (1985b p.115).

'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 kind of effects, its own mechanisms, but it does not operate outside the play of other determinations; it has social, political and economic conditions of existence. One has to take the question of the nucleus of economic activity seriously, as Gramsci said, even when using a hegemonic approach (1988b p.62)

The focus on ideology, then, is, as I noted earlier, a case of bending the stick in the opposite direction for a change (1988c p.3).

A pertinent critique of this position, from workers in the political economy tradition, has raised the question of whether the stick has in fact been bent too far in this direction, and whether the economic level has been given sufficient attention. Too often, they argue, the emphasis in the 'relative autonomy' couplet has fallen on the autonomy of ideology, and analyses have not been grounded in any account of the overall balance of class power or the relationship between the economic and the ideological (Garnham, 1986; Sparks, 1989). In the absence of any detailed analyses of the way economic determinations actually work in practice

'[d]etermination becomes a kind of ritual incantation rather than a necessary starting point for concrete analysis' (Golding & Murdock, 1979 p.201)

Hall's work, it is argued, tends to put the whole issue of economic determination in a kind of theoretical bracket, which is invoked only to signal its distinctively marxist position. The result is

' a detailed and often dazzling dissection of cultural forms sit[ting] uneasily on an underdeveloped analysis of the economic bases of their production (Murdock & Golding, 1977 p.19)

What are needed, Golding and Murdock argue, are analyses which look not just at cultural or ideological forms, but are concerned with the ways in which the economic organisation and dynamics of mass media production determines the range and nature of these forms. Whilst I believe that this is an important criticism, which highlights not just areas of underdevelopment in Hall's work, but also valuable directions for future research, it seems to me that there is no research in media studies which has adequately integrated analyses of the economic and ideological levels (This is a point which I develop in more detail in the discussion of the political economy approach). Thus I have considerable sympathy for Hall's defence of his position:

'It is difficult to do both. Practically, it means either that you have access to a wide range of analytic skills or that you have a well-differerentiated research team. In your own work you accumulate certain insights that you cannot match in other areas. I ask myself whether I should combine a sort of naive economic analysis with a highly sophisticated ideological one, and it doesn't seem to fit. In a more open intellectual climate we would take some risks like that....' (1988b p.63)

If Garnham (1986) and Murdock & Golding (1977; Golding & Murdock, 1979) accuse Hall of not taking the issue of economic determination seriously, then a much harsher critique is put forward by Sparks (1989). Criticising Hall's defence of the one-sidedness of his work as a cop-out, Sparks argues that one needs no special competence in interpreting the economic to realise that

'the living standards of employed workers fell sharply under labour but have risen under the Tories' (1989 p.86)

and that this must go a considerable way in explaining the success of Thatcherism. Hall's reluctance to face this, Sparks argues, derives from the fact that any attempt

'to demonstrate the relationship between social class and mental life is seen not simply as irrelevant but also as pernicious' (Sparks, 1989 p.86)

Hall, he argues, has strayed far from anything 'that can be properly termed a marxist project' (1989, p.86). Nor is this claim that Hall's only remaining links with marxism are 'sentimental' limited to Sparks (see also Chen, 1991; and the Journal of Communication Inquiry for a series of articles strssing Hall's similarities with Foucault).

At the outset of my PhD research I would have dismissed such an argument out of hand for two reasons. Firstly because it would have seemed to me to be a destructive and unhelpful claim of the (peculiarly male) competitive 'I'm-more-of-a-marxist-than-you' variety, all too reminiscent of the witch-hunts of many revolutionary groups in which I had been involved. And secondly because I would have seen it as untrue in the case of Hall. A number of political developments in the late 1980s - in particular the launch of the 'New Times' documents - have caused me to re-evaluate my position. Whilst I believe the first argument

still holds, it seems to me that it is germane to ask , if not 'is Hall still a marxist?' then at least 'has his position changed? and, if so, in what way?'

My own thinking about these questions was focused in late 1988 by the publication of the Manifesto for New Times and a series of complementary articles in Marxism Today. As someone who had effectively 'taught myself' media studies by working through, on my own, its key texts, I had been profoundly impressed and influenced by Hall's work (as I noted in the Introduction). With no media or communications qualification, and located outside an institutional media studies base, I was a person who, par excellence, had developed through the CCCS and OU traditions. Why, then, when I liked and admired so much of Hall's 'academic' writing, did I feel such a deep sense of unease towards the 'New Times' project, and so much sympathy with Sivanandan's (1989) critique?

I have come to understand this in terms of a change in Hall's own position which occurred around 1988. One of the key axes on which Hall's position changed, it seems to me, was in his relationship to the whole question of postmodernism. In an interview with Lawrence Grossberg in 1986 on this issue, Hall (1986b) criticised postmodernist theory as Euro-centric, essentialist and uncritical. He singled out Lyotard and Baudrillard for collapsing analysis and celebration in their theories of postmodernism. Against this, Hall quoted Perry Anderson's argument that there is no such thing as the modernist impulse, asserting that modernism is itself heterogeneous and contradictory. Crucially, Hall argued that postmodernism is not something completely new:

'I don't think there is any such absolutely novel and unified thing as the postmodern condition. It's another version of that historical amnesia characteristic of American culture - the tyranny

of the new...[I]t isn't totally different from that disintegration of whole experiences or from that experience of the self as a whole person with an integrated history for whom life makes sense from some fixed and stable position that's been "in trouble" since at least Freud, Picasso, James Joyce, Brecht and Surrealism.

'Postmodernism is the current name we give to how those old certainties began to run into trouble from the 1900s onwards' (1986b,p.47)

Indeed, more than this, Hall suggested that the very notion of postmodernism was itself destructive in the sense that it was used as a shorthand to avoid theorising the precise historical nature of the changes.

'Again, it is exactly the term "postmodernism" itself which takes you off the tension of having to recognise what is new, and of struggling to mobilise some historical understanding of how it came to be produced. Postmodernism attempts to close off the past by saying that history is finished therefore you needn't go back to it. There is only the present and all you can do is be with it immersed in it' (1986b p.50)

By October 1988 and the launch of the Communist Party's Manifesto for New Times Hall's argument appeared to have changed dramatically. Whilst articles in the Manifesto are not attributed to individual authors, Hall is listed as a writer of the document, which argues (quite contrary to his 1986 position) that

'society is going through an epochal change'

Similarly, in an accompanying article we are characterised as entering a 'brave new world' (Hall, 1988d), premised on a move to post-fordism ('a whole new epoch distinct from the era of mass production' [1988d p.24]) and 'postmodernism' (which is described as the 'cultural character of "new times"' [1988d p.25]). There seem to me to be two fundamental shifts in Hall's position here: first there is the move to thinking that there has been a real

rupture with the past, an epochal shift; and second there is the use of the notion of 'new times' and its 'parent-concept' postmodernism (Williamson, 1989 p.34) to describe the nature of that change. Although in Marxism Today Hall (1988d) promises to ask some difficult questions of 'new times', his summary of the changes which comprise it (them?) serves mainly to affirm the very categories he previously rejected. As Williamson (1989) has pointed out 'new times' is very much a 'pre-packaged concept'. It (new times is referred to in the singular) is an orthodoxy which does not open up questions about the nature, cause and history of any changes in the nature of international capitalist relations but closes them off. This is not the place for a critique of 'new times' (see Sivanandan, 1989; Williamson, 1989); my aim is simply to demonstrate the significant change in Hall's position which, for me, represents a point of difference with Hall's theoretical stance¹.

In terms of the research presented in this thesis, of more direct relevance is the failure of Hall (and others working in this tradition) to produce convincing local analyses (Grossberg, 1986). Important and illuminating though the analysis of Thatchersim is, it presents a very general picture of hegemonic struggle. Despite Hall's commitment to seeing ideology as a discursive phenomenon, what is missing from the analysis is any detailed analysis of the significance of language in the whole process of political change. Dis-articulation-re-articulation, as Hall (1988c) calls it, seems to operate at the level of the 'order of discourse' (Fairclough, 1990); it is not explored in relation to particular debates or struggles. Similarly, there is little detailed analysis of media texts - some short papers on news, news photographs and current affairs programming (Hall, 1973; 1980; see Golding & Murdock, 1979 for an important critique of this work).

From a discourse analytic perspective, this work misses much of what is interesting about the way in which arguments and positions are constructed and accomplished as legitimate, the specific rhetorical devices involved in factual constructions and the ways in which discourse is designed to undermine or criticise other positions. An aim of this thesis will be to show how this detailed analysis of media discourse can be conducted.

The Political Economy Approach

The political economy approach is the name given to a number of types of work within media studies which are centrally interested in the economic determinants of communications and cultural products. Of course, it is not really meaningful to speak of a political economy approach; there are significant differences between people working in this tradition. I use the term political economy here to signal the work of James Curran, Nicholas Garnham, Peter Golding and Graham Murdock - this is not to suggest that the work of these researchers is homogeneous, but merely to signal some continuities of interest.

The political economy approach can be thought of as a reaction against three distinct bodies of work. First it situated itself in direct opposition to pluralist positions and in particular to the notion of a 'managerial revolution' which was assumed to have led to a separation between ownership and control in capitalist societies. Secondly it positioned itself against what it identified as a kind of crude reductionism, typified by the work of Ralph Miliband and Dallas Smythe. And thirdly it was critical of what it saw as radical culturalist analysis, particularly that associated with Hall and others at the CCCS (Golding & Murdock, 1979; Curran, 1990). This work, it was argued, had responded to the problems of reductionism by effectively

ignoring the economic level altogether. It had stressed the 'relative autonomy' of the ideological at the expense of paying any attention to the ways in which economic factors shape cultural production (Golding & Murdock, 1979; Garnham, 1977). Golding and Murdock argue that some Althusserian-inspired work suggests that the social relations of production of a text can be 'retrieved and explicated through a reading of the text' (1979 p.205). They point out

'It is one thing to argue that all cultural forms contain traces of the relations of production underlying their construction, and of the structural relations which surround them. It is quite another to go on to argue that an analysis of form can deliver an adequate and satisfactory account of these sets of relations and of the determinations they exert on the production process. they cannot.' (1979 p.206-7)

This seems to me an eminently reasonable argument; where I take issue is in the claim that such a position characterises Hall's work (see last section). Against the 'radical culturalists' (Curran, 1990), Golding & Murdock argued that 'the level of economic determination' is a 'necessary condition for adequate analysis :

'In our view, any sociological analysis of the ways in which the mass media operate as ideological agencies which fails to pay serious attention to the economic determinants framing production is bound to be partial' (1979, p.198).

Murdock and Golding (1977) take on board the notion of relative autonomy - theirs is not 'a thesis of bald economic determinism'. However, they argue that

'control over material resources and their changing distribution are ultimately the most powerful of the many levers operating in cultural production' (1977 p.20)

This must be the focus of analysis.

'The ways in which the mass media function as "ideological apparatuses" can only be adequately understood when they are systematically related to their position as large scale commercial enterprises in a capitalist economic system, and if these relations are examined historically' (Golding & Murdock, 1979 p.204-5)

The starting point for analysis has been an examination of the decisive trends towards concentration of ownership, and conglomeration, in the communications and other sectors. Writing in 1977, Murdock and Golding pointed out that the top five firms in the respective sectors accounted for 71% of daily newspaper circulation, 78% of the admissions to cinemas, 70% of paperback sales and 65% of record sales (p.25). Telling though these figures are, they do not say anything about another important feature of contemporary capitalism - namely the significance of the relations between sectors (1977, p.25). As Murdock and Golding point out, it is not simply that a few firms predominate in each sector; increasingly the largest firms command important positions in several sectors simultaneously (1977, p.25). This, they argue, is part of a far more general trend towards a small number of conglomerates acquiring a greater and greater proportion of the overall means of production. Central to this is the tendency towards diversification - that is, the process by which a company with interests in one sector acquires new interests in a different sector.

Examples of this are the Thompson organisation, Granada and the Radio Corporation of America. The RCA empire includes a major TV network, a large share of the record industry, the enormous Random House publishing group, a number of domestic electronics interests, plus stakes in consumer goods and services ranging from convenience foods to car rentals (Murdock & Golding, 1977 p.27). One of USA's largest conglomerates is ITT (notorious for its political involvements in the US and Chile - which is not to suggest

that other transnational corporations are politically innocent!). ITT began life as a specialised telecommunications company, but by 1965 had diversified into more than fifty industrial sectors. By the early 1970s ITT was involved in a huge variety of fields including

'the nation's largest bakery, Continental, the largest hotel chain, Sheraton, the second largest car rental service, Avis, the leading housing and building developer..etc' (Dicken & Lloyd 1981 p.60)

A testimony to the US Senate's Anti-trust and Monopoly Subcommittee in 1969 noted the sheer range and scale of ITT's penetration of people's lives:

'The average citizen can buy his home from ITT, live in one of its "planned communities", have the house insured by another of ITT's divisions, take a trip in one of ITT's rental cars, stay at one of ITT's hotels or motels, purchase his bread and other products from another of its divisions, buy his cigarettes and coffee from one of its vending machines, obtain a loan from one of its finance companies, and, had it not been for the Anti-trust objections, watch TV on an ITT owned network' (quoted in Dicken & Lloyd 1981 p.60)

Murdock (1990) has identified three basic kinds of conglomerates which operate in the field of culture and communications - industrial conglomerates, service conglomerates and communications conglomerates. Industrial conglomerates are companies which own media interests but whose major operations lie in the industrial sector. Service conglomerates are similar except that their main sphere of operations is centred on service sectors such as real estate, financial services and retailing. In contrast communication conglomerates interests lie wholly or mostly in media and information industries - eg News International, the Maxwell Communications Group and the German conglomerate Bertelsmann. Murdock (1990) notes a recent trend among communications conglomerates to shed

their interests in other sectors in order to concentrate upon expanding their core areas of operation. Expansion takes several forms: on the one hand there is a growing integration between hardware and software, prompted by a desire to ensure a supply of programming to service the new distribution technologies (Murdock, 1990 p.5) Sony's takeover of CBS and Polygram can be understood as an example of this sort of vertical (dis) integration. On the other hand there is increasing interpenetration between new and existing information and communication markets, with, for example, the move by newspaper and journal publishers into the provision of on-line data services.

Overall, it is argued, two processes have been particularly important in restructuring the 'corporate playing field': technological innovation and privatisation (Murdock, 1990 p.2). One of the consistent strengths of the political economy position, even when considering technological innovation, is its refusal of technological determinism. Instead researchers have been concerned with the social and economic relations through which technologies have developed and into which they are inserted. Crucial in this respect, Murdock (1990) argues, is the growing spectre of privatization. This is best understood as comprising several distinct components including denationalization (the move from public to private ownership), the introduction of 'liberalisation' policies designed to introduce competition into markets, and the re-regulation of communications industries, shifting their rationale away from a defence of the public interest and towards the promotion of corporate interests.

This trend means that one of the questions asked by workers in the political economy tradition - namely, how far can a communications system dominated by private ownership guarantee 'the diversity of information and argument

required for effective citizenship' (Murdock, 1990 p.4) is today more relevant than ever. We are moving into an era

'where the combination of technological change and privatization policies are creating massive communications conglomerates with an unrivalled capacity to shape the symbolic environment which we all inhabit' (Murdock, 1990 p.2)

What is at issue is the precise nature and form of the determinations exerted by this type of ownership.

One frequently raised objection to the political economy thesis is that it cannot explain the range and form of cultural products of state-operated media - exemplified in Britain by the BBC. Certainly, some commentators run into difficulties when trying to explain the operation of 'public service broadcasting': Garnham (1986) for example, does not convincingly extend his argument that buying a newspaper is simultaneously an economic, political and ideological event to the 'consumption' of a BBC programme. Murdock & Golding (1977), however, have put forward a number of principled arguments concerning the place of organisations like the BBC in a market dominated by commercial provision. The BBC, they argue, is subject to a number of economic imperatives not completely dissimilar from those which operate in the private sector. They are forced to run according to dicta of cost effectiveness, quasi profit-maximising in order to avoid accumulating a deficit. Audience size as such represents a strategic piece of evidence, leading to ratings battles with the IBA controlled sector. Murdock (1990) has pointed out that in recent years the public sector has become increasingly commercialised, with, for example, the BBC's agreement with British Medical TV and the requirement that 25% of programmes should be produced by 'independents'. Murdock and Golding (1977) also present a defence of their position

in relation to non-profit making sectors (eg newspaper publishing).

A more pertinent criticism relates to the question of the nature, extent and mechanisms through which economic dynamics of media production are deemed to affect cultural products. Golding and Murdock (1979) argue that these economic dynamics operate at a variety of levels and with varying degrees of intensity. At the most general level the distribution of economic resources plays a decisive role in determining the range of available media. It is the prohibitive costs of market entry and the patterns and distribution of advertising revenue, for example, which account for the lack of a mass circulation radical daily newspaper in Britain. Similarly, economic imperatives also contribute to the form of available media. The lack of fit between the media systems of many 'Third World' countries is largely due to the economic domination of a few transnational corporations. At this general level economic trends within communications industries are understood as having at least two consequences - the range of material available will tend to decline as market forces exclude all but the most commercially successful (Murdock & Golding, 1977; Curran, 1981); and this process will systematically exclude those voices lacking economic power - those which survive are those least likely to criticise the existing inequalitarian social order (Murdock & Golding, 1977).

At a more specific level researchers in the political economy tradition point to a number of examples of direct intervention by owners over the output of newspapers, magazines and broadcasting networks. As Murdock concedes

'Attention has mostly been focused on proprietors efforts to use the media outlets under their control as megaphones for their social and political ambitions' (1990 p.7)

There is no shortage of examples of 'instrumental' abuses of power. More significant than these, however, is the impetus to maximise 'synergy' between the companies' various operations (Murdock, 1990 p.8). This refers to the process by which companies exploit success in one field of operations to launch products in other markets. As Murdock (1990) points out

'In a cultural system built around "synergy", more does not mean different; it means the same basic commodity appearing in different markets and in a variety of packages' (p.8)

Whilst not wanting to deny the significance of these insights, what is missing is any attempt to move beyond (and between) analyses of the general impact of patterns of ownership and analyses of direct interventions over content by owners. That economic organisation and dynamics exert a determining influence on the range and nature of available cultural/media products seems to me to be in no doubt: what is needed is an analysis of the way in which this process of determination works in concrete situations - and not just those situations in which the hand of the proprietor can be seen very clearly. This in turn raises a whole series of question about the mediation of economic determinations.

To be fair, these are questions with which workers in the political economy field have been concerned (Murdock & Golding, 1977; Golding & Murdock, 1979; Murdock, 1981) . However analyses remain underdeveloped, of ten relegated to the sections of papers concerned with what 'future research' should examine. For example

'How these various levels of determination, either singly or in combination, impinge on particular production situations is a matter for empirical investigation. However it is our contention that such investigation should form a

focus of future sociological work on the contemporary media'

Eleven years later it is still ' a key task for future research' (Murdock, 1990 p.15). The result is that there seems to be a growing gap between our increasingly detailed knowledge of the economic organisation and dynamics of the communications industries (what can almost be seen as a sociometrics of capital - taking in mergers, takeovers, joint shareholdings, interlocking directorships and even information about the educational backgrounds and shared club memberships of key actors), and analyses of media output - with few attempts to link them.

This problem, of course, cannot be laid at the door of the political economy approach - rather it is to do with the history of the development of media studies, its institutional location in British higher education and the exigencies of research funding. However, it does seem to me that this split between accounts of conglomerates with communications interests and examinations of media output is reflected within some of the work of political economy researchers. This is a point made recently by James Curran, himself identified with the tradition, who argued

'During the 1980s, even researchers in the political economy tradition began to back off' (1990,p.143)

He pointed out that Peter Golding had failed to link his analysis of the reporting of welfare issues (Golding & Middleton, 1982) to economic ownership and control of the press. Moreover, he admits

'I also backtracked in revised editions of a textbook' (p.143)

Ironically it seems that the one-sidedness which political economy researchers identified in the work of Hall and others is being reproduced (albeit in a slightly different way) in political economy work. This, as Hall (1988b) noted may tell us something about both the sheer difficulty of elucidating the nature of the links between ownership and control and media products, and about the intellectual climate in which we all work.

The mid to late 1980s saw a new focus in some political economy work centering on the new information and communications technologies. A welcome corrective to some of the CRICT research on the domestic use of these technologies (Silverstone et al, 1989; Morley & Silverstone, 1990) this work has focused on two questions - how are communications technologies being used to ease the current economic crisis ? and how will developments in new communication technologies impact on patterns of social inequality? Situating their analysis within a discussion of labour market restructuring, the withering of public provision of information and leisure services and the increasing privatization of leisure, Golding and Murdock (1986) point out that there are massive inequalities of access to cultural goods.

The basic argument is that the rise in household expenditure has been disproportionately enjoyed by high income groups within the population. Thus, for example, video ownership has been concentrated among high earners, as has access to home computers. Whilst this has been the pattern for almost all goods - eg fridges, washing machines, vacuum cleaners - Golding and Murdock argue that information and communication technologies are less likely to be characterised by a trickle-down effect (for a variety of reasons).

On one level, then, this research tells us something that is not very surprising: that patterns of ownership of new technologies reproduces existing inequalities. Where I take issue with the research is in its implication that level of income is the only determinant of whether someone will buy into a particular information and communications market place. In responding to the patently ridiculous claim by John Fiske that participation in the cultural economy is not determined by money, Golding (1990) seems to go to the opposite extreme in suggesting that it is simply money which affects the decision. This is the implication of a series of tables in Golding's argument which look not just at the absolute amount of money spent by different groups on cultural goods, but at the proportion of income - and shows - surprise, surprise - that the proportion of income spent by these groups is considerably greater. What is interesting - and precisely what Golding does not address - is the fact that low income groups do spend so much money in this way, despite having less of it to spend. A whole series of questions about the availability and take-up of credit for these goods are also not even raised.

Another related (but minor) quibble I have with this research is its exclusive focus on information and communications technologies which seem to support its 'income-determination' thesis. One obvious example of a technology which does not fit this pattern is satellite television - how is Golding to respond to the naive empiricist woman-in-the-street who knows she has seen more satellite discs on council estates than in affluent suburbs (and whose observation is backed up by the available figures). His failure to even mention such uncomfortable examples means that he is apt to lose 'natural sympathisers' like myself, who, whilst believing that income is a very significant part of the equation, also think that other social, cultural and ideological factors

are in play in the communications market place. Income, to coin a phrase, may be necessary but it is not sufficient.

Discussion

In limiting myself in this chapter to discussing four traditions of work in marxist theory I neglected to consider a number of other influences on media studies which some writers see as continuing the critical tradition. In particular I omitted consideration of deconstruction, discourse theory, psychoanalytic approaches and postmodernism. Whilst the status of these types of work is fiercely contested, several commentators see them as the 'inheritors' of a tradition of critical theory (Foster, 1985; Franklin et al, forthcoming; Strinati, forthcoming; see also Barrett, 1987). The notion of inheriting is inapposite since much of their 'project' (though postmodernists would of course reject the term project and deny that they are, in Callinicos' phrase, 'up to their necks in an epistemological enterprise') has been precisely that of undermining the epistemological bases of marxist and other 'foundationalist' theories.

The take-up of these ideas has been dramatic and their influence is profound. Post-structuralism in its various (very different) forms - deconstruction, Lacanian psychoanalytic theory, discourse theory - has challenged a whole series of modernist, post-Enlightenment assumptions, questioning the relationship between knowledge and power, criticising monolithic and 'totalising' notions of causality and determination, and dethroning assumptions of a linear, progressive history. Central to post-structuralist theory of all kinds has been a challenge to traditional notions of subjectivity. Discourse theory, deriving from the work of Foucault, has proposed an understanding of the subject as produced through discourses

of self-knowledge, constructed through categories like sexuality, madness and discipline. Deconstruction, in contrast, starts from a break with Saussurean linguistics which argued the notion that all meaning derives from a system of linguistic oppositions rather than from absolute reference. Another position still is found in post-structuralist elaborations of psychoanalytic theory which have prioritised the role of the unconscious in the formation of identity. What all these theories share is a belief in the fragmented, decentred nature of subjectivity, which has become one of the defining characteristics of post-structuralist theory.

Given the scope and significance of these challenges it is not difficult to understand how they are seen as the main site of contemporary critical theory. However, I believe there are a number of reasons for withstanding the celebratory urge to abandon ourselves to post-structuralism. A proper justification for my cautious stance merits at least a chapter in its own right - but I will limit myself here to three brief points. First there are a number of questions about what this position means for politics and for the possibility of emancipatory change. Not only does post-structuralism explicitly proscribe any commitment to a conception of history as moving forwards but it also deconstructs the very notion of the political actor. On what basis can decentred subjects take (collective) action? As Barrett (1987) has pointed out post-structuralists who do remain committed to struggling for an end to oppressive social relations are often forced back in terms of political activism onto the very humanist assumptions that are being rejected at a theoretical level. This is no doubt what leads Hall (1986) to describe himself as a theoretical anti-humanist but a political humanist (a split with which I can very much identify). Second (and relatedly) there is the whole question of where post-

structuralism and postmodernism are located politically/ideologically. This is a question I discuss in chapter five. Thirdly there is the worrying tendency for the very notion of ideology to be replaced by the term discourse. This move has been associated with Foucault and his 'radical' theory of power. The importance of maintaining a (critical) notion of ideology is something I defend in chapter three.

Perhaps a more serious omission in this chapter is any consideration ^{of} feminism as a distinct body of theory. There are three reasons for this. The first relates to the problems with seeing feminist theory as a distinct, coherent and homogeneous force. It is quite clear that feminism does not represent a unified body of work: there are enormous and fundamental differences between the positions of writers who could all be identified as feminist, which makes for huge problems in trying to assess the impact of 'feminism' on media studies.

The second point relates to this: feminism has worked through and engaged in critical dialogue with a number of different traditions - marxist theory, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, and even liberal pluralism. The problem arises when one tries to assess the 'effect' of feminism on these bodies of work. Feminism's impact is not something that can be measured in the traditional pre-test/post-test way. Its influence has been profound - transforming the epistemological and ontological bases of theory, the methodologies used in research, as well as the very nature and scope of the questions asked. An indication of the significance of feminism can be seen in the case of post-structuralist psychoanalytic theory: it is difficult to imagine what psychoanalytic theory would look like without feminism. Feminist theory represented in media studies by the journals m/f and Screen has been absolutely central to

the development of this tradition. Feminism has not just been concerned with 'adding women in' but has fundamentally changed the questions we ask at every stage of the research process, and has been largely responsible for the development of whole new areas of work on audiences' positionings and readings of films and other texts, and for the growing importance of studies of popular culture and entertainment (soaps, magazines, serials) as opposed to news and current affairs programmes. For examples of attempts to assess the impact of feminism on media studies see Women's Studies Group, 1978; Baehr, 1980; Hall et al, 1980; Franklin et al, forthcoming).

Feminism's impact on media studies has not been uniform and within the pluralist empirical tradition, there certainly have been attempts to treat the area of 'women and the media' as a discrete topic. Research has largely centred on 'images of women', and has been primarily quantitative and content analytic in nature (men outnumber women by two to one on prime time television, women are most often featured in the kitchen or bathroom in adverts, etc) (see Gill, 1988 for a discussion of this type of work). The third reason, then, for not discussing feminism in this chapter was a desire to avoid reproducing this 'women and...' style of approach.

I do just this, however, in the next chapter, in which I consider recent feminist research on radio. This forms part of a more general examination of research on contemporary popular radio. It is to this discussion that I turn next.

Footnotes

Other commentators would mark changes in Hall's position at different points (Curran, 1990). Sparks, for example, puts the beginning of the 'third phase' of Hall's work - which for him represents the break with marxism - in the late 1970s (with the publication of Policing the Crisis). For me, in contrast, perhaps the most decisive shift in Hall's position comes in the period (difficult to date) when he rejected the notion of determination in the last instance. Previously he had regarded the insistence on the importance of economic determination as 'the cardinal principle of marxism, without which it is theoretically indistinguishable from any other "sociology"' (Hall, 1977 p.23). By the mid- 1980s, however, Hall was refuting the notion of determination in the last instance, although he remained theoretically committed to some notion of determination and to the decisive nucleus of economic activity (1986, 1988a) The significance of this shift should be examined elsewhere - it is beyond the scope of this project.

CHAPTER 2

RADIO AS MEDIA TEXT

'I don't mind when people say we play wallpaper music. A lot of people spend a lot of time and money choosing the right wallpaper for their homes.'

(Programme Controller, Radio Trent)

Introduction: Radio - 'the cinderella of media studies'

Radio, as a medium, has been ignored by researchers in sociology, psychology and media studies alike. As Paddy Scannell (1988a) puts it, radio is 'the cinderella of media studies'. Since the 1940s and 1950s and the famous studies by Lazarsfeld and his co-workers (Lazarsfeld, 1940; Lazarsfeld & Stanton, 1944), radio has generally been seen to be in a period of cultural demise (Moss & Higgins, 1984). Media analyses have concentrated on the visual media (television and film), with the press running in a strong but definitely second place (Moss & Higgins, 1984). Radio, and popular radio in particular, has received hardly any critical attention.

It is possible to put forward many tentative hypotheses as to why this is the case : perhaps academic researchers shared the belief that radio, after its heyday in the 1950s, had become marginal to people's lives, had been displaced by television; perhaps the legacy of mass society and Frankfurt School criticisms was such that researchers felt that radio simply should be condemned, not studied; perhaps popular radio has been the victim of media studies' tendency, until relatively recently, to focus on news and

current affairs texts and to regard entertainments as somehow non-ideological; or perhaps, as Scannell has argued, radio is simply not as 'sexy' as television (Scannell, 1988a).

Whatever the reasons, it is clear that radio has attracted very little research relative to film, television, and the press. Of the radio research which does exist much of it foc^uses on the history of radio. Scannell, in particular, has written extensively about the history of radio broadcasting in Britain, examining in detail the development of public service broadcasting (Scannell & Cardiff, 1982); radio broadcasts during the war (Scannell, 1986a); radio and unemployment in the 1930s (Scannell, 1986b); the development of the BBC's music policy (Scannell, 1981) etc. Hall (1986), too, has examined radio during the war, though from rather a different perspective from that of Scannell, focusing on key moments in the development of the BBC's relationship with the state. A different style history has been researched by Lesley Johnson (1981), who, examining the development of broadcasting in Australia between 1922 and 1945, discusses not just the development of the medium but also the way it was promoted and marketed, some of the themes of its programming and the way in which it was integrated into people's daily lives. This approach bears some similarities with a small but important 'field' in media studies which is beginning to look at the context in which media are used (Morley, 1986). In radio research this emphasis is found in Sonia Livingston's work (Livingstone, 1988) and also in Shaun Moores' excellent study of people's memories of 'the box on the dresser' (Moores, 1988), and the way radio stitched itself into the fabric of everyday life. (The research on the history of radio will be discussed more fully in Chapter Four.)

A further focus for radio research has been community radio. There are far more community radio stations in the United States than in Britain so, not surprisingly, examinations of community radio come largely from the US (tending to focus on the financial organisation of stations - eg Gray, 1986). The little research there is on community radio in Britain tends to take the form of campaigning calls for its establishment (eg Partridge, 1982; see also Lewis, 1984; Lewis & Booth, 1989).

Popular radio has received some attention from researchers interested in popular music. Simon Frith, who has written extensively on the sociology of pop music, has examined the extent to which record companies produce records with radio play in mind (Frith, 1983); the history of the BBC's light entertainment policy (Frith, 1988a); and the role of radio DJs as the most significant gatekeepers for pop records (Frith, 1983).

Finally, Erving Goffman (1981) has looked at radio talk. In a somewhat lighthearted report, subtitled 'A Study of the Ways of our Errors', Goffman examines a seemingly exhaustive range of errors made by programme presenters, continuity announcers and advertisers on radio (verbal slips, things uttered by broadcasters when they thought they were off-air, etc), and their repairs. Whilst this is an interesting report and certainly makes amusing reading, radio talk cannot be understood purely in terms of errors. Goffman makes it clear that his interest in radio is simply as a means of highlighting features of 'ordinary' talk. Only this, he argues, can justify the examination of something 'as trivial as radio talk' (1981, p726).

Overall there seem to be just five studies which deal in any depth with contemporary popular radio (Crisell, 1986; Higgins & Moss, 1982; Moss & Higgins, 1984; Local Radio

Workshop, 1983 a & b; Montgomery, 1986; Scannell, 1988b & 1989). In this chapter I will critically review each of these five pieces of research. They will be discussed individually and in some detail as they raise significant theoretical and methodological issues and constitute important background for the research discussed in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

In the final section of this chapter I will examine work which looks specifically at women and radio, and through this discussion highlight some of the important themes of work on women and the media more generally.

RADIO RESEARCH: A CRITICAL REVIEW

Understanding Radio - Andrew Crisell

Understanding Radio does not represent a piece of research as such but rather is an introductory textbook, published as part of the *Studies in Communication* series edited by John Fiske. Crisell has two principal aims in the book. The first is to 'determine the distinctive characteristics of the radio medium' (1986, p.xi). The second purpose is 'to explore the significance of its characteristics for such of its users as the journalist, the teacher, the dramatist, and, not least, the listener.' (1986, p.xi)

One of the ways in which Crisell examines the distinctive characteristics of radio is by comparing radio with other media of communication such as television, film, literature, and examining what is unique about radio. Radio, he argues, is a 'secondary medium' - it is often listened to while people are engaged in other (primary) activities; it is 'flexible' - it can be moved from place to place to accompany the listener; it is an

'intimate mode of communication...not simply because its messages can be fully realised only inside the listener's head, but because they frequently reach him (sic) in circumstances of solitude and privacy and can accompany him (sic) in an unprecedented range of places and activities' (1986, p14)

But, above all, Crisell argues, radio's distinctiveness lies in its appeal to our imaginations, its 'suggestiveness'.

To explore this distinctiveness further, Crisell goes on to examine the signs, codes and conventions through which radio conveys its messages. He sketches the basis for a semiotic theory of radio, drawing on Peirce's distinction between the icon, the index and the symbol. He notes, for example, that whilst spoken words on radio are symbols, the voices which speak them are indexes of not just the speaker but also the radio station as a whole. He discusses the codes of radio, dwelling in particular on contrasts between scripted and spontaneous speech, and radio's convention of using speech which does not admit to being scripted.

Apart from a chapter on the history of radio, the rest of the book deals with specific types of radio broadcasts - news and current affairs programmes, commentaries, comedy and light entertainment, drama, phone-ins, and outside broadcasts - and with radio audiences.

There are a number of problems with the book. Here I will discuss five important criticisms.

The first relates to significant absences in the book. The most striking omission is any discussion of DJ style programmes. This is quite astonishing, given that they constitute by far the most prevalent type of programme on British radio. Coupled with this is an almost total neglect of commercial, community and pirate radio - that is an

almost exclusive focus on BBC radio. Indeed, Crisell's attention falls predominantly on BBC Radio Three and Four, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the choice of programmes for discussion owes more to his personal preferences than to a concern that the full range of radio's forms are represented. (The longest individual sections of the book are devoted to discussions of John Arlott's cricket commentary, and The Goon Show!)

Two further problems with the book can be understood in terms of Crisell's aim to determine the distinct characteristics of radio. This has led to a preoccupation in the book with highlighting, and then celebrating, what is unique about radio. Sometimes this leads Crisell to rather essentialist claims about those forms to which radio is 'inherently' suited. At other times it merely leads to lengthy formalist discussions about, for example, the advantages of radio plays over drama in the theatre, or of radio news bulletins over newspapers. Paddy Scannell, in his review of Crisell's book in Media Culture and Society, argues that part of Crisell's difficulty may lie in the 'conceptual straightjacket' that goes with the *Studies in Communication* series (Scannell, 1988a,).

A fourth problem and one of the results of the formal approach of the book is that it does not discuss in any depth radio's content. In particular there is no consideration of the ideological aspects of radio's output. This does not represent a mere omission, for in failing to directly engage with the issue of ideology the implication is that radio broadcasts are simply not ideological. There is no discussion of the complex relationships between broadcasting, state and capital, and discussion of the broadcaster's role and language assume that she or he is simply 'telling it as it is'. This can be

seen, for example, in the following extract from Crisell's discussion of commentaries:

'The commentator is the mere purveyor of actuality. He (sic)' is as self-effacing as possible, his primary duty is to events rather than the listener, he is interested only in what is happening 'out there'...The commentator has no rhetorical design upon the listener but is presenting the facts on a take-it-or-leave-it basis...' (p124)

As such the book fits firmly within a liberal/consensus perspective.

The final criticism is related to this. It concerns Crisell's individualistic focus. This is evident throughout the book in discussions of, for example, how much listeners learn about broadcasters' personalities, but it is in relation to the discussions about phone-ins and the audience that I want to highlight it. It was to the chapter on phone-ins that I turned most optimistically for a discussion of issues relating to popular radio, phone-ins being a mainstay of both commercial and BBC local radio. However, after an interesting but all too brief discussion of the extent to which phone-ins functions may be phatic or meta-linguistic - verifying the presence of an audience and creating the illusion of radio as a two-way medium - Crisell turned to Jakobson for a typology of forms of phone-in. The result is a list of the different types of individual who call in to radio stations - the 'expressive caller', the 'exhibitionist', etc. Questions about the functions of phone-ins, the choice of topics by the broadcaster, the ways in which listeners contributions are dealt with by presenters are all eschewed in favour of an analysis which makes the psychology of the individual caller the central focus of interest.

The chapter on listeners is similarly individualistic. It focuses first on 'uses-gratifications' approaches and discusses the extent to which people use radio in a 'utilitarian' way, switching channels and programmes to satisfy their needs at different times. Crisell then goes on to consider the 'effects' of radio, arguing that because radio is a secondary medium, often on in the background

'its content can infiltrate the listener just because her (sic) conscious faculties are primarily engaged elsewhere and her mental defences are therefore down' (p211)

Ironically the nature of this 'infiltration' is not discussed. Moreover, none of the important recent research on audiences is considered (see for example Morley, 1974; Brunsdon & Morley, 1978; Morley, 1980; Morley, 1986; Richardson & Corner, 1986; Bausinger, 1987; Gray, 1987; Livingstone, 1988; Silverstone et al, 1989; Morley & Silverstone, 1990;). The picture painted is of a collection of individuals listening in isolation, selecting their programmes, and changing channels at will, but occasionally, when their defences are down, being influenced by radio's content.

Local Radio and Private Profit

An approach which is rather more critical than Crisell's, and which engages with DJ style programmes, is to be found in Local Radio Workshop's (LRW) discussions of local radio in London. LRW is a group of broadcasters who work with community and special interest groups to make programmes for Capital Radio, LBC and BBC Radio London. Their research, published in two books (Nothing Local About It: London's Local Radio and Capital: Local Radio and Private Profit) largely consists of an analysis of a week's output from each of these three stations. The week's monitoring

took place in May 1981. I will briefly summarise their discussion of its results.

Music and DJ programmes

In general, LRW argued, Capital, LBC and Radio London listeners were being offered a steady diet of light music, pop quizzes, phone-ins and travel news. The stations played a narrow range of 'middle of the road' music which was structured around the commercial playlist. DJ's appeared to have little knowledge of the music they played and expressed no interest in it over and above the occasional 'that's great' (1983a p17). The programmes provided little of local interest, either in terms of the music played or the DJs talk. On Capital Radio, for example

'The DJ neither represented nor referred to the daily lives of the majority of Londoners. Instead he dwelt largely on entertainment and leisure activities, treating everyday activities as something to be got through as quickly as possible. The listener was urged to "think positively, just five days to the weekend"'. (1983a p49)

News

As far as news programmes were concerned, LRW argued that a 'fast food' approach dominated on all three stations. News bulletins suffered from an 'event orientation' at the expense of any account of processes which might help the listeners to better understand the world (This, of course replicates the findings of many studies of news on TV and in the press - see eg Cirino, 1971; Cohen & Young, 1973; Glasgow Media Group, 1976, 1980, 1982; Hartley, 1982). In short bulletins a sense of urgency and excitement prevailed, with the emphasis on what had 'just happened' or, if there had been no crisis, what was about to happen

(1983a p53). In longer bulletins personality and entertainment value were emphasised, with, for example, coverage of the Greater London Council elections recast as a story about Ken Livingstone's personal life (1983a p53). News broadcasts on all three stations tended to be overly reverential towards experts of all types, and those politicians who were interviewed were rarely asked probing questions (1983a p62). LRW claim that there was little in the news broadcasts which could be described as local news. LRW's main conclusion was that for commercial radio the primary concern for news editors was to produce a stream of news words that could be packaged in 30 second or three minute segments. They argue that advertisers know that serious sounding content lends credibility to their adverts, and note that advertisers often used news reports as a model for their adverts, especially to sell business products and services. Thus the 'sound of the news' was more important than any issues that might be raised (1983a p50). Interestingly, although BBC Radio London were not subject to the same commercial pressures as Capital and LBC, LRW argue that their news productions were very similar, and indeed that there were fewer distinctions between the BBC and ILR stations than is often assumed (cf Barnard, 1989).

Magazine programmes

A further category of programme identified by LRW was the magazine programme. The topics covered in these were

'mainly restricted to celebrities, and new books and shows, with some current affairs material usually taken from the news broadcasts' (1983a p78).

LRW commented

'So consistent (and repetitive) were some of the morning programmes that we almost got the

impression that we were listening to a 20 or 30 minute loop, with nothing but the feature and occasional word changed' (1983a p85)

'Experts' proliferated on these programmes. Out of the 12 hours of magazine programmes recorded by LRW only 2 minutes and 36 seconds was given to ordinary people. Indeed even on discussion of the 'everyday', celebrities were used to highlight ordinary issues:

'Clare Francis, a typical Capital listener who occasionally sailed the Atlantic. Glenda Jackson, someone "with experience of unemployment". Melvyn Bragg, so used to the chores of looking after children' etc (1983a p91)

Features on these programmes seemed unrelated, similar only to the extent that they were likely to be covert promotions of some sort. LRW argued that presenters often took advantage of their position to embellish features, rather than simply link them - redefining and offering comment on items.

Phone-ins

This covert role was also adopted by presenters on phone-ins. Topics were chosen by radio stations, the callers were selected by the radio station and allowed only a few sentences. On average each caller was allowed 45 seconds. LRW comment:

'On current figures it would take a quarter of a century for 1-2 per cent of Londoners to speak for 2 minutes on Capital' (1983b p29).

DJs were deemed by LRW to be uninterested in and unsympathetic to listeners comments. They made little attempt to relate callers' comments and often fell back on anecdote and uninformed opinion. LRW cite an example of a presenter on a BBC Radio London phone-in about events in

Northern Ireland who did not even know that Bobby Sands was Catholic.

On health and advice phone-ins the range of topics was limited and tended to reinforce traditional ideas about 'housewives' interests: children and health figured prominently as topics (1983b p83). Such phone-ins or helplines provided a cheap and safe way of dealing with social issues that did not offend the advertisers. LRW conclude about Capital:

'By careful selection of topics and/or the constricted way in which they are treated, the station prevents any informed discussion taking place on-air and avoids interrupting the smooth and profitable flow of pop music, adverts and DJ chatter' (1983b p83).

In addition to the monitoring report, LRW have examined a number of other issues, particularly in relation to Capital Radio. They discuss the history of commercial radio in Britain and highlight the pressures for its development from business interests, advertising and Conservative politicians.

LRW discuss the way in which advertising is deemed to be a 'service' to radio station's and their listeners. TDK, a company which manufactures cassettes, were awarded a 'gold cassette' by Capital for having spent £1 million on advertising (1983b p57). LRW also note the fact that adverts frequently blur into other programme content, despite an IBA directive that 'advertisements must be clearly distinguished as such, and recognisably separate from the programmes' (IBA Code of advertising standards and practices, quoted in LRW 1983b p58). Capital justify this (and the IBA condone it) in the interests of maintaining the 'natural flow' of broadcasting (1983b p58). LRW point

out also that IBA and ILR staff are becoming increasingly interchangeable.

Two further chapters in the book concerned with Capital examine its off-air services - that is, its 'social action' work and its very occasional but prestigious arts sponsorships - which are shown to have more to do with promoting Capital's image than with serving the community - and with its self-promotional materials.

Finally LRW put forward a number of proposals for improving London's local radio. These include : greater public accountability and more access programmes, higher staffing levels, better training for DJs and presenters, abandonment of the commercial playlist, a more local focus to both music and talk, more adequate reflection of the lives of Londoners, and the exercise of positive discrimination in favour of women and ethnic minorities in the appointment of staff to the stations. As well as these proposals LRW note that

'In the long term, if local radio is to develop as a genuine means of local communication then it has to be run primarily as a public service and not as a private concern: this means taking ILR into public ownership.' (1983b p108)

LRW's work constitutes an ambitious and extensive study of London's local radio, which looks not just at programming but at a range of aspects of the radio stations' activities. It is a valuable piece of work which has raised many important issues in relation to pop radio. Essentially, though, it is a content analytic study. The concern is with identifying different programme types, counting the number of minutes given to ordinary people to speak on air, computing the length of time given to local issues, examining the number of different topics discussed on phone-ins, etc. As such it is subject to many of the

limitations of content analytic research which have been widely discussed elsewhere (eg. Janus, 1977; Gledhill, 1978; Mattelart, 1982; Gill, 1988). It tells us whether particular topics were mentioned or not, whether certain groups were 'represented' or not, but it does not tell us anything about those representations. Of particular interest for this thesis is the fact that LRW does not examine DJ's talk. 'Transcripts' of the programmes take the form of lists:

'News; weather; record; chat; record chat; ad; ad; record; chat', etc (1983a p87).

The 'chat', sometimes referred to as 'prattle', is hardly considered - except in terms of the number of minutes on a particular issue. But in order to understand popular radio we need to know more than the length of time the presenter talked about a particular topic; we need to know how she or he talked about it. At several points in the books LRW referred to presenters redefining or reinterpreting what people said in interviews or phone-ins. However, LRW just assert this; there is no discussion of how presenters did this, of the discursive and rhetorical strategies employed. Yet it is precisely these kinds of struggle over meaning which are of interest: how, and to what end, do presenters control on-air talk ?

Like many content ^alytic studies, LRW's work has a distinctly liberal character. Its main preoccupation is with the radio stations' claim to be providing a local service. LRW are concerned with the issue of whether the lives of Londoners are being reflected accurately:

'Isn't there something unrealistic about an organisation which...never once in the material we looked at recognised the existence of whole groups of people in London. Trade unionists, for example, or lesbians or gay men, or single parents' (1983b p102).

Questions are limited to those about bias, distortion and omission. The issue for LRW seems to be whether the representation of Londoners lives is realistic. There is no sense that the broadcasters are involved in constructing representations of the 'real world', not simply reflecting it - with or without omissions. Indeed, an alternative reading of LRW's findings may note that LRW are implicitly working with a construction of the world which centres around work, whilst that of the radio stations' seems to emphasise leisure and entertainment as the site of 'real life'.

Finally, it is worth briefly highlighting what appears to be a tension in LRW's prescriptions for better local radio. On one hand they argue for remedial steps - for example better training, more staff, etc.- yet they also assert that it is the radio stations' drive for profit that leads to poor radio, that radio stations run for profit will never produce good radio and that radio stations should be publicly owned. In one sense this twin argument can be mapped onto a short-term/long-term distinction, where in the short term what is needed is better training, etc, but in the long term publicly owned radio stations. However, more significantly it draws attention to a key theoretical problem in their work. For if the 'cause' of bad programming is the radio station's need to make a profit then how are the equally poor standards of BBC Radio London to be explained ? The problem derives from LRW's tendency to locate the explanation for low quality programmes in the individual profit motives of radio stations, rather than situating it within the wider complex of social and economic relations of which radio stations (both 'public' and private) are a part. Whilst the profit motive of owners of individual radio stations obviously plays a significant part in the explanation for low-budget programming, it is not sufficient to explain low quality

programming generally. To explain this it would be necessary to look at a whole range of factors, including the relationship between radio stations and record companies, the relation of 'publicly' owned radio to commercial stations and the relationship between broadcasting and the state.

Paddy Scannell - Public Service Broadcasting in Contemporary Britain

Paddy Scannell is well-known for his work on the history of radio broadcasting in Britain. In several recent articles, however, he has discussed contemporary (mostly public service) broadcasting (Scannell, 1988b; 1989). Scannell argues against the view that the media can be seen as an 'ideological apparatus' (1989 p156). He criticises what he calls 'the ideological effect thesis', reserving particular criticism for 'Stuart Hall and his graduate students at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies' who 'misunderstand the media in terms of its ideological effect' (1989 p156). Scannell caricatures this work, arguing that

'(it) is a one-dimensional critique that , in effect, only needs doing once from a predetermined political template. It collapses any differences or contradictions in the work of broadcasting. As such, broadcasting has no history, no development' (1989 p157).

These criticisms have little foundation. Research workers at the CCCS have produced several important pieces of research which historically examine popular forms, and Stuart Hall has been careful to stress on many occasions that an ideological reading is not equivalent to an analysis of the total social formation : for example 'We should not mistake an ideological reading for an anlysis of the conjuncture as a whole' (Hall, 1988, p41).

Scannell goes on to attack CCCS for the privileging of the 'media academic's' reading over that of the broadcaster, and argues;

'To regard the media as ideological is to regard them as anti-rational or irrational' (1989 p158)

This seems an extraordinary claim and does not fit with what I understand to be Hall's 'working definition' of ideology (eg Hall, 1980; 1982; 1986; 1988; or cf Gramsci, 1971). The issue of rationality - like that of logic - simply is not germane in discussions of ideology from this perspective. For example, Hall has argued that much of monetarist economics is not internally consistent as a theoretical system, so that theoretical economists can dismantle it in a moment, but that does not make it go away (Hall, 1988b p59).

For Scannell the significance of the media lies not in their ideological role, but in the role they play in ordering and maintaining routines in everyday life:

'I regard the features I have described as characteristic of all national systems of broadcasting in fully developed modern industrial societies. It does not matter whether they are organised along public service or commercial lines. Such systems are fundamentally oriented - irrespective of nature or intention - towards the maintenance of the routine features of day to day life for whole populations. Broadcasting, whose medium is time, is profoundly implicated in the temporal arrangements of modern societies.' (1988b p27-8).

Discussing the historical development of this role, Scannell argues that it was a response to the development of modernity, to the 'chronic anxieties' produced by the transition to the modern world, in which the home was no longer a bulwark and defence against the strange and threatening public world of work and city life.

'The fundamental work of national broadcasting systems goes beyond any ideological or representational role. Their primary task is the mediation of modernity' (1988b p28)

Broadcasting, he argues, is

' a public sphere which works to enhance the reasonable, democratic character of life in public and private contexts' (1988b p.158)

Whilst this temporal, routinising role may not be ideological in the strict sense, it clearly played (and plays) an important part in the maintenance and legitimation of capitalist relations (Thompson, 1963; Johnson, 1981), something that may be obscured by the notion of modernity.

Broadcasting, Scannell argues, restored, in the face of modernity, the possibility of a knowable world:

'Radio first and later television unobtrusively restored (or perhaps created for the first time) the possibility of a knowable world, a world in common for whole populations...Broadcasting brought together for a radically new kind of general public the elements of a culture in common (national and transnational) for all. In so doing it redeemed, and continues to redeem, the intelligibility of the world and the communicability of experience in the widest social sense' (1988b p29)

Events which were previously only available to a few became, with the advent of broadcasting, available to all. The notion of 'cultural capital' so clearly described by Bourdieu (eg Bourdieu, 1984), has no relevance for broadcasting. For broadcasting is :

'a common resource and a common knowledge that excludes none ...(and is) equally talkable about in principle and in practice by everyone' (1989, p156)

In this sense, Scannell argues, broadcasting can be said to have 'resocialised private life' (1989, p155).

There are a number of points I want to raise about these claims. Firstly, contrary to Scannell's argument, we do not all share the same broadcast universe. We do not all watch and listen to the same programmes - there are class, gender and age (and other) differences in what we attend to, as a glance at almost any audience research will demonstrate. Cultural capital in contemporary society is not simply a matter of particular groups not being able to afford certain experiences - a ticket for a seat at a football match in Nottingham costs more than a ticket to the theatre - it is precisely cultural and not in any simple sense economic factors which Scannell needs to attend to if he wants to understand why the audience for an opera broadcast on Radio Three will include few people from social classes 'D' and 'E', whilst the audience for The Simon Bates Show is made up predominantly of people from these groups.

Secondly, Scannell's assertion that broadcasting is 'equally talkable about in principle and in practice by everyone' seems to me a questionable one. Scannell cites Morley (1986) to support the idea that people talk in relaxed, sociable, shareable ways about programmes to which they watch and listen. But his reading of Morley (1986) seems to be a very partial one. For Morley notes that most television viewing is done in the home where choices about what to watch, the relative weight accorded to different types of programmes and to talk about them is allocated along existing domestic lines of power, the most important of which is gender. Men control the channel selector, make most of the decisions about what to watch and their choice of programmes is valued more highly than those of women (Morley, 1986; Gray, 1987). As in most situations, then, women's talk is not valued as much as men's (Spender,

1985). Similarly, Dorothy Hobson found in her study of female viewers of Crossroads (Hobson, 1978; 1980; 1982) that women felt guilty about and often apologised for their interest in soaps whereas men's choice of viewing was positively valued, by both men and women.

Thirdly Scannell's claim that broadcasting resocialises private life. This is based on two ideas. One concerns the notion that broadcasting is talkable about by all (which I have just discussed), and gives people a shared universe about which to converse. The other concerns the way in which broadcasting has adjusted itself to daily private life offering comment on daily routines such as getting up and having breakfast. The issue I want to raise here is to what extent this counts as resocialisation of private life. Dorothy Hobson described DJ's constant reference to the domestic routines of women in the home as reinforcing their 'collective isolation' (1980, p108). This seems to me to capture the significance of broadcasting's adjustment to our activities far more than the claim that it represents a resocialisation of the private. Above all, what seems extraordinary is that Scannell makes such a grand claim on such flimsy 'evidence'; that he does so without examining the output of broadcasting. As I will argue later in this thesis, my examination of popular radio's output demonstrates that far from resocialising private life, presenter's talk privatises and personalises social life.

It is worth pointing out that Scannell's two substantive criticisms of Stuart Hall can as easily be applied to his own work. He criticises Hall for not paying sufficient attention to the content of television's output, for 'the tendency to "read off" the "unity" of current affairs television from a single study of a single programme' (Scannell, 1989 p 157), yet Scannell himself has not systematically examined broadcasts in order to make his

claim that broadcasting resocialises private life.

Scannell's other criticism of Hall is that he grants no autonomy or knowledge to broadcasters and plays down their intentions:

'They may have ideas about what they are doing, but these (from the point of view of theory) are irrelevant, for "ideology is a function of the discourse and of the logic of social processes, rather than an intention of the agent" (Hall, 1982 p88)' (Scannell, 1989 p157)

Yet in precisely the same way Scannell claims modern broadcasting systems are

'fundamentally oriented - irrespective of nature or intention - towards maintenance of recognisably routine features of day to day life for whole populations' (1988b, p28)

Scannell also argues that broadcasting represents the whole of society in its programmes.

'Broadcasting, because its service was addressed to the whole of society, gradually came to represent the whole of society in its programmes' (1989 p142)

The logic of this assertion seems to me to be flawed. There is no reason why a broadcasting service addressed to a whole society should necessarily represent that entire society. And indeed, much research indicates that many groups are not represented by British broadcasting; as we saw in the last section, LRW claim that lesbians, gay men, single parents and trade unionists are not represented by London's local radio. To that list other researchers would add women (Stott & King, 1977; Davies et al, 1987), old people (Older Feminist Network, 1987), black people (Cohen, 1981; Manuel, 1987), differently abled people (Mason, 1987; Hancock & Hearn, 1987).

Scannell continues:

'It is important to acknowledge the ways in which radio and television have given voices to the voiceless and faces to the faceless, creating new communicative entitlements for excluded social groups' (1989 p142)

As an example of broadcasting giving voice to the voiceless he cites documentaries which, he claims, privilege ordinary people's voices over those of experts (1989 p142). Again, this seems quite an assertion - one which is not substantiated by any evidence which Scannell mentions. It may be that only some 'ordinary' voices, ^{are allowed} or that voices are only 'privileged' when they say certain things. It may be, for example, that ordinary people's testimonies are accorded status within documentaries only as long as they remain emotional and confined to talking about their own situation, and not when they put forward explanations for their position, for this is the province of narrators and experts.

Despite a reference to Garnham (1972), Scannell argues naively:

'All the techniques of documentary are designed to foreground the testimony of speakers, to let them speak spontaneously and naturally, and to minimise the interventions and presence of the institutions of broadcasting' (1989 p142).

He appears not to have taken on board the fact that documentaries' surface naturalism is the result of particular filming and editing techniques, which are designed to make them seem to be transparent testimonies (Garnham, 1972; Connell, 1980).

Finally I want to take issue with Scannell's claim that what is broadcast represents an exhaustive range of interests :

'The totality of output of mixed programmes in nationally networked channels adds up to a complete world. The repertoire appears exhaustive, and what lies outside its catchment - what is not broadcast - is not part of the 'normal' range of needs and interests of the audience as expressed in the sum of its contents' (1989 p143).

Scannell achieves this claim by a series of contrasts with the past, when many topics were not deemed fit for discussion on radio. In the late 1940s previously excluded issues, such as birth control, were taken up in dramatised forms of social documentation. But studies have shown that 'while introducing new and delicate issues...(broadcasters) contrived to resolve and close off their disturbing and troublesome implications' (Booth,1980). It was not until the late 1950s, argues Scannell, under the impact of competition and a changing social and political climate, that broadcasting's universe began to open up and blossom (1989 p145). A more populist and democratic stance was adopted in news and current affairs programmes and in the field of entertainments

'taboo subjects could now be joked about, and previously stigmatised situations and relationships routinely serve as the basis for situation comedies' (1989 p146-7).

The construction of this argument, with its contrasts with the 'bad old days' of taboo and exclusion, serves to emphasise Scannell's claim that now (the golden age) anything can be and is talked about on air.

I want to challenge this claim. Not only do certain sets of views seem to be systematically absent from broadcasts, but also the way in which formerly taboo subjects are dealt with deserves attention. Michael Mulkay (1988) has argued that the way in which taboo subjects are treated in jokes and other kinds of humour does not necessarily suggest an

openness about their discussion - indeed it often indicates the opposite. Moreover, many situation comedies which appear to be radical and subversive, poking fun at 'our most sacred institutions', in fact often serve to reinforce the legitimacy of those institutions.

As I will be arguing later in this thesis, although Radio One's feature Our Tune deals with subjects which would not have been discussed thirty years ago on popular radio - rape, abortion, AIDS, drug addiction - the manner with which they are dealt serves to make them individual's responsibility, and their social aspects are ignored. I would argue that Booth's conclusion about the closing off of disturbing social implications of the topics of radio documentaries in the 1940s is equally applicable to many present day 'features' on popular radio. What are needed are detailed studies of how broadcasts deal with social and political issues and which interests this serves to legitimate/marginalise, not bland assertions that everything can be talked about now and everybody's interests are served by radio and television.

Sounds Real / Radio Voices - Australian Talk-Back Radio

Two writers concerned with just this kind of detailed examination of broadcast language are Christine Higgins and Peter Moss. Higgins and Moss (1982) and Moss and Higgins (1984) argue that media and cultural studies have ignored language to their detriment, because of their focus on visual media (1984, p353). Higgins and Moss are concerned with talk-back radio in Australia. Talk-back radio consists of phone-ins broken up by commercials and occasional records and interviews. The nearest equivalent in Britain would be nighttime programmes on ILR stations, when listeners are invited to call in and talk to the host about any topic.

Higgins and Moss are critical of perspectives in cultural studies which both limit their concern with the media to ideology/hegemony, and who treat ideology as if it were monolithic. They argue that

'Cultural meanings, as filtered through commercial radio, are more porous than some critics believe and the nature of formal interaction and the idiosyncratic purposes of individual members of the audience require a more flexible interpretation of the "ideological instance", one which allows for private "classifications" of social and cultural experience, and also for the possibility that "encoders" of dominant messages (talk back radio hosts for example) may be forced, by the very nature of the discourse type, both to acknowledge the existence of, and to accept complicity in, other kinds of meaning-making.' (1982 p3)

They advocate a discourse analytic approach which would see radio output as a particular kind of text. The nature of the discourse analysis is not made clear by Higgins and Moss, but they say it

'rests on the twin foundations of linguistics and sociology but also incorporates elements of semiotics.' (1984, p353).

For Moss and Higgins

'the task for radio researchers is to chart the kinds and levels of radio's discourses...to describe a number of functions and types of radio talk' (1984 p358)

Moss and Higgins identify five 'discourse properties' which they set out as follows

TEXT-MAKING INTENTION which might be suggested by
RHETORICAL LEVELS aided by
INTERACTANTS COMPLICITY OR NON-COMPLICITY in text
making which could be underpinned by
THE PERSONA of the host, which is sustained by
THE AUDIENCE'S perception and acceptance of that
persona.
(1984 p358)

In Sounds Real, Higgins and Moss, drawing on Williams (1974), analyse the flow of programming on talk-back radio. They argue that despite the appearance of haphazardness, there is a flow of adverts, snippets, pop songs, phone-ins. There is, in particular, a reciprocal flow of suggestion between commercials and pop songs; both, they argue, create a fantasy world for the listener, but the adverts also explain how people can make their fantasies reality by buying the product (1982, p50).

A sense of haste permeates the flow of talk-back radio. The messages are urgent: 'hurry', 'rush out and buy', etc. The news bulletins stand in stark contrast to the flow of commercials and pop songs - they present the world as a confused, violent and meaningless place. To the passive, powerless role offered listeners by the news, the commercials have the solution - buy more.

'Even though the adverts may appear to compete, they are in fact complementary. They all say the same thing - buy and you will be happy, secure, popular and powerful.' (1982, p47)

In this way, Higgins and Moss argue, consumption is being offered as a substitute for democracy.

'It compensates for all that is patently undemocratic in our society. Because we can choose which toothpaste to use or which pizza to buy, we live under the illusion that we are free' (1982, p51).

Into this world of pop songs, commercials and news bulletins come listeners phone-calls which speak of loneliness, frustration, insecurity and powerlessness. But, Higgins and Moss argue, the force of these personal statements

'is dissipated by the sheer weight and impact of commercials in the programme...Adverts always stand in juxtaposition to the cries for help and expressions of frustration with the present and offer their illusory but powerful promise for the future' (1982 p.47).

It is to the analysis of listeners phone-calls that Higgins and Moss devote most of their attention. Their principal aim is to show that the host does not straightforwardly control what goes on air and manipulate meanings in talk-back radio, but that there are important 'sub-dramas', and alternative messages are aired.

A central problem with Higgins and Moss's work, however, is that this argument is very fragile and often seems in danger of collapsing completely. There are significant contradictions both within and between the two reports of their work discussed here. In Sounds Real Higgins and Moss give the impression that anything even approaching an 'alternative meaning' would be lost, dissipated by the weight and force of the commercials on the programme. They argue

'Radio has not helped to democratise culture and even in talk-back programmes the ability of people to make their own culture is inhibited.'
(1982,p32)

In Radio Voices Moss and Higgins are far more optimistic, arguing that 'counter hegemonic' and 'subversive' meanings do get broadcast and that radio has become a democratic tool, offering audiences the opportunity to both share and contribute to culture (1984,p356).

But it is not simply that Higgins and Moss have 'changed their minds' in the two years separating the two reports, for there are elements of both arguments in both pieces of work. They are struggling with an issue which is a perennial problem for marxist researchers in media studies: how to acknowledge the power of the media to broadcast dominant meanings without theorising them as the 'voice of the ruling class', and how to attend to the 'cracks', to the possibility of other meanings, without lapsing into a pluralism in which no meanings are seen as preferred over any others.

One of the problems for Higgins and Moss is that they appear to be working with a very restricted notion of what it means to effectively broadcast an alternative or counter-hegemonic set of meanings. Their only criterion seems to be that an 'alternative' point of view is spoken on air. They pay little attention to the way in which an alternative perspective is presented or framed by a talk show host. In one case which Higgins and Moss cite as an example of a counter-hegemonic message being successfully broadcast, the host ends the telephone interaction (with a woman who had been complaining about a new government bill) with the remark 'I presume that was your punchline'. This represents the last in a series of remarks during the conversation in which the host has signalled the illegitimacy of the callers point of view, here linking it with comedy routines. Moss and Higgins acknowledge the hosts action but argue that despite this

'the medium has not been able to prevent an alternative set of messages being broadcast' (1984,p364)

This raises important questions about what counts as a successful broadcast of 'alternative' meaning. Is it enough that the alternative message is simply spoken, or is the

context/framing of the perspective as important as whether the actual words are broadcast ? Higgins and Moss do not address this issue at all. For them the fact that a different set of meanings are broadcast is sufficient. In this sense their perspective is similar to a traditional content analytic one, in which the mere presence or absence of words or phrases is registered. The criticisms of content analysis discussed earlier therefore apply here. I am reminded of Ray Lowry's cartoon about TV discussion programmes - 'Wild eyed trot'- where the presenter is shown introducing the guests as follows

'And now to ensure a balanced discussion of the latest government measures...a Conservative backbench MP and a wild eyed trot from the lunatic fringe'.

The 'wild eyed trot' may put his or her views, but in a context in which they have already been signalled as illegitimate.

A further related problem concerns what constitutes an 'alternative' meaning. Higgins and Moss seems to use the words 'alternative', 'subversive' and 'counter-hegemonic' interchangeably, but they don't discuss the nature of such a perspective. In practice many of the views which they describe as 'subversive' or 'counter-hegemonic' seem merely to be objections to particular individual pieces of legislation, rather than significant challenges to the dominant values of Australian society. They hardly seem to warrant the description 'subversive' or 'counter-hegemonic'.

Above all, Higgins and Moss's problems derive from their inadequate and eclectic theoretical approach. Theirs is an extremely diffuse marxism, drawing on the Frankfurt School, culturalist writers and marxist/anarchist situationists,

for example Guy Debord. Using ideas from Adorno and Horkheimer, and from Hoggart, Higgins and Moss present an image of a golden, harmonious past age in which relationships were authentic (characterised by face to face communication) and where people created and managed their own culture (1982,p70). In contemporary society, by contrast, people are manipulated, alienated and have suffered from a flattening of consciousness. To explain this dramatic change in social relations Higgins and Moss invoke familiar Frankfurt School concepts - mass entertainments (in particular television), the growth of urban areas, technology, and the encroachment of the state into individual life.

In this world, radio is seen as

'the medium which can fill the gaping hole television has made in cultural life' (1982,p354).

It is seen, then, as somehow more authentic than television. This is because it is a speech medium. it allows people - or has the potential to allow people - to speak to each other directly.

'The conditions necessary for culture to grow and strengthen can be seen in this medium as tension between the genuine voices of the audience and a packaged consumer-oriented 'technology' culture...At the present time the task is for people to force their voices upon the media...' (1982,p70)

The idealisation of past social relations, characteristic of some culturalist writing, was discussed in Chapter One. A related problem is the tendency to see speech as more genuine, closer to the true self, than writing which seems more obviously mediated and distanced (Parker,1989). This opposition clearly rests on extremely tenuous and

problematic assumptions and has been the subject of work in 'deconstruction' (Derrida, 1978).

Throughout their work, Higgins and Moss draw stark contrasts between the genuine, authentic voices of 'the people' and the manipulative, inauthentic media which threaten to silence them altogether. The solution proposed by Higgins and Moss is for people to talk to each other:

'The encroachment of the state and its agencies² upon individual life is so widespread that any attempt for people regularly to explain and explore their world and to explain themselves to each other, through words, may be one of the few ways which members of our society have left for maintaining hold on a meaningful social reality.'
(1982, p226)

In the extract above several of the weaknesses of culturalist work discussed in the first chapter are manifest. Most important is the essentialist view of 'the people' and the implications of this for a conceptualisation of ideology. It is as if the people inherently know social reality, they have some sort of direct access to it, but that 'the state and its agencies' are so powerful at imposing their view of the world, that the people must keep reminding each other that the real world is different. The words used - for example 'the encroachment of' - suggest a steady creeping of lies which threatens to undermine the people's essential knowledge of reality. This is an extraordinary view of ideology. Ideology is claimed to be pumped out by the state and its agencies, whilst the people remain largely untainted with their pure and authentic view of social reality still intact. This can be seen even more clearly in Higgins and Moss's borrowing of Debord's concepts of pseudo-reality and spectacle, both of which they claim are imposed by the media.

Moreover ideology is severed from any material relations as is the struggle for change. Indeed, the 'problem' is as likely to be identified as 'the state' or 'technology' as capitalist relations.

The problem with their concept of ideology is part of a wider problem for Higgins and Moss in theorising the status of media communication. We have seen that one view expressed by Higgins and Moss is that there is an independent social reality to which 'the people' have access, whilst the media imposes a 'pseudo-reality'. At other points, however, Higgins and Moss argue that communication constructs reality:

'Communication is not communication about reality, it is an integral part of that nebulous concept reality itself. It is through language basically and also through non-verbal means of communication that we come to know the actuality of ourselves and our society' (1982 p.196)

Here the notion of social reality existing independently outside of language/communication vanishes. In other places still, the media, it is claimed, are not involved in constructing versions of reality, but rather serve to reflect reality:

'Radio seems to have developed into a reflection of shifting cultural and group interests' (1984,p356)

And so on. This kind of loose theoretical formulation makes it difficult to engage with the central arguments of the book, and must be seen as particularly problematic in texts which claim to place language centre stage.

Higgins and Moss suggest a novel approach to the study of media language, which is based on the notion of 'discourse properties'. However, an examination of some of their key

concepts suggests that there are significant problems with the approach. One of the central theoretical concepts is that of 'persona'. Higgins and Moss argue that the host has an on-air persona which is distinguishable from his or her real self. The persona is linked in their argument with performance and drama. Listeners are familiar with the host's persona, and 'make their texts' in full knowledge of it (1984, p374). Indeed, the host's persona is constructed and maintained by reason of its constant familiar nature and because audience members respond to it in familiar and predictable ways (1984,p368).

Problems with the concept of persona arise, however, when attempts are made to distinguish between real self and persona. Higgins and Moss specify no criteria for making such a distinction and therefore appear to fall back on a combination of extra-textual information and guesswork. In their analysis of a phone-in discussion about post-natal depression, for example, they argue that

'the host seems to step quite outside the persona, to provide well-rounded, self-contained presentation of self' (1984, p370)

Their sole reason for making this claim is a conviction that the host herself has suffered from post-natal depression.

Similarly, in a discussion about labour relations in Australia, the host is characterised as steering the discussion onto a topic 'dear to his own heart':

'From regular listening to this host's programmes, it is very clear that he is a small l liberal, a keen supporter of free enterprise, anti-strike and rather sceptical about 'experts' or professionals' (1984, p361).

It is not clear whether these are the views of his 'persona' or of his 'real self'. The distinction becomes a meaningless one on examination.

Another key concept from their list of five 'discourse properties' is that of 'text-making intention'. The difficulty with this is that it implies that the researcher can unproblematically 'discover' the callers' intentions. Yet clearly the analyst will only have access to the text which is spoken. When Higgins and Moss claim to know a speaker's intention they are merely making inferences from the text. The argument becomes psychologised and circular. This problem is avoided in some discourse analysis which does not take the speaker's intention to be an analytic resource (eg Potter & Wetherell, 1987), and also, of course, in structuralist and post-structuralist textual analyses.

Finally it is worth drawing attention to the surprisingly traditional view of the political and ideological domains which Higgins and Moss espouse. From their analysis of telephone conversations it would seem that their view of the political could be described as 'that which pertains to parliament'. So, for example, the 'Essential Services Bill' is seen as political (and significantly as something about which people can be 'justifiably angry'[1982,p41]), whilst the lack of provision and care for women suffering from post-natal depression is not. (It seems also that women's anger about this is not 'justifiable': the two women reported discussing this topic were described in a variety of negative ways including 'highly emotional', 'introspective', 'bitter' and 'histrionic' [1984,p372]).

Higgins and Moss's view of ideology is also circumscribed - with contrasts occasionally drawn between the ideological and the interpersonal (eg 1984,p360) as if the

interpersonal were not ideological. This can be seen as part of their attempt to 'rescue' media studies from what they see as the 'skewed' readings of those who focus on ideology/hegemony (1984,p358). However the result is a focus on interpersonal discourse at the expense of ignoring its ideological aspects, and a tendency to make the individual the central category of their research - as a host, caller or listener.

DJ Talk - Martin Montgomery *

The last of the five pieces of research to be discussed is Martin Montgomery's (1986)pioneering article on DJ talk. Montgomery's aim is to

'characterise some features of the discourse produced by DJs between playing records on BBC Radio 1' (1986,p421)

He argues that DJ talk presents a major challenge to the dominant approaches to the study of talk - conversation analysis and discourse analysis. Since DJ talk consists largely of monologue it raises particular problems for conversation analysis and discourse analysis. For conversation analysis, for example, the orderliness of talk is displayed in the relation between one turn and another (1986, p422). Whilst, as Montgomery points out, there have been conversation analytic studies of the organisation of extended turns - for example Sack's joke, political speeches (Atkinson,1984) - these have depended upon the presence of some 'receipt' - eg laughter or applause. In DJ talk, of course, no such receipts are present. For discourse analysis, Montgomery argues, monologue presents a further problem : the description of the function of discourse units depends heavily on what is implied by speakers succeeding moves (1986, p422). In DJ talk there is no second turn or response to help define what a first turn

might be doing. DJ monologue, then, poses problems for general accounts of the operation of talk (1986, p422).

DJ talk also presents problems for work in media studies which treats language as crucially implicated in the production and circulation of ideologies. This type of work is generally concerned with representations. As I argued earlier, work within this tradition has tended to focus on representations of the social, political and economic spheres. As Montgomery points out, DJ talk sits uneasily within this kind of approach, precisely because so little of what it does is bound up with reportings. Montgomery argues

'It (DJ talk) tends to foreground the relationship of the DJ to the talk, and the relationship of the talk to the audience, rather than the relationship of of the talk to 'the world at large''. (1986 p423).

Work on ideology has tended to neglect the interpersonal dimensions of discourse, precisely that dimension most foregrounded in DJ talk. Montgomery argues :

'If we are to have a comprehensive account of the role of media discourse in the reproduction of social life, then it must be one that includes the interpersonal dimension of talk as well as its ideational aspects - the social relational as well as the ideological - and yet, paradoxically, it must be able to handle the monologic utterance as well as the dialogic.' (p424)

To this end, Montgomery sketches out some of the characteristics of DJ talk. He considers both the relationship of the talk to the audience and, in less detail, the relationship of the DJ to his or her discourse.

Montgomery argues that the social relational dimension of talk is foregrounded in a number of ways by DJs. One of the principal ways is that the discourse frequently addresses

its audience in direct terms - as you. At times the second person pronoun refers to the audience as a whole; often its field of reference is narrowed by an accompanying identifier. Thus 'you' may be identified by name, by region, by occupation, by event, by age, or by star sign (1986 p426). The crucial point, then, is that the audience, though addressed directly, is not identified in stable terms but in shifting ones.

The effect of direct address to specific segments of the audience is to simultaneously exclude others. However, Montgomery argues that the relegation of substantial sections of the audience to the status of overhearers does not reduce the capacity of the discourse to engage the audience in general - in fact it contributes to its dynamism. (1986 p428)

These kind of direct address are often combined with greetings tokens -eg

'Ian Schlessor hello happy birthday'

In effect absent recipients are treated as if co-present and capable of responding. The simulation of co-presence seems to characterise much DJ talk. Sometimes this takes the form of the social or personal deixis just discussed; at other times it is accomplished by making reference to the conditions of co-presence -eg

'take a look at this then' or
'can you see that?'

Sometimes by contrast the absence of co-presence is made the explicit focus of attention as in

'I wish you could see the mess in this studio today'

The monologic nature of DJ talk is different from that of, say, news reporting. It contains interrogatives and imperatives - eg

'How's virgo doing ?'

'What's the gossip today ?'

'Have you noticed the penny for the guy things are starting to appear ?'

'Stop that, it's dirty'

Once again these response demanding utterances can be seen as simulating co-presence and implicating the audience into the discourse.

Montgomery also considers many examples of 'expressives' used by DJs - for example, congratulating, criticising, deprecating. Interestingly, in the only comment of this kind on the content of discourse, Montgomery notes that named individuals are rarely singled out for deprecation, unless they can answer back (so other DJs are fair game). Deprecations are more likely to be directed at groups for whom clear stereotypes exist, operating along well-defined axes : journalists, doctors and traffic wardens are more likely to be deprecated than nurses , firemen, and typists (1986 p431)

So far I have concentrated upon Montgomery's discussion of the relationship of the talk to the audience. Now I want to examine his analysis of the relationship of the DJ to the talk. Montgomery argues that just as there are a variety of audience positions in relation to the discourse, there are also a variety of positions available to the DJ. Sometimes the DJ is animating pre-scripted materials -eg readers letters, 'horriblesopes' (horoscopes), interest items about celebrities, announcements about future events. Sometimes the DJ supplies his or her own scripted materials. Sometimes the DJs are

'extemporising as they go along, playing off one or other of the different kinds of scripted materials.' (1986 p422-3).

The relationship of the DJ to the talk is therefore one of variable and shifting alignment. The most obvious example of this involves interpolation, insertion sequences eg.

'Libra
(Oi Libra stop that it's dirty)
Libra
Let partners procratinate^s and argue...

The interpolated item is not usually part of the syntax of the discourse into which it is inserted. Often the syntax of the surrounding discourse resumes after the interpolation as a straight continuation of the point reached immediately prior to it as in the example above and in the following:

'a listener for ever is Marjorie Bunting
(ah you must have suffered with that name)
in Woodlands in Doncaster' (p434)

Interpolations, Montgomery claims, often occur in the environment of a proper noun. Commonly they operate as a kind of reactive comment which may be oriented to the topic, to the audience, to the speaker him or herself, or even to the discourse itself.

In sum, Montgomery argues that

'the discourse eludes characterisation as some seamless, integrated unity authored by a single subject to a homogeneous, unitary audience. Despite issuing - in its monologic aspects at least - from a single vocal source, it is

maintained as as a thing of many 'voices'
addressed to many 'audiences' (p438)

Close attention to the form and structure of DJs talk has allowed Montgomery to demonstrate very clearly the complex and fragmentary nature of their discourse. His insights are valuable and should be built upon by researchers interested in media talk of all forms. Further analyses, however, should concern themselves not only with the structuring of discourse, but also with its content, with what is said. The idea that the address to different sections of the audience allows the DJ to dramatise the audience to itself should be explored. And in particular the tendency of Montgomery to contrast interpersonal and ideological discourse should be avoided. Instead what is needed is an approach which will extend the critical concept of ideology to include interpersonal or social relational discourse.

Women and Radio³

In the final section of this chapter I will turn to a discussion of research on women and radio. The privileging of research on television, cinema and the press is reflected also in a lack of feminist research on radio. Anne Karpf has argued:

'While virtually all of the mass media have come under feminist scrutiny in the past few years, radio has got off scot free. Academics and women's groups have been diligently monitoring television, cinema and the press: decoding signs of sexism, uncovering masculinist ideology, and promoting feminist alternatives. Yet radio, the medium which permeates women's lives more than any other, has been ignored.' (1980, p41)

Yet switch on the radio, Karpf argues, and there is a subtle but pervasive 'gender apartheid' going on (1987, p169). Radio is offering a world of private women and

public men. During the daytime mainly male broadcasters speak to women, and women firmly situated in the domestic realm (Karpf, 1987, p169). Historically, broadcasters adapted their programming timetables to what their research and their imagination indicated was the pattern of women's domestic lives (Frith, 1988).

'Through this process, radio stations set out to regulate the work and the rhythms of the daily life of all women to this pattern...Listeners responded by altering their domestic arrangements to fit in with their favourite shows.'
(Johnson, 1981 p169)

This has continued in present day programming in the allusions to and frequent comments about the houseworking day, made by DJs and presenters, particularly on BBC Radio One and Two and on local radio (Karpf, 1987). These remarks, Karpf argues, have the effect of normalising the domestic routine:

'doing the washing to Jimmy Young; or baking to Woman's Hour become fixed points which have an almost independent, natural life of their own.'
(1987, p170)

Dorothy Hobson, who interviewed women in the home about their television and radio preferences, and how these fitted into their daily lives, found that DJ programmes provided important boundaries for women's division of time, in terms of the 'structurelessness' of the experience of housework (Hobson, 1980). She also argued that the DJ's comments served to link the isolated individual woman with the knowledge that others are in the same position, in a sort of 'collective isolation' (1980, p108).

The domestic focus of programming, feminist researchers have argued, is the result of a particular set of ideas about the listener (eg Karpf, 1980, 1987; Baehr & Ryan, 1984). Its clearest expression came in the mythical

prototype listener coined by the commercial local radio station, Essex Radio:

'We call our average listener 'Doreen'...Doreen isn't stupid but she's only listening with half an ear and doesn't understand 'long words'. She's a housewife with a working husband and children at school. She doesn't work outside the home and is generally content'. (quoted in Baehr & Ryan, 1984)

Another insight into broadcasters image of their female audience is to be found in Capital Radio's submission to the IBA for its franchise contract:

'There are certain fundamentals that women enjoy. Women are sentimental, or they care deeply about emotions. Women are fanatical, or they can see through plausible rationalisations. They are escapists, or they are not sufficiently cold-blooded to enjoy drama which, if taken seriously, would represent alarm and despondency. This is what gives them their bias towards stories about hospitals and against stories about guns; towards local issues (where they can see plainly enough what is at stake) and away from foreign news (of dubious implication); towards happy endings, but happy endings to sagas which are as grittily tough as they know real life usually is.' (quoted in Local Radio Workshop, 1983).

Such images of the listener are said to be shared by most presenters (Kar[*f*, 1980). Ross quotes BBC Radio Two DJ David Hamilton:

'I try to talk to one person. I've got this picture of a woman, a housewife, young, or young at heart. She's probably on her own virtually all day. She's bored with the routine of housework and her own company and just for her I'm the chatty, slightly cheeky romantic visitor.' (quoted in Ross 1977)

Hamilton's comment about being the cheeky romantic visitor highlights another facet of many presenters assumed role in relation to women - that of sexual innuendo. A mainstay of

many DJ style programmes is a steady stream of sexually 'risque' patter, directed at women. Hobson quotes Tony Blackburn, who was suffering from a throat infection which made his voice sound rather husky.

'I hope I'm not turning you ladies on too much. I know your husbands have left for work, it's you and I together kids.' (quoted in Hobson, 1980 pp.107-8)

Such remarks are not just directed at female listeners. The few female presenters, studio guests and callers are also often subjected to sexual innuendo and objectification (Women's Airwaves, 1983). During their week of monitoring London's local radio, Women's Airwaves found many examples. I will illustrate it with just one. This comes from an afternoon show on BBC Radio London. A female presenter is attempting to carry out her role as a kind of 'consumer affairs' reporter: (M.P. refers to male presenter; F.P. to female presenter)

MP: Right now, looking as beautiful as ever, it's...Oh aren't you nice ha ha. Hello. Well, old flatterer that I am, yes indeed, I've forgotten what you're going to talk about today. Er yes ofcourse, fruit and veg time isn't it ?

FP: That's right, yes. We've had lots of nasty weather...

MP: Let's just talk about you and forget the fruit and veg.

FP: I'm sure no one's interested in me.

MP: Yes they are, yes. Alright we'd better talk about fruit and veg.

FP: 'Cos it's quite sad really, we've had some quite nasty frosty weather all over the country...It's destroyed all the blossom on the English cherry trees and pear trees, so of course...

MP: Has it interfered with your pears then ?

FP: Yes it might do later on in the year. These things show later on in the year. We shall have to see, won't we ?

MP: Your pears show later on in the year do they ?

FP: Yes they do.

MP: Yes, because of the cold weather is it ?

(from Women's Airwaves, 1983. Emphasis in original)

Despite many examples like this, Women's Airwaves concluded that it was the almost total absence of women's voices on air that was the most striking indication of sexism on the stations. On all three stations (Capital, BBC Radio London and LBC) virtually all the presenters were male, as were the programmes guests. Women's voices could be heard in the morning phone-in shows on BBC Radio London and LBC but very often the format of these shows mitigated against women callers and was exploited by male presenters who seemed to use their position to patronise women and make them appear stupid (Women's Airwaves, 1983, p132). They frequently interrupted women, interpreted and redefined what women were saying and were sometimes blatantly obstructive (p132). The lack of female presenters is equally true of BBC Radio One and Two and of other local stations (Karpf, 1980). Ross argues that male domination of the airwaves has a subliminal effect which should be recognised:

'It reinforces all the old sexist myths that men are the activists, the speakers, the entertainers, the ones who do, while women are the captive audience, flattered to be chatted up and offered a little second hand romance along with the idle talk.' (Ross, 1977 p19)

The twin focus of male popular radio presenters on domesticity and sexual innuendo go some way to explaining the lack of female presenters on radio (see Chapter Seven). An executive producer of Radio One (herself ironically called Doreen Davies) explains:

'I think that the housewife at home would rather hear Tony Blackburn than a girl (sic)... If a girl in some studio in London starts talking about getting your washing and ironing done you're going to resent it. It just sounds personal to another woman. She'll feel "Why should I ? That girl's not doing housework or washing." It's different if Tony Blackburn says

it. that's just lighthearted' (quoted in karpf, 1987 p171)

A woman, then, would alienate female listeners by talking about the housework and making them feel resentful or guilty. But a woman also could not play the role of 'romantic visitor'. Doreen Davies again:

'The audience does tend to accept a man more readily. There are more women and girl listeners than men, and you cannot deny that a young girl (sic) with a couple of small children at home will more easily relate to a man. It's like having a male friend in the house while the husband's away, without the obvious repercussions.' (quoted in Karpf 1980)

A recent 'experiment' at Cardiff Broadcasting Corporation, reported by Helen Baehr and Michele Ryan, in which a female was taken on as a presenter of the popular mid-morning show, gave no evidence that her gender had any effect on the audience's appreciation. Indeed, what evidence there was from audience ratings supported the contrary view (Baehr & Ryan, 1984). Flirtatious banter, then, was not necessary to maintain the popularity of the show. Despite this, after a year on the experiment she was transferred to a less popular evening show.

Overall, research on women and radio presents a depressing picture of women addressed and presented primarily in terms of their domesticity or sexuality, and highlights some extreme examples of this. However, the focus of much of the research discussed here has a decidedly liberal feel. Once again (as with research on radio discussed earlier in the chapter), the concern is with issues of bias and distortion, with the claim that women's lives are not being reflected accurately or are being presented in a misleading way (Women's Airwaves, 1983; Baehr & Ryan, 1984). Moreover, some of the research lapses into essentialism,

speaking of 'the female perspective' (Women's Airwaves, 1983) as if this were a natural and unproblematic category. Christine Gledhill has argued that this is a feature of liberal feminist argument (as well as radical feminist), and that it is usually accompanied by the belief that divisions related to age, class or race are unimportant relative to the central gender division (Gledhill, 1978)

The liberal emphasis is made especially clear in Baehr and Ryan's work in their approving citation of an Equal Opportunities Commission report about non-sexist advertising. Baehr and Ryan claim to put 'a good commercial case for change' because:

'by showing that a more adventurous and less circumscribed presentation of women in adverts may actually sell better than some well-worn stereotypes, this study suggests that there need be no conflict of interests between those whose job it is to sell and those who seek to further equality of opportunity' (EOC Report, 1982 quoted by Baehr & Ryan, 1984 - my emphasis).

A further significant problem with the research discussed is that none of it is based on detailed and systematic analysis of programmes. At best it has drawn a general thematic picture of output; at worst it has merely drawn attention to the crudest and most obvious examples of sexism on popular radio. It may be that the focus on the extent to which women are addressed as housewives is overstressed. This is not to argue that women are not addressed as housewives, but rather that the exclusive focus on this (and sexual innuendo) distracts attention both from other constructions of gender, and from the ways in which these versions are constructed and deployed. There seems to be a tendency in this research to collapse sexist ideology into single images. Yet, as Janice Winship has argued, when it is asserted that women are represented as housewives, there is no discussion of how we know she is

a housewife, nor of whether there is one means or many to signify this image rather than another, for example 'mother'. The stress is on what is repeated rather than the specificity of any representation (Winship, 1981, p26).

What is needed, then, is an approach which can grasp the flexible, contradictory and constructive nature of the language of DJs, and one which does not rely on a fixed notion of the 'real' or 'true' woman in order to engage with ideologies of gender. In the next chapter I introduce discourse and rhetorical analysis which I believe can form the basis of such an approach.

Footnotes

1 Although Crisell makes a point of arguing that he will use gendered pronouns interchangeably, it is striking to note his tendency to use 'him' to refer to radio presenters and 'her' to radio listeners.

2 The notion of 'the state and its agencies' highlights the vagueness of Higgins & Moss' theoretical position, which at times seems to owe less to marxism than to a populist/libertarian opposition to the encroachment of the state.

3 I am deliberately vague in using the phrase 'women and radio', as I am referring to work which examines not just the representation of women, but also their employment in radio and their roles as listeners.

CHAPTER 3

DISCOURSE, RHETORIC AND IDEOLOGY

Why lend ourselves to the politics of 'difference' if not in virtue of its enlightenment - what it permits in the way of releasing subjects from the confluences of imperialising discourse and the constructed identities of binary oppositions? Why lend ourselves to the deconstruction of liberal humanist rhetoric if not to expose the class or racial or gender identities it occludes? Why challenge truth if not in the interests of revealing the potentially manipulative powers of the discourses that have achieved the status of knowledge? Why call science into question if not in part because of the military and ecological catastrophes to which the blind pursuit of its instrumental rationality has delivered us? Why problematise the artistic canon and its modes of aesthetic discrimination if not to draw attention to the ways in which art can collude with the values of the establishment and serve to reinforce its power elites? In other words, in so far as we want to cling to some of the insights of post-structuralist theory, we seem caught up in ways of explaining and justifying this inclination in terms which, strictly speaking, only make sense if we are prepared to defend certain forms of truth, ethical value and political principle. (Kate Soper, forthcoming ms p. 7)

The last few years have seen an unprecedented growth of interest in language in disciplines across the arts and social sciences. This move has been associated with developments in semiology, post-structuralism, postmodernism, conversation analysis, speech act theory and discourse analysis, which, taken together, represent a decisive 'turn to language'. This 'turn', which must be one

of the most important intellectual developments of the last decade, has been far from uniform, encompassing work from disparate disciplinary backgrounds and radically different perspectives on social relations. Indeed, even the term discourse analysis would generate very little agreement, being used by workers in the social study of science (Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984), people interested in classroom interaction, monologue and speech act theory (Coulthard & Montgomery, 1981; Montgomery, 1986a), workers in the post-structuralist and Foucauldian traditions (Barthes, 1973, 1977; Coward & Ellis, 1977; Culler, 1983; Eagleton, 1983; Henriques et al, 1984; Hollway, 1989; Squires, 1990; Weedon, 1987), conversation analysts (Van Dijk, 1985; Widdicomb & Wooffitt, 1991) - to cite but a few - as well as by people concerned with reformulating social psychological issues in non-cognitive terms (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, 1988, 1989, Potter et al, 1990; Wetherell & Potter, 1988a, 1988b).

Given the levels of conceptual and theoretical disagreement, it is obviously not particularly useful to say that the approach which I use and aim to develop in this thesis is a discourse analytic one. More useful is an indication of my point of entry: the work that has been most important in my own intellectual development. It is impossible to cite everything, but of particular significance are critical linguistic approaches (Fowler et al, 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979) and their development in social semiotics (Hodge & Kress, 1988), critical language studies (Fairclough, 1989, 1990, 1991), discourse analysis by Thompson (1984, 1986, 1988), Montgomery (1986a & b), Fraser (1987, 1988a & b), and recent work in the Foucauldian tradition (Eagleton, 1983; Henriques et al, 1984; Hollway, 1989; Parker, 1989a, b & c; Walkerdine, 1986, 1989; Weedon, 1987). Most significant, however, has been a developing body of work within social psychology on

discourse and rhetoric (Billig, 1987, 1988a, b, c, d, 1989a, b, c, 1990, 1991; Potter & Wetherell, 1987, 1988, 1989; Potter et al, 1990; Wetherell & Potter, 1988a, 1988b; Wetherell, 1990; White & Wetherell, 1988). This is the tradition within which (and, as will become clear, partly against which) I work, and which I aim to both 'try out' and develop in this thesis.

In this chapter I provide a brief introduction to these two bodies of work - which themselves have significant differences. The chapter is divided into three broad sections. In the first two I introduce the basic ideas of discourse analysis (henceforth I use the term to designate Potter and Wetherell's approach) and the rhetorical approach. In the final section I raise a number of critical issues, which, whilst explicitly addressed to discourse analysis and the rhetorical approach, are of much more general significance in relation to the debates (or lack of them) between marxism and post-structuralism/postmodernism.

Discourse Analysis: Central Ideas

In this section I will attempt to set out the basic ideas of Potter and Wetherell's Discourse Analysis. I am greatly aided in this task by the fact that Potter and Wetherell have written a number of clear expositions of their approach (eg 1987; Potter et al, 1990; Wetherell & Potter, 1988b)). According to Potter and Wetherell, a discourse analytic approach with a 'social psychological orientation' should have three major themes:

1. It should have a concern with the functional orientation of language
2. It should address the constructive processes that are part of the functional orientation
3. It should have an awareness of the variability thrown up by this orientation.

Following the form of Potter and Wetherell's expositions, I will examine each of these 'themes' in turn.

Function

One of the central ideas which discourse analysis has drawn from both speech act theory and ethnomethodology is that people use language to do things - that is, discourse is orientated to action, to different functions; utterances ask questions, make accusations, pay compliments, etc. Potter and Wetherell note that this functional orientation of language should not be understood in a mechanical way. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, people do not always do their accusing, justifying or requesting in a direct or explicit way. Requests, for example, are sometimes couched as abstract questions or even as apparently simple remarks. Consider the example of someone who wants a lift home after a meeting. She or he may not say to their companion 'would you give me a lift home', but may instead leave the meeting with exaggerated shivers and remarks about the coldness of the night air. Potter and Wetherell cite work by conversation analysts which indicates that it may be advantageous to the speaker to make a request indirectly because it allows the recipient to reject it without making the rejection obvious, something which people are keen to avoid (Drew, 1984; 1986; quoted in Potter and Wetherell, 1987).

Moreover, functions are not always as specific as the request which may have been performed in the previous example. They can be more 'global' - for example wanting to present oneself as a wonderful human being (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). They are also not always simply oriented to interpersonal goals; discourse also performs ideological functions. This is not to suggest that the interpersonal is non-ideological. On the contrary, texts may be

simultaneously oriented to interpersonal and ideological functions - as Potter and Wetherell have shown very clearly in their analyses of talk about 'race' in New Zealand (Potter & Wetherell, 1988; Wetherell & Potter, 1986, 1988b).

Another sense in which function should not be understood in a mechanical way concerns the effects of any piece of discourse. Potter and Wetherell are not proposing a form of textual determinism, and argue that the fact that a text is organised to achieve a particular function does not guarantee its success. When an account is organised to offer a 'blaming', for example, this blame will not necessarily be accepted by the recipient or the wider community (Potter et al, 1990). There are clear affinities here with Hall's work on encoding and decoding, in particular with the notion of the 'preferred reading' in television discourses, and with Morley's Nationwide audience study which showed that viewers who did not 'inhabit' (Morley's term) the same code as the programme makers made negotiated or oppositional readings (Hall, 1980; Morley, 1980). Potter and Wetherell argue that texts are characterised by discursive struggle, and discourse analysis is, in part, the analysis of this struggle (Potter et al, 1990).

Construction

The second theme or 'component' of discourse analysis is that language is constructive. Potter and Wetherell argue that the metaphor of construction highlights three facets of the approach. First, it draws attention to the fact that discourse is built or manufactured out of pre-existing linguistic resources

'language and linguistic practices offer a sediment of systems of terms, narrative forms,

metaphors and commonplaces from which a particular account can be assembled' (Potter et al, 1990 ms p5)

Second, the metaphor illuminates the fact that the 'assembly' of an account involves choice or selection from a number of different possibilities. It is possible to describe even the most simple of phenomena in a multiplicity of different ways. Any particular description will depend upon the orientation of the speaker or writer (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Potter et al, 1990).

Finally, the notion of construction emphasises the fact that much of the time we deal with the world in terms of constructions, not in a somehow 'direct' or unmediated way; in a very real sense texts of various kinds construct our world.

The notion of construction, then, clearly marks a break with traditional 'realistic' models of language, in which it is taken to be a transparent medium, a relatively straightforward path to 'real' beliefs or events. It is important to note, however, that Potter and Wetherell would not want to make claims about the intentions of persons involved in processes of discursive construction

'It may be that the person providing the account is not consciously constructing but a construction emerges as they merely try to make sense of a phenomenon or engage in unselfconscious social activities like blaming or justifying' (Potter & Wetherell, 1987 p34)

In many situations a person will not be deliberately (or even consciously) deciding to use one form of language or construction rather than another, but will simply be 'doing what comes naturally' or what seems 'right' for that particular occasion. For discourse analysts, the whole issue of 'intentions' is eschewed in favour of an approach

which takes discourse itself as the topic of interest. Clearly there are parallels here with structuralist and post-structuralist work in literary criticism in which 'the author' has long since been dead, and texts themselves, rather than authorial intentions, are the object of study.

In focusing on discourse in its own right, discourse analysts are not trying to 'recover' 'real' attitudes or to discover what 'really' happened, but are looking at

'the analytically prior question of how discourse or accounts of these things are manufactured' (Potter & Wetherell, 1987 p35)

This has profound implications for social psychology which has traditionally treated language as an indicator of something else - eg underlying attitude, belief or personality.

Variation

The third central theme of discourse analysis is variation and is closely related to the ideas of function and construction. If discourse is constructed (and constructive) and functional, then it follows that discourse will vary according to different functional orientations. That is, any given event, group or person can be described in very different ways depending upon whether we are blaming, justifying, excusing or whatever. This becomes obvious in the domain of the courtroom where the 'same' piece of behaviour can be constructed in highly contrasting ways by prosecution and defence. As Potter and Wetherell are aware their claim about variability in constructions can sound banal, but, they point out, in practice the variation between accounts can be striking.

The concept of variability has a central place in discourse analysis because of its connection to functional orientation. For Potter and Wetherell, variation is an 'analytic clue' to functional orientation, because, it is claimed, constructions vary systematically with the particular function being performed.

'As this orientation leads to variation so the presence of variation can be used as an analytic clue to work back to functional orientation. That is, we can predict that certain sorts of functional orientation will lead to certain sorts of systematic variation and look for the presence of those variations.' (Potter et al, 1990 ms p6)

It should now be clear that the importance of the concept of variability in the discourse analytic perspective rests on an empirical as well as a theoretical claim - that is that not only is it possible for any state of affairs to be described in radically different ways, but that in practice this happens all the time. The approach therefore contains an immanent critique of traditional social psychology which has no principled way of dealing with variability within and between accounts. When traditional social psychology does acknowledge variability in accounts, as, for example, in work on social perception, it tends to see it as evidence of bias or distortion, rather than taking it to be a normal and general phenomenon. Most of the time, however, variability is minimised or obscured in traditional psychological work through the routine use of social psychological procedures. Potter and Wetherell have identified three broad sets of practices which have the effect of suppressing variability - the restriction and constraining of the autonomy or options of subjects in experimental conditions; the use of gross forms of categorisation; and the selective reading of versions in ways which treat some accounts as realistic, neutral descriptions and ironises others. They note:

'These strategies presuppose the "realistic model" of language use by obscuring any data which might throw it into doubt.' (Potter & Wetherell, 1987 p42-3)

Interpretative Repertoires

In the final part of this section I will consider interpretative repertoires. The interpretative repertoire differs from the notions of function, construction and variation in that it is not a central concept but rather an analytic tool for discourse analysts. In arguing that discourse is variable (because speakers construct their talk differentially according to function), Potter and Wetherell are not arguing that discourse is completely random and irregular, but simply that regularity does not necessarily appear at the level of the individual (speaker or writer). There is regularity in the variation:

'Inconsistencies and differences in discourse can be understood as part of broader differences between relatively internally consistent, bounded language units' (McKinlay, Potter & Wetherell, 1989 ms p26)

Potter and Wetherell follow Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) in using the term interpretative repertoire to describe these regularities.

'In dealing with lay explanations the analyst often wishes to describe the explanatory resources speakers have access to and wishes to make interpretations about patterns in the content of the material. The interpretative repertoire is a summary unit at this level. Repertoires can be seen as the building blocks speakers use for constructing versions of actions, cognitive processes and other phenomena'. (Wetherell & Potter, 1988 p172)

Any particular repertoire

'is constituted out of a restricted range of terms used in a specific stylistic and

grammatical fashion. Commonly these terms are derived from one or more key metaphor and the presence of the repertoire is often signalled by particular tropes or figures of speech'. (McKinlay, Potter & Wetherell, 1989 ms p26)

The 'community repertoire' is a good example of this. It is a resource which analysts have identified as a recurring pattern in talk about uprisings/riots, policing and care of mentally handicapped people (Potter & Reicher, 1987; Potter & Collie, 1989). It is partly a set of words describing cohesive social relationships - 'closeness', 'integration' and 'friendliness'. It is also a group of terms which depend upon certain metaphors - involving space ('close-knit'), organism ('growth', 'evolution') and agency (a community 'acts' or 'feels') (Potter et al 1990).

Recent criticisms of the notion of interpretative repertoire, regarding the importance of grammar in its identification and the claims about the limited number of terms which constitute any repertoire (Parker, 1989a), have led to useful clarifications of this analytical tool (Potter et al, 1990). Potter et al argue that discourse analysts should not take over 'any of the theoretical baggage of grammar as a resource for analysis', but that in practice attention to grammatical constructions can be very illuminating - in highlighting the persistent use of certain constructions, for example use of the 'passive voice'. The benefits of attention to grammatical forms can be seen very clearly in the analyses by critical linguists of newspaper reports of street disturbances at the Notting Hill Carnival (Trew, 1979) and police violence in southern Africa (Fowler et al, 1979).

Potter et al also defend their description of interpretative repertoires as being made up of a limited or restricted range of terms.

'Again our use of this talk of limits arises out of our analytic practice; one of the striking things about studying the talk of fifty or so interviewees on a particular topic is the limited and indeed stereotypic sets of terms and tropes which occur again and again.' (Potter et al 1990 ms p14).

The use of the idea of a limited range is 'not meant to place a priori boundaries' but simply to highlight 'the conspicuous lack of variation' (Potter et al 1990 ms p15).

Potter and Wetherell have stressed that the notion of interpretative repertoire does not have 'grandiose claims' attached (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). It should be seen simply as but one component in a systematic approach to the study of discourse, and one which will require refinement (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Its development did not take place in a theoretical vacuum, but in a context in which it 'kicked off' (to use Judith Williamson's [1978] phrase) against other theoretical constructs. This inevitably has affected the features of it which discourse analysts have chosen to elaborate to date. The interpretative repertoire has been most frequently and notably been compared with the notion of social representation (see Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Potter, Wetherell & McKinlay, 1987; Wetherell & Potter, 1988; and McKinlay, Potter & Wetherell, 1989 for detailed discussions of how 'interpretative repertoire' improves upon 'social representation'). Recently, however, the interpretative repertoire has been proposed as an analytically useful alternative to the idea of a 'discourse' used by workers in the Foucauldian tradition (eg Henriques et al, 1984; Parker, 1989 a, b & c).

One problem with the notion of a 'discourse' as 'an organised set of statements' (Parker, 1989 a, b & c) is that 'discourses' become reified. They are treated as discrete,

coherent and systematised whole which are given the status of causal agents in analyses (Potter et al 1990). Analytic interest then becomes focused on the processes of abstract discourses working on or against other abstract discourses.

The advantage of the tool interpretative repertoire over this is that it deals with flexibility of use in practice in a way that the concept of a 'discourse' as an organised set of statements fails to apprehend. That is, it is sensitive to the actual working of discourses as a constitutive part of social practice situated in specific contexts (Potter et al, 1990). As Potter et al point out, discourses do not work on each other in some abstract realm, but are always versions organised in particular contexts. For this reason analysis must always be sensitive to

'the local geography of contexts and practices and also to the devices through which the discourses are effectively realised' (Potter et al, 1990 ms p9)

Analysts should not treat the propositional functions of discourse (the statements) as separate from all the rest of the work that is done in text and talk. As Potter & Wetherell have shown in a recent study of discourse about 'race' and educational inequality, the analysis of the socially constitutive role of the discourse (in this case the discursive destruction of programmes which challenge inequality) needs to be done at the same time as analysis of how this talk is made effective, and indeed brought off as self-evident, on each occasion (Potter & Wetherell, 1989).

Another advantage of the notion of the interpretative repertoire is that it avoids building in common sense assumptions at an early stage in the analysis. For Parker,

identification of a 'discourse' involves using 'culturally available understandings as to what constitutes a topic' (Parker 1989b ms p6). Each of our common sense versions of the world is deemed to have its own associated discourse - so there is family discourse, racist discourse, medical discourse, etc. In this way commonsense assumptions are built in to the analysis and the analytic work merely serves to 'reproduce its pre-defined ontology in linguistic form' (Potter et al, 1990 ms p12). Potter et al point out that whilst common sense assumptions cannot be purged completely from analysis, much of the most interesting research is done when the role of common sense is less inflated. They cite Gilroy's (1987) work on the changing meaning of 'race' and its articulation to constructions of nation and patriotic culture as a good example of this. The advantage of the notion of interpretative repertoire is that rather than simply being mapped onto common sense topics interpretative repertoires are seen as 'abstractions from practices in context' (Potter et al 1990 ms p 17). The aim of analysis is thus not simply to identify which interpretative repertoires are present in any text or talk (as if it were a sort of 'ticking off' exercise) but to look at the functions that they are performing in that particular context.

This has been a brief description which will be 'filled out' in the discussion and with analytic examples in chapters six and seven. I turn now to the rhetorical approach.

The Rhetorical Approach

Writing about the recent revival of interest in rhetoric, Herb Simons has argued that it represents one of the most significant movements in contemporary social science (Simons, forthcoming). One of the foremost contributors to

the 'rhetorical turn' has been Michael Billig. Over the past decade he has produced an enormous range of books and scholarly articles which offer a rhetorical perspective on a vast variety of different topics (Billig, 1985; 1986; 1987; 1988a; 1988b; 1988c; 1988d; 1989a; 1989b; 1989c; 1990a; 1990b; 1991; Billig et al, 1988). In Arguing and Thinking Billig (1987) set out the basis of a rhetorical approach to social psychology, which has been followed by detailed rhetorical critiques of work on attitudes (1988b; 1989c), categorisation (1985), social representations (1988d) and prejudice (1985; 1986; 1988c), exemplified by analyses of political discourse, ordinary speech, racist literature, a newspaper's souvenir album and families' talk about the British monarchy.

The rhetorical approach (in as much as it can be seen as an approach - see later points) takes as the starting point of its critique of social psychology the 'one-sidedness' of psychological models and notions of human functioning. In Arguing and Thinking Billig (1987) argues that most of the traditional metaphors used in psychology give only a one-sided picture of social psychological processes. Thus, for example, the theatrical metaphor only 'works' as a description of human behaviour to the extent that it plays down 'backstage' arguments and refuses to see plays as part of wider debates. / Similarly the game metaphor with its notion of people as rule-followers works by suppressing another aspect of human behaviour: namely that people are also rule-breakers. \

This one-sidedness is not limited to the metanarratives of human psychological functioning, but is characteristic of many of the concepts most central to psychology. Indeed, overall, social psychology is held to have played down the argumentative aspects of social life. Its image of the person is mechanistic and bureaucratic, tending to see

people as response-machines or information-processing machines. One example of this is work on categorisation:

'The typical thinker is seen as an individual who is faced with a complex and untamed stimulus world, and who attempts to trap the stimuli in a schema or categorisation' (1985 p.86)

People are seen as dully and bureaucratically categorising the social world, placing particular stimuli in general categories or grouping them with other stimuli. Against this one-sided picture Billig (1985) argues that for every psychological process 'one should look for an opposing process' (p.82). This is because

'For each cognitive skill humans possess, they also possess the negation' (1988d)

If humans categorise, Billig suggests, then they also particularise, that is make exceptions, distinguish stimuli from general categories, treat things as special cases.

'Humans are just as good at particularising as categorising information. Thinking should be seen as the conflict between these two processes' (1987)

To date, Billig argues, this has not happened: psychologists have underestimated the tolerance and dynamism of human thought.

The notion of the person as rhetorician, as argumentative, as someone who engages in what Billig (1987) calls witcraft, which is at the core of the rhetorical approach will be fleshed out in the remainder of this section through a discussion of Billig's work on ideology. It is important to note that this work is not distinct from or somehow bolted on to Billig's social psychological work but is an integral part of it. This is part of what makes Billig's work so exciting: he is almost alone in social

psychology in considering questions about ideology and linking them to traditional concerns within the discipline.

The rhetorical approach to ideology rests upon a critique of both cognitive social psychology and Althusserian-inspired theories of ideology. Billig's critique of cognitive psychology concerns its a-social, a-historical view of the person. For cognitive social psychology, people are lone perceivers, dealing with information via processes like categorisation. The individual is no hero, Billig (1991) points out, for much social psychological work has concentrated on cognitive biases, but nevertheless the individual is the privileged unit of analysis: society, as he puts it, gets left outside the laboratory door.

'In this account, no social forces and no patterns of history are flowing through the mind of the individual combiner of stimuli' (1991 ms p. 7)

Social critique and the argumentative aspects of thinking are conspicuous by their absence.

In contrast in Althusserian theories of ideology, Billig argues, it is the individual who is nowhere to be seen. The author of all human actions, and indeed of subjectivity itself, is ideology. Ideology in such formulations is held to close off the mind and to switch off thought: individuals are simply dupes, passively obedient. Billig argues that the concept of ideology itself invites contrasting psychological views of the person:

'On the one hand, the theories, as radical theories on the side of the down-trodden, seem to give dignity to the oppressed. They accord respect to the ordinary person as an agent of thinking. On the other hand there is the dismissal of the thinking ordinary person. The masses are seen as the duped victims of ideology. Their minds have been filled with erroneous ideological reflexes' (1991 ms [p. 3])

In short, the ordinary person is seen simultaneously as a thinking and an unthinking being - 'the agent of thinking and a passive recipient of thoughts' (1991 ms p.3). This, 'the paradox of ideology', is a variant of a more general paradox - that of language itself: for speaking involves both autonomy and repetition. We are, Billig suggests, simultaneously in charge of language and captured by it. To highlight one of these features at the expense of the other is to produce a one-sided analysis of human experience. Instead of being abolished this paradox must be preserved and must inform our very ways of thinking about ideology and thought.

To this end, Billig et al (1988) propose a rhetorical perspective which stresses both the ideological nature of thought and the thoughtful nature of ideology. Ideology, they argue, does not deny thought but actually gives rise to thought. It is not a unified system which tells people how to read and think but rather is comprised of contrary themes which enable thought. These contrary themes, which characterise not just ideology but also common sense, are responsible for the dilemmatic aspects of thinking. They represent the material that people need to think and argue about their lives. Without them, Billig et al (1988) argue, there would be no way of arguing about dilemmas or understanding how opposing values can come into collision.

This position has a number of social psychological implications. First it stresses the universality of argumentation. The common sense of all societies will possess contrary themes (Billig, 1987; Billig et al, 1988). Rhetoric will not take the same form in all societies, but nevertheless the rhetoric of argumentation will be used universally as people justify their own positions and critique the views of others.

Second it entails a radical shift in social psychology's view of the person - as someone existing in a social context characterised by dilemmas and oppositions. The individual, by possessing the common sense of the community, necessarily possesses the contrary aspects of debates which enable debate - both internally (as thought) and externally.

A third implication, therefore, concerns the need to pay attention to both the implicit and explicit dimensions of beliefs. For beliefs may contain the seeds of their own negation which in a changed rhetorical context could be drawn upon. To illustrate this dilemmatic quality of common-sense Billig et al (1988) give the example of the maxim 'too many cooks spoil the broth', arguing that it implicitly contains the seeds of its own apparent antithesis - namely that 'many hands make light work'.

The shift to studying the 'thinking society' involves a significant rupture with traditional social psychology

'The focus is to be shifted towards social factors, especially those relating to language. This is not merely a matter of deciding to study one set of phenomena rather than another - from internal states to social processes. A theoretical shift is involved. This involves accepting that mental states are themselves socially created and that mentality is to be directly observed by observing social processes (1991 ms p.4)

Language is crucial in this respect. Indeed, Billig (1991) quotes Marx and Engels in The German Ideology: 'language is practical consciousness' .

I have noted that Billig sees both ideology and common sense as made up of contrary themes which enable thought and argument. Now is the time to briefly say a little more

about ideology and its relationship to common sense, and to give an example of what Billig et al (1988) describe as an 'ideological dilemma'.

Billig et al (1988) distinguish between two meanings of or types of ideology - lived and intellectual ideology. The notion of lived ideology refers to the ideology of an age - its beliefs, values and cultural practices. In this sense, lived ideology is used synonymously with common sense, and has many similarities with the notion of culture as a way of life (cf Raymond Williams, see chapter 1). In contrast an intellectual ideology is a formalised philosophical view of the world. An example of an intellectual ideology is that of liberalism - expressed in the works of Voltaire, Locke, etc. Billig et al (1988) are interested in the relationship between lived and intellectual ideologies. What they are concerned with is

'whether the ideas of intellectual ideologies can travel beyond the mythical ivy-covered walls of theory in order to enter the hustle and bustle of ordinary life' (1988 ms p.52)

As such, they are interested in how grand notions of , say, liberalism, have filtered into everyday thinking (cf Stuart Hall, see chapter 1). However, the relationship is not just one-way, for the ideas of lived ideology or common sense have been incorporated into intellectual ideologies. The relationship is not in any sense a straightforward one. If one theme of work has been to attempt to understand the way in which formal philosophies have permeated^a ordinary common sense, another theme has been an examination of the 'contradictions' between intellectual and lived ideologies. As an example of what they mean by this, Billig et al (1988) point to Marx and Engels

'whose theories seem at odds with the details of their everyday lives' (ms p.58)

Billig et al (1988) argue

""The Communist Manifesto" may have sneered at the conventional family and its morality, but Karl Marx was always the concerned father and husband' (ms p.58)

Such 'contradictions' Billig et al (1988) argue, are not confined to the Left. Today there are New Right theorists who hope to reduce the role of the state to the absolute minimum, yet who formulate their theories from offices in state-funded universities.

Perhaps the most significant focus of work to date, however, has been concerned with contrary themes within ideologies. Earlier, I noted Billig's argument about the dilemmatic aspects of common sense - that common sense beliefs contain what Billig (1987) calls 'the seeds of their own negation'. This is also true of ideologies. Billig et al take issue with the assumption

'that ideologies, or mental structures possess an inner unity. This assumption suggests that an ideology, although it might contain a variety of beliefs, norms, representations, etc will be based around a dominant theme or value.' (ms 1988 p.62)

To counter this Billig et al (1988) argue that the notions of liberty, equality and fraternity all contain their qualifications. These opposing themes are found not outside liberalism, but 'within the ideological traditions of liberalism itself' (ms p.66).

Before concluding this section I want to give a concrete example of an 'ideological dilemma'. An ideology, Billig et al (1988) argue, produces dilemmatic thinking when two

valued themes conflict. The dilemma I will describe is one concerning authority and expertise. The authoriatrism of other times and places has given way to a situation in which experts are 'hunched shouldered authorities':

'The expert is like a large individual caught up in a throng of smaller persons. The giant attempts to look inconspicuous by bending at the knees and hunching the shoulders. Trying hard not to step on tiny toes, the giant nevertheless has to move the throng gently in the desired direction' (Billig et al, 1988 ms p.117)

The example comes from an analysis of an interview with a nursery nurse in a Child Development Centre. The ethos of the centre is one of team work and democracy - experts, it is held, whatever their different specialist backgrounds, should work together putting the needs of the children first. In the interview the nursery nurse (who is at work) tells the interviewer how much she enjoys working at the unit and how democratic and open the working relationships are. No one thinks that they are superior to anybody else

'"We all do everybody else's job and we all take advice from each other"' (ms p.117)

The interview continues in this vein, with the nursery nurse stressing that there is no consciousness of status at the unit.

'At this point the speech therapist enters the room to ask politely "excuse me, have we got any medicine cups?". So polite was the phrasing that the nursery nurse interprets the interrogative as a question rather than a command. Thus she replies that there might be some in the drugs cupboard, but the pharmacy stores provide them. This is not the response which the speech therapist was wishing for: her conversational plan has not succeeded. She states: "I want it now, though". The nursery nurse responds by obediently searching for the cup. However, the switch from the democratic interrogative of the first person plural ("have we?") to the command of the first person singular ("I want") has been

too abrupt. It has conveyed an unintended authoritarianism. The speech therapist starts to parody her own words: "I want it NOW" she says in the humourously exaggerated tones of a sergeant major. In so doing, she distances herself from the sort of authoritarian, military command which would have been unacceptable' (ms p.121-2)

This, Billig et al (1988) argue, is a dilemma of unequal egalitarianism. The order is obeyed so long as the speech therapist denies that it is an order.

'She has not negated authority as such. No one wants democracy to go that far' (ms p.123)

The example is not just a tension for individuals but represents a basic dilemma between equality and (expert) authority which pervades social relations - especially those concerning expertise in human relations. In contemporary democratic societies the 'equalisation of discourse' is itself part of rational expertise. Billig et al (1988) argue that this is exemplified by the role of the doctor.

'It is part of the role of the doctor that the doctor should be something other than a doctor. There is a requirement that the doctor should also be a friend' (ms p.136)

But of course the doctor is not 'really' or 'merely' a friend but must act as a friend: the 'easy equality' of the doctor is a necessary part of the unequal professional expertise. This is a point made forcefully by Norman Fairclough (1989) who points to the wider processes of discursal change. He argues that there has been a pervasive change towards the personalisation of discourse - specifically to 'simulated personal relations in political and public life' (p.8) - and to an apparent democratisation in various institutional discourse types. It is particularly pertinent to an analysis of DJ talk - of

whom it could be said that their very expertise consists in maintaining a personal, democratic talk, a pseudo-friendship with the audience (Gill, 1989).

The final point Billig et al (1988) argue is this:

'The friendly smiles of the expert, produced so expertly and divorced from genuine friendship, are not to be confused with hypocrisy' (ms p.138)

Rather, what is at issue is 'the well-intentioned operation of ideology', which in this case relates to the significance of an egalitarian pattern within an inegalitarian social structure.

Discursive and rhetorical analysis: a critical appreciation

In the remainder of this chapter, I want to discuss several issues which I feel are raised by the 'turn' to discursive and rhetorical analysis. There is not space to provide an exhaustive critique of discourse analysis and the rhetorical approach, nor a detailed appreciation. Nor is the aim to attempt a 'synthesis' of this work - this is neither possible nor desirable - but it is hoped that the chapter as a whole will give some sense of where the two approaches agree and differ. (Their engagement is, not surprisingly, an argumentative one). The principal aim is to use questions raised by discourse analysis and the rhetorical approach to examine a number of the more general issues concerning the turn to language and to try to say something about my own position in relation to these issues. All seem to me to be central to debates posed between marxism (and other positions with realist commitments) and post-structuralism and postmodernism. As such they are all intimately related, but for the purposes of exposition and argument I have organised them under three headings relating to ideology and social

contradictions, power and ontological commitments and relativism and values.

On discourse, ideology and contradiction

One of the most important questions raised by Billig's rhetorical approach to ideology, it seems to me, concerns the reasons for the contradictoriness of common sense and ideology. In the example of the ideological dilemma which I discussed in the last section, Billig et al (1988) seemed to be arguing that the contradictory or dilemmatic aspects of lived and intellectual ideologies derive from a social structure or social relations characterised by contradiction. That is, the ideological dilemma seems to be explained by a (real) social contradiction: namely an egalitarian pattern of relations within an inegalitarian social structure. This example, however, seems to be untypical of Billig's writing, and more often than not ideological dilemmas are not related to any feature of social relations which might help to explain them. Thus, for example, Marx's dismissal of the morality of the family and his 'paradoxical' role as the good husband and father, is treated as a purely ideological contradiction. Billig presents no way of understanding this dilemma except as ideological. In fact, this apparent contradiction is a variant of a form of attack which is routinely directed at socialists - of the 'you-say-you-are-against-private-property-but-you-own-a-house' variety (brilliantly captured by Ben Elton in his 'call yourself a socialist - you're wearing shoes' routine) - and is best understood not as an ideological contradiction but as the result of a material, social contradiction. Similarly when unemployed young people speak of needing work experience in order to get a job, and needing a job in order to get that experience they are not so much (or not merely) producing a dilemma, but are discursively handling a real contradiction.

Billig's position derives not simply from a failure to link the ideological to other instances but from an explicit antipathy to such a project. Instead, Billig argues that the contrary themes of ideology are a universal feature of all ideologies and societies. This position comes very close to Althusser's notion of ideology-in-general, which was held to be an 'organic' part of all societies and to transcend the different modes of production. Like Althusser, Billig sees ideology's dilemmatic nature as transhistorical and inevitable. This is because Billig explains the dilemmatic aspects of ideology in cognitive terms, rather than relating it to any aspect of society or social relations. The contrary themes of ideology and common sense are seen as part of the very cognitive structure of attitudes or beliefs (Billig, 1988b). This misses Marx's notion of a revolutionary practice through which contradictions may be abolished, and causes significant problems for an approach which claims that language and social processes are the only resources available to the analyst.

The issue of whether Billig is formulating a socially and rhetorically-informed cognitive social psychology or rejecting cognitive explanations completely constitutes a major tension in this work (which exemplifies just the kind of 'internal arguments' that Billig takes as his analytic focus of interest). It is also an important site of disagreement with the discourse analytic approach which explicitly avoids the use of 'mentalistic' concepts like attitude. More generally, the precise status of the rhetorical approach is as yet unclear: specifically, it is not clear whether rhetoric is to be understood as a theoretical perspective, an activity among other discursive activities or a form through which other activities are conducted. In a recent article, Billig (1991) argues that rhetorical approach shares discourse analysis's concern

with language as a social practice, but concentrates on a particular type of speech and thought : namely argumentation. But since Billig (eg 1987, 1988b) has argued elsewhere that all thought and language, and even the most banal sounding maxims, contain contrary themes, this hardly narrows the field of interest!

A further problem concerns the formulation of ideology by the rhetorical approach. Ideology, for Billig, refers to lived ways of understanding the world and to formal philosophies. There are two problems with this. The first is an empirical problem of some substance, which should concern rhetoricians. If, as Billig et al (1988) argue, ideologies are characterised by contrary themes and are not 'based around a theme or value' (ms p.62) then what criteria can we use for distinguishing between ideologies? Traditional theories of ideology distinguish between different ideologies on the basis of the core ideas that constitute them. By deconstructing this notion of unitary core ideas, it seems to me that the rhetorical approach denies itself the possibility of making a principled distinction between ideologies. To put it crudely, if humanism contains counter themes of anti-humanism, then on what basis can we make a meaningful distinction between humanism and anti-humanism in such a way as to maintain the idea that they are distinct ideologies? Billig et al's (1988) formulation of ideology seems to negate the very defining characteristic of ideology - the patterned organisation of ideas around a dominant core theme or themes. I would suggest that this notion makes it meaningless to speak of ideologies at all- Billig has left himself no means by which to do so.

Billig was criticising a particular notion of ideology - one which defined ideologies in terms of the patterning of ideas. I want to argue against both this view of ideology

and Billig's reformulation. Against these, I will put the case for a critical definition of ideology. Ideology can be understood as referring to

'the ways in which meaning is mobilised for the maintenance of relations of domination
(Thompson, 1984 p. 5)

This view is associated with John Thompson who, in recent years, has attempted to fashion a way of analysing the ideological nature of language, especially that of mass communications (Thompson, 1984, 1986, 1988). Thompson (1988) has argued that there are a number of ways in which meaning serves to sustain relations of domination. One way is through legitimation, when a system of dominance is presented as legitimate; another way is through dissimulation - that is, by denying, concealing or obscuring the real nature of social relations; a third mode through which ideology may operate is that of fragmentation - meaning is mobilised in a way which fragments groups and places individuals and groups in opposition to one another; finally, ideology may operate by reification, by representing a transitory historical state of affairs as if it were natural and inevitable. These four ways through which meaning and power intersect need to be studied in detail. This represents the second phase of Thompson's analysis - discursive analysis. To this end he suggests several forms or genres through which these processes are likely to be accomplished: narratives, rhetoric and syntactic structure. Here I will simply discuss Thompson's arguments about syntactic structure.

'At one level, one may study the syntactic structures of forms of discourse, that is, one may study those syntactic rules and devices which enable meaning to be mobilised in certain ways. Nominalization and passivization are two such devices used in everyday discourse. Nominalization occurs when sentences or parts of sentences, descriptions of action and the participants involved in them, are turned into

nouns, as when we say "the banning of imports" instead of "the Prime Minister has decided to ban imports". Passivization occurs when verbs are rendered in the passive form, as when we say "the suspect is being investigated" instead of "police officers are investigating the suspect" (1988 p. 371)

In a critical review of Studies in the Theory of Ideology, Martin Montgomery (1986b) has argued that one problem with the identification of, say, syntactic structure as crucial to ideology is that it suggests that we can simply 'read off' ideology from particular forms of language. In fact, he argues, it is by no means clear that the genres selected do inevitably sustain relations of domination:

'By no means every instance of the passive with agent deleted is concerned with the ideological suppression of agency' (1986 p. 60)

To support this, Montgomery gives an example of a Morning Star report of an incident during the miners' strike. Montgomery's point is part of a more general critique of Thompson in which he criticises him for seeing language as a container for ideology which is deemed to exist in some realm independent of language, and for ignoring the fact that language can be independently constitutive of power relations as well as of ideology (see next section). Montgomery argues that Thompson's problem derives from a tendency to treat ideology as an epiphenomenon of power (which exists in another - prior - realm). This leads Thompson to argue that not all language is ideological - and to try to specify those forms which are ideological.

It seems to me, however, that it is possible to sustain an argument which says that not all language is ideological, and, indeed, that ideological language is that which serves to sustain asymmetrical power relations - / as long as we make it clear that ideological language cannot be

identified in the abstract. Like Montgomery, I would argue that ideology cannot simply be read off from particular forms of language - the tendency to make it seems as if ideology resides in, say, passivization or nominalization is one of the problems with the critical linguistic approach (Fowler et al, 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979). Moreover I believe that similarly we cannot say that ideology 'works' by legitimation, dissimulation or reification as if it somehow inhered in this type of discourse. Rather, what is ideological should become an analytic question, something to be discovered in analyses not specified in advance or in the abstract. Such a position, I want to suggest, maintains a critical definition of ideology - what is ideological is still defined by sustaining inegalitarian relations - but it leaves the question of how ideology works far more open for analysis. It may be that ideology is far more flexible than is generally assumed - working not just by legitimation, reification, etc but also in a whole range of other ways. This point also has the advantage of not forcing us to see ideology as functioning purely through representational discourse, and thus can draw attention to the ways in which the conduct of discourse can constitute social relations in asymmetrical ways (cf Montgomery, 1986b).

Of course such a radical shift in the way we understand the relationship between language and ideology is not without difficulties. Above all, it will mean that we will need to pay detailed attention to what exactly it means to sustain asymmetrical power relations: this will become a site of arguments about texts, ideology and audience readings. I believe, however, that this reformulation offers a constructive and exciting way of thinking about ideology and discourse.

On power, ontological commitments, and whether 'it will all come out in the wash'

Entirely related to the above discussion are a series of questions about power and ontological commitment which must be raised in relation to discourse analysis. One of the clearest influences of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis on discourse analysis can be seen in Potter and Wetherell's (1987) injunction that in studying texts we should be concerned with the participants orientation of what is going on in any given interaction. What is being argued here is that the analyst should not bring to bear her own ideas about what is contradictory or inconsistent but should simply be concerned with what participants understand as contradictory or inconsistent. This is problematic in a number of ways. On one level it presents immediate empirical/analytical difficulties in terms of actually identifying the participants' orientation: this may be easier for conversations than , for example, newspaper articles or DJ talk (indeed all monologues). More than this, however, it constitutes a major theoretical problem in suggesting that everything that is relevant to an interaction will be displayed discursively. I take issue with this claim ^{that} speakers will orientate in an obvious way to every interactionally relevant feature of a situation. If I do not respond to an instance of sexual harrasment on a train or at work, then can an analysis of a transcript of that interaction deem that gender was not relevant? Hardly. Deborah Cameron has given a good demonstration of this point in her response to Brian Torode's account of the Conversation Discourse Conflict conference in Network. The issue in question was a conversation analytic paper which analysed a transcript of a telephone call to the emergency services following an incident of domestic violence. Cameron (1989a) points out that in this paper no mention was made of gender - that is, the use participants make of

our everyday knowledge that men are generally the perpetrators of domestic violence - because the speakers showed no obvious sign of orientating to it. Not only was gender not mentioned in the paper, but also in the discussion following its presentation no one brought up the issue of gender.

'Feminists present felt constrained not to point this out; they were sensitive to possible accusations of vulgarity and bias' (1989 p.16)

Thus not only was gender deemed interactionally irrelevant in the paper presented, but a transcript would reveal that it was also apparently interactionally irrelevant to the conference discussion paper! This was not the case at all, as Cameron's remarks above illustrate - in fact women felt silenced and met separately at the conference to discuss this. Moreover, on the 'in fact' side, Cameron argues that the relevance of gender was displayed but that many of the men at the conference did not pick up on it. This in turn raises a whole set of issues about the interpretative resources which (classed, gendered, 'raced') analysts bring to bear on the texts they examine - which are not discussed at all in Potter & Wetherell's work or that of Billig.

Related to the question of whether 'everything will come out in the wash' is the issue of how power is theorised by discourse analysis. Discourse analysts argue that all social relationships between speakers are discursive accomplishments. A social relationship is something that is achieved by discourse and cannot be said to exist somehow outside of or prior to discourse. In this we see the influence of post-structuralism, and especially Derrida's assertion that 'il n'y a pas dehors du texte'. One variant of this position is to argue that social relations are not extra-discursive in the sense that they exist outside all

discourse. This argument is associated with Foucault and has been taken up by discourse analysts like Parker who argues that even things like 'giving an injection' or 'feeling an abdomen' are discursive (Parker, 1989b). Such a position does not seem to me to get one very far: it either makes the relatively straightforward point that no practices exist outside of meaning, or it tends towards a position where everything is collapsed into discourse.

More pertinent in relation to Potter & Wetherell's work is the fact that saying that social relations are discursively accomplished does not tell us anything about particular interactions - and we never have access to the entire corpus of interactions which constitute social relations. As John Bowers (1988) has argued, there are clear circumstances where social relations are given with regard to particular exchanges, when speech acts depend upon social relations which pre-exist the particular occasion of occurrence. Moreover, participants do not engage in talk as *tabulae rasae*:

'To be sure, as Potter and Wetherell assert, categorisations based on class, gender and ethnicity may well emerge in particular forms or versions for particular discursive purposes. But this does not rule out - indeed is conceptually distinct from - the issues of (i) whether participants come to discourse already gendered, as members of a class or ethnic group and (ii) whether the social relations thus implied have a determining effect on what kinds of talk are possible' (Bowers, 1988 p.189)

We cannot assume that relations of power and control, can be fully explicated and fully exposed within any particular stretch of discourse. Undoubtedly, power is 'done' or accomplished in discourse in subtle ways (which need examination) and does not 'simply' reflect existing power relations, which are assumed to have their reality in another sphere. But, equally, power is not 'simply' the

product of particular interactions, accomplished on a moment by moment basis. We cannot change our skin colour or our sex by changing how we talk about it. Similarly, interventions like assertiveness training may be valuable for the individuals concerned, but speaking more directly or assertively cannot in and of itself change inequalitarian social relations. It simply leads to a situation where people are sacked 'with sensitivity'.

What is at issue here (as usual) is the tension between materialism and idealism, or, more specifically, the tension between seeing language as simply reflecting power relations determined elsewhere or as constituting power relations which have no independent existence outside discourse. Against what I feel is a tendency towards the latter in Potter and Wetherell's work, I would argue, like Bowers (1988) that some of the questions they address may require realist answers and ontological commitments regarding what exists extra-discursively. Without such commitments it is difficult to see how discourse analysis can avoid drifting into a reactionary relativism.

An idea for a science fiction novel: a society in which the egalitarianism of its language increases in direct inverse proportion to its inequalitarian oppressive social relations. (This may not be so completely different from what Fairclough (1989,1990) describes as the personalization and democratization of our public discourse - after all we are not 'really' getting any more democratic, are we.) In fact, I would - definitely - not want to contrast language with some unproblematised notion of 'the real', but the point is clear: unless we look outside the text we have no way of saying anything about its significance. Nor have we any way of saying anything about the silences or absences in a given text. When we think about media coverage of the Gulf war, for example,

what is perhaps as significant as the discourse which makes it up is what is not said. It is not simply that particular perspectives happen to be absent, rather some positions are systematically excluded. Simply looking at the variability amongst those that are present will tell us nothing about these - as Billig acknowledges. As Deborah Cameron (1989b) has said in relation to conversation analysis, it may be that the most fundamental 'rule' of social interaction turns out to be 'because I say so' - and this rule cannot be invoked by just anyone, anytime, with effect. We may, in turn, want to say something about the control and dissemination of discourses in a society - something which has led Billig (1991) to recently give his work a political economy inflection: he argues that the ownership of the means of rhetoric is possessed by the ruling class. (Unfortunately this turn has not, to date, been developed in Billig's work).

In practice (as I argue in chapters six and seven) discourse analysts routinely make extra-discursive judgements and ontological assumptions - but they do not make them explicit. Their interpretative resources and commitments are inadequately described and they prefer, instead, to flirt with relativism.

On relativism, postmodernism and discourse

In as much as discourse analysis embraces a relativist position, it can be understood as being a kind of postmodern approach. It is explicitly described as such by one commentator (Parker, 1989b) and discourse analysis' relativist position has attracted comment from others (Bowers, 1988; Burman, 1990). Perhaps the most important feature of relativism is the refusal to employ a whole range of epistemological vocabularies concerning truth, verification and objectivity. This is just part of a wider

suppression of questions about values, which are political, aesthetic and ethical as well as epistemological in nature. As Kate Soper (forthcoming) argues, it is not clear how much longer postmodernists can defer an engagement with questions of value. This is because of a 'contradiction' within postmodern theory which means that postmodernists can rely only upon what they theorise as unreliable, and cannot argue for the truth status of the forms of argument which they produce to criticise foundationalist theories. It is also because postmodernists have been unable to claim any emancipatory politics - they have become politically paralysed (but cf Laclau, 1989; Mouffe, 1989).

In the remainder of this chapter I want to discuss the second issue in relation to discourse analysis's relativist position. In doing so I will draw on argument by Kate Soper (forthcoming; see also an article which I co-authored with Soper and others: Bhaskar et al, 1989). Fundamentally what is at stake is what discourse analysis's relativism means in relation to a commitment to emancipatory social transformation. To point up the issue, Soper has produced a caricature of the two positions:

'The caricature presents us on the one side with the dogged metaphysicians, a fierce and burly crew, stalwartly defending various bedrocks and foundations by means of an assortment of trusty but clankingly mechanical concepts such as "class", "materialism", "humanism", "literary merit", "transcendence" and so forth. Obsolete as these weapons are, they have a distinct advantage in that in all the dust thrown up by their being flailed around, their wielders do not realise how seldom they connect with their opponents. On the other side stands the opposition, the feline ironists and revellers in relativism, dancing lightheartedly upon the waters of difference, deflecting all foundationalist blows with an adroitly directed ludic laser beam. Masters of situationist strategy they side-step the heavy military

engagement by refusing to do anything but play'

Part of the conflict is an emotional one, with the 'burly crew of metaphysicians' asking us to keep a grip on the horrors, injustice and oppression in the world and to analyse all practices in terms of how much they contribute to greater equality, peace, democracy, etc, and the 'feline ironists' telling us to give up our socialist commitments and just accept - indeed feel cheerful about - the loss of values.

As Soper points out, those who bid us to accept the end of history and the illusory nature of progress do so from a utopian position of privilege unimaginable to 'the African peasant, the street child in Rio de Janeiro or the Iraqi political prisoner' (indeed, I would add, in many ways they do so on the backs of these people). We should, then, accept our misgivings about postmodern cynicism. The question is, though, whether this inevitably leads us back to the 'burly crew'? Is there any way of resolving the opposition between the two seemingly incommensurable positions?

I believe that there is a possible way out of the impasse; a way of articulating post-structuralist/ postmodernist notions to a emancipatory political project. It involves constructing a position from precisely what is attractive about postmodernism and post-structuralism, : namely the way in which it deconstructs and challenges particular views of the world, revealing their partiality and the interests they serve. Soper asks of the postmodernists:

'Why lend ourselves to the deconstruction of liberal-humanist rhetoric, if not to expose the class or racial or gender identities it occludes? Why challenge truth if not in the interests of revealing the potentially manipulative powers of the discourses that have attained the status of

knowledge?... etc - see quote at beginning of the chapter. (SOPER 1991)

There will be some postmodernists who deny such motivations - and they will have no sympathy for the project I am proposing. Nor though do I have any sympathy for theirs - for I can see no purpose in deconstructions devoid of any (even general) political impulse, whose only aim is to get us to think 'properly' about texts. My own interest in post-structuralism and postmodernism comes from their ability to deconstruct truths that are oppressive or stultifying. This is a position which I think may be shared by some discourse analysts. In a recent paper, for example, Wetherell (1990) has argued that what is exciting about post-structuralist notions of subjectivity is that they liberate us from the tyranny of 'experience' as a unitary category. What I want to argue is that a position concerned with emancipation, liberation becomes an explicit part of our work. I want to argue, in short, for a politically informed relativism, which rejects both the appeal to foundationalism - to truth, science, rationality as if they were a-political and transcendent values - and the programmatic relativism of difference theory, which condemns us forever to 'play' among the obscenities of late (she said optimistically) capitalism.

It is important to be clear that I am not suggesting that we should somehow 'suppress the truth' for our own political ends - rather I am arguing for the politicisation of notions like truth and objectivity. It is no longer good enough to hide behind notions like objectivity as if they were self-evident, but instead we must argue for our interpretations of the world on political grounds. It is a position with which (I think) the rhetorical approach may have considerable sympathy. Billig (1991) has recently distanced himself from the relativist position, and put

forward a case which stresses the essentially argumentative nature of analysis.

'In offering an account, the analyst is also producing an argument. Because of this, and not despite it, there is the possibility of critique. The analyst, at a remove, can join in arguments, which are being observed, and can argue about the arguments. Nothing less should be expected of an analysis which constructs the rhetorical meaning of a piece of fascist propaganda. In the last analysis, or rather in the first analysis, critique depends upon the argument produced by the analyst'

Billig, I feel sure, would not limit his claim about the essentially critical nature of analysis to considerations of fascist literature. As such, all analysis comes to be understood as political practice. This means, crucially, that interpretations can be argued about, not simply protected behind defences like 'objectivity': they enter the realm of discussion and debate. In short, the political realm.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to do two things. First to give a 'faithful' description (an entirely problematic notion for discourse analysis!) of the two approaches on which I draw in this thesis - discourse analysis and the rhetorical approach - at least as far as they relate to the project of this work (it has meant, for example, neglecting much of Billig's important work in social psychology, and concentrating on his discussions of ideology). Second I have raised a number of critical points which relate both to this work and to more general concerns with discourse and ideology, and I have tried to say where I stand in relation to these issues. This focus has had two implications: on one hand it has meant that my discussion has been circumscribed - there are a number of criticisms

of both approaches which I have not been able to discuss - most important are those relating to functionalism, social change and the discursive construction of subjectivity. Indeed, even those questions with which I have dealt have been considered cursorily: they are developed a little more in the analytic section of the thesis. On the other hand, this focus has meant that I have not offered an appreciation of discourse analysis and the rhetorical approach. I hope that it will be clear that, despite my criticisms, I see tremendous value in both approaches and believe that they offer coherent, principled and exciting ways of understanding the discursive nature of social relations. If I have criticisms, this is hardly surprising in relation to approaches which offer such a radical reformulation of many social psychological (and wider theoretical) issues, and which, in addition, are so new. Both Billig and Potter and Wetherell published their 'key' texts which 'launched' the approaches after I started my PhD, so not only is this one of the first attempts to 'try out' these approaches, it is also part of their very development. I will end, then, by echoing Fairclough's (1991) call for debate and interchange between different discourse analytic approaches and with the hope that positions do not polarise and become sectarian.

CHAPTER 4

A SHORT HISTORY OF RADIO

'Radio could be the most wonderful public communication system imaginable, a gigantic system of channels - could be, that is, if it were capable not only of transmitting but of receiving, of making listeners hear but also speak, not of isolating them but connecting them.'

(Bertolt Brecht, 1930)

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a short, accessible history of radio in Britain. Lengthy discussions of radio's history exist elsewhere; the object here is simply to focus on some of the key moments in its development and transformation, to draw with a 'broad brush' some of the themes which characterise the outlines of radio's history. Although I discuss the early years of radio, the significance of John Reith, and the impact of the war on the nature of radio, a disproportionate amount of space is dedicated to the more recent past and in particular the period since the 1960s, examining the development of pop radio in Britain.

The beginnings of radio

The first public radio broadcasts in Britain were transmitted from the Marconi Company in 1919, although listening in to military broadcasts had long been an immensely popular hobby for many (Burns,1977). The product of developments in military technology at the end of the nineteenth century, radio, or 'wireless' as it was then known, was initially perceived as an extension of the electric telegraph and telephone, and was used for military and maritime purposes for two decades before the beginning of public broadcasting.

The history of the earliest British broadcasting is, in part, the history of the struggle between the Government and the Marconi Company (Burns,1977). Marconi were the acknowledged leaders in the development of 'wireless' technology and, prior to the war, the British Government had contracted them to develop long distance links between London and the Empire. The war interrupted this process, but after it ended the Government maintained control over wireless, in order that these links should be completed. It did, however, allow Marconi and other wireless equipment manufacturers restricted scope to experiment with 'amateur broadcasts'. These 'amateur experiments', as the Postmaster General later called them, proved extremely popular. Often lasting only half an hour in the evening, the broadcasts consisted of music and light entertainments. What evidence there is suggests that they were listened to by large numbers of people on home-constructed receivers.

Early in 1920, after only a few months of the 'experiments' the Postmaster General banned them, arguing that they were interfering with important state communications. The ban lasted two years, after which time pressure from large radio equipment manufacturers such as Marconi and Vickers,

combined with pressure from groups of amateur radio enthusiasts who had formed 'Wireless Associations' forced the Postmaster General to lift it. Broadcasts began again at the beginning of 1922. But, in lifting the ban, the Postmaster General expressed his intention to

'lay down very drastic regulations indeed for the control of wireless broadcasting' (quoted in Lewis & Booth, 1989)

In consultation with the Wireless Sub-Committee of the Imperial Communications Committee, he drew up a plan which allowed only what he called 'bona fide' wireless manufacturers to be involved with broadcasting. Moreover, in order to avoid 'clashing' wavelengths, only one single wavelength was to be available to all transmitting stations, which would have restricted transmitting power and would only be permitted to operate between 5 p.m. and midnight. It is worth drawing attention to the way in which a technical justification was given for what was very clearly a political decision. In their excellent recent book, Peter Lewis and Jerry Booth (1989) draw attention to the fact that this argument concerning 'shortage of frequencies' has been used repeatedly by the Government throughout radio's history. And they point to the speed with which 'spare' frequencies can be found when the political will is there.

Not surprisingly the Postmaster General's restrictions provoked considerable protest from the wireless manufacturers, who were keen to exploit the commercial potential of the medium. In 1922 the Post Office received one hundred applications from manufacturers who wanted to set up broadcasting stations (Seaton, 1981). Two of the largest companies, Marconi and Metropolitan Vickers were invited to the next meeting of the Wireless Sub-Committee

where they made it clear that a single wavelength was unacceptable.

It was in these circumstances that discussions leading to the formation of the British Broadcasting Company began in May 1922. The Government, acting through the Postmaster General, had two major concerns - it wanted to avoid the 'frequency chaos' which was being witnessed in the USA at the time, and it also wanted to avoid a situation where one company had a monopoly over broadcasting (Lewis & Booth, 1989).

The establishment of the British Broadcasting Company avoided both these problems. It was a consortium of wireless receiver manufacturers who wanted to acquire a stake in transmitting broadcasts, so as to secure a share in the market for receivers (Burns, 1977). Whilst the British Broadcasting Company was established as a single entity, with a single Managing Director (John Reith) and a set of unified policies, in many respects it remained several separate companies : there was no pooling of patents, no merging of manufacturing resources, and each company continued in competition for sales of receivers (Lewis & Booth, 1989). The official BBC symbol was stamped on the licenced receivers the public was supposed to buy and the manufacturers had to pay 10% of its retail price to the BBC, thus providing the Company with its income.

It quickly became apparent, however, that this method of generating income was not working. Rather than buying the ready-made sets, people were building their own crystal receivers, following instructions which were printed in a number of specialist periodicals. Documentary evidence concerning the numbers of home-constructed receivers and the consequent loss to the BBC is not available, but Shaun Moores (1988) has argued that the majority of receivers

used in the 1920s were built at home. This is not surprising given that the manufactured sets cost nearly seven times as much as receiver 'kits' (in 1923 a BBC set cost £20, whilst a 'kit' cost £3 [Moore, 1988]) and also that early interest in radio was primarily in its technical aspects, rather than the content of broadcasts. It was seen, in Asa Briggs' famous phrase, as a 'miraculous toy' (Briggs, 1981 p26).

A Government Committee headed by Sykes was established to look into the finances of the BBC. The Sykes Committee, reporting in October 1923 rejected the '10% tariff' in existence, arguing that it was unjust that only those who had bought manufactured sets should pay for broadcasts:

'We are clear... that if funds are required to pay for broadcast programmes they should be contributed by those who in fact receive it' (Sykes, quoted in Barbrook, 1989).

The Sykes Committee also rejected advertising as a solution, recommending instead that a licence should be issued to finance the broadcasting activities of the BBC. The BBC was thus to be freed

'to run as a public service instead of an appendage of the trade...(whose) own interests would thereby best be served' (Sykes, quoted in Lewis & Booth, 1989 p.56).

In 1925 another Government Committee was appointed to look into broadcasting. The Crawford Committee was asked to advise how a new licenced BBC, separate from the wireless manufacturers, should be managed, controlled and financed, and how its 'proper scope' should be defined. Crawford recommended the setting up of a public corporation, licenced for ten years and

'acting as a trustee of the national interest in broadcasting' (Crawford, quoted in Lewis & Booth, 1989)

The Corporation should be independent from Parliament and should be controlled by a Board of Governors appointed every five years.

Crawford's recommendations were largely endorsed by the Government. The British Broadcasting Corporation was established (with John Reith as its Director General) and given a Royal Charter. Carolyn Heller (1978) argues that the setting up of a Corporation followed a recent tradition in Britain, the wartime experience of rationing and centralisation having convinced an important body of civil servants and politicians that market forces needed to be controlled by an agency operating at arms length from Government. The creation of the British Broadcasting Corporation (henceforth BBC will denote the Corporation) has been described as a significant step in the rise of the 'social industrial complex' (see O'Connor 1973).

The Government and the BBC

One of Crawford's recommendations which was not assented to by the Government was that the BBC should be allowed to broadcast discussions of controversial matters. This was a right for which Reith had to battle, and it highlights the ambiguity and unease of the relationship between the Government and the BBC. The terms of that relationship were discussed in the House of Commons in 1926. The Postmaster General argued:

'While I am prepared to take the responsibility for broad issues of policy, on minor issues and measures of domestic policy, and matters of day to day control, I want to leave things to the free judgement of the Corpoartion.' (quoted in Burns, 1977 p.12)

This view was echoed when the formal parameters of the relationship were laid down by the Ullswater Committee in 1935:

'The position of the Corporation is thus one of independence in the day to day management of its business, and of ultimate control by His Majesty's Government. We find that this line of demarcation has been observed in practice, and we are convinced that no better can be found...

'It is inevitable that the State in establishing a sole broadcasting authority should reserve to itself those powers of ultimate control, but we have no reason to suppose that, in practice, divergent views of the lines of public interest have been held by the Corporation and by Government departments, or that the Corporation has suffered under any sense of constraint or undue interference' (Ullswater Report, quoted in Burns, 1977 p.12-3).

Tom Burns, writing, it should be noted, before the Thatcher administration, argues that the notion of 'control' is inapposite. Direct control over the BBC, he argues, was never expressed publicly and officially, because it was never necessary for the Government to do so (Burns, 1977). In practice, the arrangement which operated was rooted in that which had been arrived at during the General Strike. With all newspapers except the Government's British Gazette closed, the BBC broadcast news during the day for the first time, with an audience of millions.' The Government wanted to 'take over' the BBC in order to present its own broadcasts. Reith successfully argued against this on the grounds that it would destroy the BBC's pioneering work of three and a half years, and moreover that people would not be 'doped' (Seaton, 1981). BBC news bulletins had to pass the Government censor but, as in the Falklands/Malvinas War more than fifty years later, the BBC did not reveal the extent to which its autonomy was limited.² Jean Seaton argues that in the General Strike the BBC invented 'propaganda in its British form' (1981 p.147). Reith wrote in his diary:

'They want to be able to say that they did not commandeer us, but they know they can trust us not to be really impartial' (quoted in Lewis & Booth, 1989 p.57)

Lewis & Booth (1989) argue that it took great vigilance on Reith's part that the BBC was not totally discredited during the General Strike. But the BBC's lack of 'impartiality' was not lost on the labour movement - the TUC warned its members against believing the BBC

'because radio would become just another tool in the hands of the Government' (quoted in Burns, 1977 p.17)

and others on the Left noted that the BBC's broadcasts were like blackleg recruitment campaigns. As Willie Graham, one of the strike leaders wrote to Reith

'The Government emphatically deny that they interfere with the BBC in any way. On the other hand the Company states that it was not a free agent. I am sure that you will agree that it is impossible to make any sense of these two statements' (quoted in Seaton, 1981 p149)

It has been argued that in practice it was Reith's own political judgement which controlled policy throughout the strike (Seaton, 1981). Early in 1926 Reith had made it quite clear that the BBC could be relied upon to support the Government. In a now famous letter he wrote to Baldwin:

'Assuming the BBC is for the people and that the Government is for the people, it follows that the BBC must be for the Government in this crisis too.' (Reith, quoted in Burns, 1977 pp.16-7)

A High Court judgement towards the end of the strike which stated that the 'so-called General Strike is illegal' gave Reith the justification he needed to be 'for the Government'. He told his senior officials not to

'permit anything which was contrary to that judgement, which might have prolonged or sought to justify the strike' (quoted in Burns, 1977 p.17).

Reith's conduct during the General Strike illuminates the conviction of the Postmaster General, endorsed by the Ullswater Committee, that (to paraphrase Ullswater) the interests of the BBC were not in practice divergent from those of the Government. For more than fifty years, Government control of the BBC operated along lines set by this precedent. Jean Seaton argues:

'The General Strike marked the end of propaganda based on lies, and the start of a more subtle tradition of selection and presentation' (Seaton, 1981 p149)

Whilst there were occasions when there was interference and censorship by Government these were managed quietly behind the scenes, without recourse to the formal and public exercise of the powers set out in the Licence (Lewis & Booth, 1989). In the 1930s objections to the BBC's handling of an issue were sometimes raised in the House or in the press, but most frequently they were resolved informally in discussions between senior civil servants or politicians and BBC management. Such objections referred to 'errors in editorial judgement' or 'lapses in taste'. As Tom Burns (1977) has argued, these occasions reinforced the propensity of the chief officials of the BBC to prove themselves even more 'reliable', and self-censorship proved to be the most effective form of censorship.

Carolyn Heller (1978) has argued that whilst broadcasters' views about the 'national interest' or 'public interest' have always shifted to accommodate the changing views of Governments, an unspoken agreement to defend the BBC's independence has always been maintained. Heller (like

Burns) was writing just before the Thatcher Government which has significantly called into question the tradition of broadcasters' independence (however nominal it is argued that this independence always was). More than any other British Administration, the Thatcher Government has attacked the 'relative autonomy' of the BBC, with its appointment of more openly partisan Governors, its banning or censoring of several important programmes, the securing of a judicial ruling during the GCHQ affair giving it the right to define the 'national interest', and most recently its blanket ban on radio and television appearances by members of Sinn Fein, announced on 19th October 1988. A further worrying development has been the establishment of the supposedly non-aligned Media Monitoring Unit, dominated by senior officials from two right wing think tanks (the Institute for Economic Affairs and the Adam Smith Institute) which has recently forcefully argued that programmes which criticise aspects of public policy or British life are inherently against the 'national interest' (Guardian, 28th September, 1989)

Returning to 1926. The BBC's relation to the State was (and remains) a contradictory one.

'This delicate positioning in - drawing authority from, but not of the state - has been the basis of the BBC's cultural operations; the foundations of both its "dependence" and its "independence", ever since' (Hall, 1986 p42)

Moreover, Reith's own position was an ambiguous one. It is this ambiguity that enables Scannell and Cardiff (following Briggs' interpretation) to describe Reith as a fierce defender of the BBC's independence from the State, thwarted on all sides by the vested interests of the press, Press Association and the Post Office (1982 p164), and Tom Burns to describe him as 'a man of the Establishment' who failed completely to 'wrestle free from the political swaddling

clothes' which were threatening the BBC (1977, p20). It is not that either of these views is in any simple sense 'right', rather that Reith's position, like that of the BBC in relation to the State, was contradictory. What, for some commentators, is most significant, is that the BBC never dealt with the ambiguity of its relationship to the State. Burns calls this a 'calculated imprecision' (1977,p20) and Seaton has criticised 'the elevation of an uneasy relationship into an ideal type' (1981, p.146). Finally, though, it is Reith's championing of a particular set of cultural values for which he is primarily remembered. It is to these that we turn next.

The Reithian Ethos

The character of John Reith has provoked an amazing amount of interest over the years. His social class background, his political beliefs, and above all the psychological aspects of his 'personality' have been scrutinised and debated. Writers have been interested in the effects of his parents' child-rearing practices and his Calvinist upbringing on his 'authoritarianism' and 'careerism', and even aspects of his appearance (eg his height) have been called up by some researchers to shed light on his character. The temptation to discuss his personality appears to be almost irresistible: even writers who criticise others for focussing on Reith 'the man' at the expense of wider social and political issues, quickly fall prey to it themselves (eg Seaton, 1981). Director General of the BBC for nearly twelve years, his influence was clearly prodigious. He was not only one of the architects of the BBC, but also to a large extent of the concept of public service broadcasting itself. Indeed, a survey of radio listeners shows how even in the late 1980s Reithian concepts are still internalised by the overwhelming majority of the British audience (Barnett & Morrison, 1988).

Asa Briggs (1961) has identified four key components which make up Reith's concept of public service broadcasting. Firstly, it should be non-profit-making; making money should have no place in public service broadcasting. Indeed, according to Reith, one of the factors which gave the BBC the ability to 'make of broadcasting what no other country has made of it' was its 'assured finance' in the form of the licence fee. Secondly, it should involve national coverage which would reach the entire population. Thirdly, programmes should be subject to 'unified control' as a principle, rather than being made in response to sectional interests. Finally, radio's public or publics should be treated with respect, as listeners 'capable of growth and development' (Briggs, 1961).

Paddy Scannell and David Cardiff (1982) have argued that in Reith's mind unity of control and centrality of control were inextricably linked. The argument in favour of central control was that it was essential to the establishment of coherent policy and the maintenance of standards. By 1930 all the local stations which had been set up by the British Broadcasting Company had disappeared. In their place was the National Programme broadcast from London, and the Regional Service produced from five centres serving the North, South, West, Midlands and Scotland. From the beginning these two services were unequal. The National Programme was in every sense the senior service, with the regions very much as juniors (Scannell & Cardiff, 1982). Two different concepts of culture were articulated in the National and Regional services. The London service was to provide the 'best' in music, talks, drama and entertainments. Scannell and Cardiff argue :

'This ideal of cultural enlightenment operated within a larger ideology of nationalism, for the best meant the best of British. This was easily invoked in the domains of literature and drama, less so in the case of music. In this sphere the

BBC sought to actively raise Britain from being a 'third class' musical nation to one that would bear comparison with other more evidently musical nations' (1982, p167).

The Regional services, in contrast, were assumed not to be able to match this 'quality' and offered culture much more (in Raymond Williams phrase) 'as a way of life' (Scannell & Cardiff, 1982).

There was mixed programming on both National and Regional Services. Each service offered news, drama, sport, religion, music (light and classical) and light entertainments. The BBC's programming is traditionally seen by historians of broadcasting, including Scannell and Cardiff, as embodying tensions and contradictions between two quite different broadcasting principles - public service and entertainments, with entertainments on the menu largely as a 'ground bait' for working class listeners. The history of broadcasting from this perspective thus becomes the struggle between the two principles and the ultimate acceptance (in the face of competition) of entertainments broadcasting. Simon Frith (1988), however, has recently challenged this view. He argues first that 'light entertainment' cannot be defined separately from public service broadcasting, and second that the popular/serious distinction does not in any straightforward sense describe a class division, with serious programmes aimed at the bourgeoisie and popular programmes reflecting working class tastes and interests. Frith argues that BBC 'light entertainment' was a middle brow form itself shaped by the idea of public service. What the traditional assumptions have done, he claims, is to distract attention away from 'entertainment' by the exclusive focus on the 'public service' part of the couplet (Frith, 1988).

BBC culture was composed out of the values, standards and beliefs of the professional middle class, especially that part educated at Oxford and Cambridge (Burns, 1977). Broadcasting, according to these values, should be about enlightenment. It was explicitly anti-mass-culture, against catering to 'the lower forms of the mass appetite', against giving people what they want, and in favour of 'giving the people something a little better than they think they want'. As Reith said as early as 1924:

'It is occasionally represented to us that we are apparently setting out to give the public what we think they need, not what they want, but few know what they want, and very few what they need...Better to overestimate the mentality of the public than to underestimate it.' (Reith, from Broadcast Over Britain quoted in Scannell & Cardiff, 1982).

The Reithian ideal was

'to carry into the greatest number of homes everything that is best in every human department of knowledge, endeavour and achievement'. (Scannell & Cardiff, 1982 p.163).

Reith's music policy exemplified this mission and has been discussed in variously favourable and critical terms by Asa Briggs (1965), Tom Burns (1977), Paddy Scannell (1981) and Simon Frith (1988). Popular music was broadcast by the BBC but the aim was to encourage 'better healthier music'. Using jazz and popular music as a bait the BBC hoped to surreptitiously 'lift' listeners standards of musical appreciation. The liking listeners had for dance music, it was assumed, simply reflected the fact that most of them had never had the opportunity to visit the Albert or Wigmore Halls. Once they heard classical music they would realise its superiority to popular tunes (Frith, 1988). C.A. Lewis, programme organiser under Reith, argued:

'The music doesn't wear. It cannot be repeated, whereas good music lasts, mellows and gains fresh

beauties at every hearing. It stands, like Shakespeare, through the centuries. No passing craze can shake it. It is the product of greatness, and greatness leaves its mark and endures' (quoted in Frith, 1988 p.30).

Asa Briggs and Tom Burns have concluded that Reith's crusade for cultural enlightenment was, in relation to music, perfectly justified. Burns, for example, critical of Reith in other respects, argues:

'Perhaps the single greatest achievement of the BBC has been to transform this country from what was musically the most barbarous nation in Europe into what has some claims to be the musical capital of the world' (Burns, 1977, p19-20).

Frith (1988) does not share this view, arguing in contrast that the BBC's music policy was less significant as an exercise in national education than as an expression of support for an existing way of musical social life.

Overall, the BBC's anti-mass-cultural stance has to be understood in terms of the debates about mass society (see Chapter 1). In particular, the BBC's cultural policy (which I have already noted was a national cultural policy) must be seen in the context of growing fears of 'Americanisation' in Britain (Strinati, forthcoming). By the end of the 1920s, Hollywood films dominated cinematic experience, and popular British papers were mimicking American tabloids. Many British intellectuals feared that Britain's national outlook was becoming 'Americanised', and the BBC was not out of step with this view when it commissioned a report into 'the ramifications of the transatlantic octopus' (Frith, 1988). If John Reith constituted the 'pull' for the BBC's 'cultural mission', then the 'push' was provided by the American popular press and film industry (Burns, 1977; Strinati, forthcoming b).

The Reithian notion of public service broadcasting rested on a particular conception of listening. The listener was to be active and to be selective about what she or he listened to. She or he should not use the radio as a background or listen to it 'on tap', but should discriminate between programmes and then give his or her best receptive faculties in order to appreciate the full value of the particular broadcast. According to Reith and other senior officials there was quite simply a right way and a wrong way to listen, with the wrong way often described using metaphors of addiction. Public service broadcasting entailed a responsibility to teach people the art of listening itself. The Radio Times was produced in order to allow audiences to plan for themselves which programmes to listen to. And the ticking of a clock between programmes marked breaks in which listeners were supposed to compose their minds for a change of mood, or tune into one programme without the irritation of catching the tail-end of the previous (by definition) unwanted programme.

The BBC held out considerably longer than many organisations against the discipline of the strict timetable, varying transmission times of different programmes so that listeners could not simply switch on day by day or week by week in order to hear a regular programme. Gradually, though, it began to impose on its listeners, in more and more minute divisions of time, the rhythms of the industrial age. As it did so it both responded to and itself altered the domestic routines of the listening context. It is this context which we examine next.

Radio in the home: from 'unruly guest' to 'good companion'

Radio's transition from 'unruly guest in the home' to 'good companion' involved what has been described by

Lesley Johnson as 'the capture of space and time in the home' (Johnson, 1981 p.167) over a period of about twenty years.

As I noted earlier, the public's initial interest in radio was in its technology. It was a 'miraculous toy' (Briggs, 1981 p.26) and, as Shaun Moores (1988) has demonstrated, a toy used mostly by men.

'The crystal set was heard over headphones - there was no loudspeaker - and with this technological limitation the set was designed for a single listener. That listener was usually male.' (Moores, 1988, p24)

For women, radio often signified an ugly box and an enforced silence. One of Moores' interviewees expresses a sentiment which seems to be typical:

'Only one of us could listen in and that was my husband. The rest of us sat like mummies. We used to row over it when we were courting. I used to say "I'm not coming down to your house to sit around like a stupid fool". He always had these earphones on, messing with the wire, trying to get different stations. He'd be saying "I've got another one", but of course we could never hear it - you could never get those earphones off his head' (from Moores, 1988, pp19-20).

During the 1920s and 1930s women's relationship to radio went through a transformation which repositioned them at the centre of the broadcasting audience. This transformation was central to the capture of time and space in the home. It can be understood as being made up of three related changes which I will discuss below.

1. Part of the explanation for the transformation lies in the development of radio's technology and the introduction of mains electricity into the home. By the early 1930s significant numbers of people had replaced battery operated

crystal sets with a mains powered set, which had the advantage of a loudspeaker. Listeners dispensed with headphones; a loudspeaker made it possible for families or groups of people to listen together (Moore, 1988). This shift was accompanied by changes in the form of radio sets. More attention was paid to the aesthetics of their design, and they began to be marketed as fashionable living room furniture.

2. The change in the design and reception quality of radio sets was in itself part of wider changes which can be understood as the increasing privatisation of the family and the modernisation of the home. The radio was just one of a number of new household machines which came to be known as 'consumer durables' (Moore, 1988). But radio had a significance which other items lacked. It was placed at the centre of home life by broadcasters and set manufacturers alike. In the words of one radio magazine of the time:

'Radio...is a vital factor in modern home life, and the home which has no radio is not a home in the full sense of the word' (Wireless Weekly November 1933, quoted in Johnson, 1981).

Radio constituted itself as a new focus for family life at exactly the time when major changes in the structure of society were also creating a more privatised and individualised way of life (Johnson, 1981). This was underlined during the Depression when families were exhorted to stay home and listen to the radio. In 1923 the Marconi company claimed:

'Many of the older people regret the scattering of the young folk to their various occupations and amusements, and think sadly of the old-fashioned 'family' evening. But broadcasting has brought this back again' (quoted in Frith, 1988).

If the BBC promoted the home and the radio hearth, then this was part of the wider Reithian ethos. For Reith the home and family life were the foundations of democracy and community. Radio was praised for

'bringing all classes of society into closer touch with their neighbours, and so fostering that mutual trust and understanding which is essential for the well-being of a great democracy' (C.A.Lewis, quoted in Frith, 1988).

Radio's contribution to these grand ideals - neighbourhood, community, democracy - lay in its organisation of family life. As Frith writes:

'What bound listeners together was where they listened' (Frith, 1988 ,p31 emphasis in original).

3. Intimately related to the promotion of radio as central to home life, were the discourses by which the audience was addressed and constituted by broadcasters. Listeners were addressed as members of the family group, both individually and collectively. And radio itself became one of the family - a 'good companion' (Moore, 1988). In the evenings there were programmes such as Children's Hour, when

'radio aunts and uncles occupied the youngsters while mum prepared the evening meal' (Moore, 1988 p34)

and there were quizzes, serials, etc for the whole family. But during the day it was women - addressed as wife or mother - who were positioned at the centre of the broadcasting audience. Radio addressed women as 'the monitor of the domestic sphere', offering them advice about childcare, health issues and family management (Moore, 1982 p34).

Writing about the Australian situation, Lesley Johnson has described how radio promoted itself as 'the constant companion to the housewife' and how programmers 'adapted their timetables to the imagined pattern of a woman's life' (1981, p169). Johnson argues:

'Through this process radio stations set out to regulate the work and rhythms of the daily life of all women to this pattern' (1981, p169).

I noted earlier in this chapter that the BBC were slow to introduce scheduling and the routinisation of programmes. By the late 1930s, however, after the first audience research which showed increasing numbers of listeners switching to Radio Luxembourg, the BBC adopted similar tactics to those described by Johnson. As it adapted itself to the imagined routines of women's domestic lives, so women altered their own routines to fit in with radio.

By 1937 there were forty 'fixed points' in BBC weekday output (Scannell & Cardiff, 1982) and by the 1940s scheduling was fully established. Time became something which was no longer guessed at, but was repeatedly and accurately announced on radio, to the perplexity of many listeners.³ E.P. Thompson has described the restructuring of the patterns and rhythms of life brought about by nineteenth century industrialisation. In the twentieth century, with the introduction of the assembly line and other regulated procedures of large factories, described by the French Regulation School as 'Fordism' (Aglietta, 1979), concepts of time and rhythms of life needed further readjustment. Radio contributed to this readjustment:

'Radio assisted this process through its adoption of the values of precision, predictability and regularity central to the operation of a scientifically managed factory or office' (Johnson, 1981 p171)

The BBC and the War

The Second World War was of immense importance for the BBC. The period between 1939 and 1945 dramatically altered its relationship to the public, and theirs to it. It became both a trusted source of news and information, synonymous for many with truth and objectivity, and a popular institution. Stuart Hall:

'The story of how the BBC became not simply a 'national' but a popular institution, temporarily identified with the fate and fortunes of the whole British people, is really a story of the great ascendancy it established during the years of the Second World War, when it came positively to symbolise many of the things for which the British people believed they were fighting ' (Hall, 1986 p44).

Much has been written about the BBC during the War examining its articulation of the so-called 'Dunkirk spirit' and the way it emerged from the war as both a symbol and agent of victory; considering the ways it convinced the public of their own endurance and solidarity, with the celebration of the ordinary and the commonplace as heroic; and discussing the popular programmes of the time - such as ITMA, the Brains Trust, and the talks of J.B. Priestly. This thesis is not the place to add to or examine this literature. What I will try to do instead is to sketch out the ways in which the BBC responded to competition and popular demands during the war. In doing so I am following Lewis and Booth (1989) in regarding the period of the Second World War as one of two important 'moments' in which the BBC was forced to make changes in its programming structure. The second moment, when the BBC faced the threat posed by pirate and commercial broadcasting, is more germane to the present research and will be discussed in the following sections.

The war is sometimes represented as a complete 'break' for the BBC, but, at least in terms of 'softening its severe paternalism' and beginning to respond to public criticisms, the war years were a continuation of a process which had started earlier (in the mid 1930s) with the first BBC audience research (Lewis and Booth, 1989). Whether this is attributable to Reith's imminent departure and subsequent absence is a matter for conjecture.

The increase in scheduling in the late 1930s (hitherto opposed because it pandered to the 'tap' listener) was in part a response to the first audience research. The BBC had resisted audience research until 1937: Reith had been determined to avoid the mediocrity which he believed would accompany 'giving people what they wanted'. As Lewis and Booth (1989) have noted, Reith felt that he knew what the public would say - 'dance music' and 'variety' - so there was no need to ask them. By the late 1930s, however, it was becoming increasingly clear that people were switching off from the BBC in their thousands and tuning instead to Radio Normandie or Luxembourg. A number of newspaper polls showed this very starkly. On the 'Reith Sunday' in particular as many licence holders were tuning to other stations as to the BBC.

The BBC's audience research in 1937, as well as showing the numbers of people who listened to other stations, gave the first indication of the horrifying fact that people were not 'listening in' to selected programmes, but were using radio as a background. The war drove home this point and it also weaned programme-makers from the idea that radio was essentially a home-based medium (Lewis & Booth, 1989).

The BBC approached the war with two directives - to provide news and to broadcast official statements and instructions. Entertainments were to continue but would take a lower

profile within programming. In the first few weeks of the war the BBC doubled the number of news bulletins. The New Stateman commented:

'The BBC monotonously repeated news which was in the morning papers and which it had itself repeated an hour earlier. While each edition of the papers repeated what had already been heard on the wireless' (quoted in Seaton, 1981 p162)

Official announcements proliferated and ministers broadcast 'pep' talks, many of which had a 'peevish, hectoring tone' (Seaton, 1981 p.163)

With theatres, cinemas, concert halls and other entertainments closed down the BBC's sober output during the so-called 'phoney war' attracted considerable criticism from the public and the press. A month after the outbreak of war, a British Institute of Public Opinion poll showed that 35% of the public were dissatisfied with the BBC and 10% did not listen at all (quoted in Seaton, 1981 p.163). The press campaign against the BBC's output prompted the BBC's Control Board to agree that

'We shall need guidance from listener research even more urgently in time of peace' (quoted in Lewis & Booth, 1989 p73)

Early in 1940, the stationing of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in France provided the BBC with a unique opportunity to conduct some intensive listener research. Radio Luxembourg had been closed down, but the forces were listening to Radio Internationale, against which the BBC's 'experimental' programmes were being unfavourably compared. A researcher (A.P. Ryan) was sent to France by the BBC to tour the camps and find out what the troops thought of what they heard. Lewis and Booth describe the 'sample':

'This "sample" was to a large extent a "citizens army" - the same citizens army which is thought to have been at the root of the political changes

which happened after the war. It was made up of men who would not normally have chosen to enlist, less bound than regulars by regimental commitment, more ready to laugh at authority when they got the chance. Listening to the radio in groups in their off-duty periods, they tended to be critical of the programmes as a way of affirming group identity. They certainly constituted a thoughtful, often vociferous audience for the BBC's first experiment in popular programming. What had proved significant was that the collectivity in question was characterised by a coherence and self-consciousness which till then no peacetime audience had possessed. It had also heard commercial radio and thus had separate standards by which to judge the BBC's output.' (Lewis & Booth, 1989 p74).

A.P. Ryan's report made it quite clear that if programmes were to be shaped by the same policies as in peacetime they would fail.

'The troops won't mind if a proportion of good serious stuff is included in their programme out of deference to policy views as to what constitutes good balance. They won't mind - and they won't listen ' (A.P. Ryan, quoted in Lewis & Booth, 1989 p 74)

The BBC realised that many of the comments made by the BEF might have been shared by the listeners back home. It was not slow to respond. In February 1940 it set up the Forces Programme, predominantly an entertainments service of dance music, sport and variety, which quickly won back listeners. Within two years it was being listened to by more civilians than service personnel and was attracting an audience 50% larger than that of the Home Service (Briggs, 1970 p47).

At the time, the Forces Programme was seen merely as a temporary expedient (Scannell & Cardiff, 1982), but its existence constituted the beginning of the end for Reith's concept of mixed programming, the final demise of which is variously dated as 1946 (with the establishment of

tripartite programming) or 1967 (with the creation of Radios One to Four.) The popularity of the Forces Programme made it clear after the war ended that there could be no simple reversion to the peace-time system of two 'substantially similar' mixed programme networks (Crisell, 1986)⁴. In 1945 William Haley (then Director General) announced his plan for a new tripartite system comprising the Home, Light and Third Programmes. The Home Service was responsible for the main news programmes and came to be seen as the part of the BBC most concerned with 'citizenship, family and home'. The Light Programme superseded the Forces Programme and its fare was similar except of course that its entertainments base could no longer be justified in terms of 'public morale' as it had been during the war. Grace Wyndham Goldie commented of it:

'It is not only that it is lighter, more gay, fresher in its approach; but for good or evil it is more closely related to the box office than any broadcasting England has ever seen before' (quoted in Seaton, 1981 p.200-201)

For many commentators the most significant innovation was the introduction of the Third Programme in September 1946, the pinnacle of the cultural pyramid envisaged in the post-war changes. A BBC internal memorandum in 1944 had suggested that it

'should be the highest possible level, devoted to artistic endeavour, serious documentary, educational broadcasting, and the deeper investigation of the news, corresponding in outlook to a Times of the air' (quoted in Seaton, 1981 p 201)

Its output reflected this description. The creation of the three services represented, if not the death of Reith's idea of mixed programming, then certainly a narrowing within each network of the range of programmes, and a certain uniformity of tone. But the Reithian notion of

'tempting the listener to better things' was not abandoned totally, as is clear from the following extract from William Haley:

'It (tripartite programming) rests on the conception of the community as a broadly based pyramid slowly aspiring upwards. This pyramid is served by three main Programmes, differentiated but broadly overlapping in levels and interest, each programme leading on to the other, the listener being induced through the years increasingly to discriminate in favour of things that are more worth-while. Each Programme at any given moment must be ahead of its public, but not so much as to lose their confidence. The listener must be led from good to better by curiosity, liking and a growth of understanding. As the standards of the education and culture of the community rise so should the programme pyramid rise as a whole.' (quoted in Crisell, 1986 p.27).

The conception is of a cultural ladder or continuum on which all members of the audience can be placed, and along which they progress in an essentially linear fashion. There has been much discussion about the parallels between the 1944 Education Act, which established a tripartite model of schooling, and the post-war changes in the BBC's programming. As Jean Seaton (1981) has pointed out, while children and listeners are not obviously analogous, what is striking is the similarity in proportions of people assigned quite independently by broadcasting and education authorities to the three categories. It was as though the division of people into three categories somehow represented a 'natural order' (Seaton, 1981). The table below, details the expectations of the relevant authorities about how the population would divide.

<u>Education</u>		<u>Broadcasting</u>	
Grammar	5%	BBC Third	6%
Technical	15%	BBC Home	20%
Modern	80%	BBC Light	74%

Table 4.1 Expected distributions of people into broadcasting and educational categories.

Source: Seaton, 1981 p203

Both sets of predictions proved utterly wrong. The Third Programme, for example, never attracted more than 1-2% of listeners. What became most significant, however, were the demands for programmes placed below the bottom rung of William Haley's ladder. Demands for rock music and for jazz became more vociferous in the generation born after the war, and the BBC increasingly found itself unable to meet the needs of this group (Lewis & Booth, 1989).

Radio after the War

The history of radio after the war is a difficult history to construct, for in texts concerned with broadcasting, radio is totally eclipsed by television after this period. Curran and Seaton's (1981) book is a good example of this tendency: the reader interested in radio is led through the early days of radio broadcasting, the 1930s, the war and the subsequent establishment of tripartite programming only to be abruptly abandoned sometime late in 1946; radio is not even mentioned again throughout the remaining fifty pages of the essay. Of course, I would not wish to argue that the history of radio and television in the post war period are unconnected - on the contrary, they are related in very significant ways - but what this type of history does is to give the impression that radio was superceded by television. Paradoxically in doing this it actually obscures some of the important connections between radio

and television - for example the ways in which commercial television was used in the argument for commercial radio.

In the remaining sections of this chapter I will perhaps 'overcompensate' with an exclusive focus on radio - looking primarily at the pirate radio stations and the BBC's response to them , and the growth of local radio in Britain.

The BBC lost its monopoly over broadcasting in 1954 with the establishment of commercial television in Britain. At the time Reith memorably likened its introduction to that of dog racing, smallpox and bubonic plague! Commercial television was the result of a number of different influences. Significant among these were pressures from industry and advertising. Also important was the generally negative tone of the Beveridge Report towards the BBC. Although Beveridge had recommended renewal of the BBC's licence, he was highly critical of the Corporation, singling out in particular what he saw as its centralisation and its complacency:

'beginning with Londonisation, going on to secretiveness and self-satisfaction and ending up with a dangerous sense of mission became a sense of divine right' (quoted in Seaton, 1981 p206).

Whilst not specifically advocating commercial television, Beveridge warned against the 'four scandals of monopoly: bureaucracy, complacency, favouritism and inefficiency' (quoted in Seaton, 1981 p206). It is a minority report to the Beveridge Committee, however, which is frequently cited as one of the most important factors leading to commercial television (Seaton, 1981; Lewis & Booth, 1989). Written by Selwyn Lloyd, it was used by a 'new breed' of Tory M.P.s with interests in the commercial world. Interestingly, the campaign for commercial television is

sometimes attributed to changes within the Conservative party itself, which led to the erosion of the old Tory paternalism by a hard-headed and entrepreneurial approach (Lewis & Booth, 1989).

The creation of commercial television strengthened the pressures for commercial radio in the late 1950s and early 1960s. By 1959, after three successive Conservative election victories, many companies sat poised for what they saw as the inevitable introduction of commercial radio. A year later Pye Limited published its 'Plan for Local Broadcasting' which proposed the setting up of one hundred stations.

In 1962, however, when the Pilkington Committee (appointed in 1960) produced its report, it was highly critical of both the idea of commercial radio and of existing commercial television, which it argued had not realised the purposes of broadcasting as laid down in the 1954 Television Act. Lewis and Booth (1989) argue that with the Government's credibility weakened in the last period of Macmillan's leadership, it made the decision to hold off plans to introduce commercial radio or to authorise a second Independent Television (ITV) Company. Instead it concentrated on strengthening the Independent Television Authority (ITA) against what Pilkington saw as the excesses of ITV, and gave the BBC the responsibility of developing a second television channel (Lewis & Booth, 1989). Nevertheless, it was widely expected, not least by the lobby for commercial radio, that had the Conservatives won the next election they would have introduced commercial radio within the next twelve to eighteen months (LRW, 1983). But in 1964 Labour won the election.

The Threat from Pirate Radio

If the threat from commercial radio had temporarily receded, then the BBC was faced with a different threat from the pirate stations. By the mid-1960s the popularity of the pirate stations was posing a direct challenge to the BBC. At the end of 1965 the pirates had an estimated fifteen million regular listeners, and an National Opinion Poll in 1966 estimated that 45% of the population listened either to an offshore station or to Radio Luxembourg during any week. The most popular stations were Radio Caroline, operating from a ship in the North Sea, and Radio London, from a fort in the Thames estuary. Caroline had been established in March 1964, and a Gallup poll found that in its first three weeks alone it had gained seven million listeners from a potential audience of only twenty million (quoted in Crisell, 1986 p33). After just eighteen months (and despite its extremely dubious legal status) Radio Caroline was grossing £75000 in advertising revenue (Lewis & Booth, 1989 p84). Similarly, Radio London's advertising revenue had stabilised at around £70000 a month by 1966 (op cit p84). In audience numbers and commercial terms pirate radio was clearly a success.

The most obvious reason for the success of the pirates is that they were playing music which was not available elsewhere. The BBC had one programme a week of pop music, which concentrated on established artists, and, whilst Luxembourg's 'Top 20' show was popular, it was controlled by a cartel of record companies (EMI, Decca, Phillips and Pye) and the possibilities for musical innovation were limited.

The pirate stations played rock and roll at a time when it was dramatically growing in popularity amongst young people. It has been argued that rock and roll had a different sort of appeal from previous popular music. Dave Laing (1969) argues that whereas previous pop songs

addressed the audience as individuals, rock addressed the audience collectively, giving young people a sense of group identity. This was enhanced by the hostility of many of their parents' generation to rock and roll. Simon Frith (1983) has also argued that rock had a significance not attributable to earlier pop: it came to signify rebellion. Interestingly, Frith argues that the music signified different types of rebellion to different sections of the audience. For working class youth rock and roll offered a way into the fantasy of student culture made up of self-exploration, art and sex. For middle class youth in contrast it gave a way into working class adolescence, offering the fantasy of 'risk' (Frith,1983).

The rise of rock and roll and the popularity of the pirates also coincided with more the widespread availability of small transistor radios, so that the character of listening itself changed. No longer did one have to sit by the box in the front room, radio could accompany the listener virtually anywhere, and it could be used as a way of defending some private space (cf Morley 1986).

The success of the pirates is also traditionally attributable to wider social changes taking place in the 1950s and 1960s. Accounts point to the growing affluence of certain sections of the working class (discussed in well-known sociological research on the 'affluent worker' and the 'embourgeoisement thesis') and in particular to the increased spending power of young people. This was the period in which the 'teenage consumer' was born. As Lewis and Booth comment:

'The pirates were the recognition in radio terms of the commercial potential of the teenage audience' (Lewis & Booth,1989 p85)

For many young people at the time, and for commentators since (eg Hind & Mosco, 1985), pirate radio signified rebellion. The rebellious image came both from the music they played and from their very illegality which lent them a romantic aura. In fact, pirate stations were blatantly commercial operations which in many ways were the very epitome of Establishment values: at the height of their popularity in the 1960s they actively supported the Conservative Party and the lobby for commercial radio in Britain.

The BBC responded to the pirates by negotiating more needle time with the recording industry and the Musicians Union, and increased its broadcasting hours to cover late nights and early mornings - the period popular with young listeners. The listeners did not, however, repay the gesture by forsaking the pirates (Lewis & Booth, 1989). The BBC could not emulate the pirates. As Conservative M.P. Paul Bryan put it:

'When the BBC try to imitate this type of programming it is like the Postmaster General or myself going to a teenage dance. We should either be too merry or too dull' (quoted in Lewis & Booth, 1989 p85).

The illegal pirates were also, of course, a problem for the Labour Governments of the mid-1960s. In the 1964 election campaign neither political party had wanted to alienate young voters so the issue of the pirates was left dormant (Lewis & Booth, 1989). In 1966, however, Labour had a larger majority and clearly had to do something about the pirates. The distinctly 'piratical' behaviour of the pirates, which included the destruction of rival stations' equipment and the shooting of a key protagonist, helped the Labour Government in their decision (Lewis & Booth, 1989). The Government was also worried about the fact that the pirates accepted political advertising and were angered by

some of the stations' overt anti-Labour campaigns in the run-up to the 1966 election (Local Radio Workshop, 1983). Their response was the Maritime (Etc) Offences Act (1967) which forbade British subjects from operating broadcasting apparatus without a licence and made the provision of goods or services to pirates illegal. At the same time the Government proposed the establishment of a fourth BBC radio channel, which was to play pop music. On 30th September 1967, Radio One, staffed partly by ex-pirate DJs and aimed at the audience the pirates had won, came on the air for the first time.

The Lobby for Commercial Radio

Meanwhile the lobby for commercial radio had been strengthened by the pirates. The commercial success of pirate radio had vindicated the lobby's beliefs about how much profit could be made from radio, and support from pirate stations had enhanced their case, a point recently acknowledged in the Green Paper on Radio (1987). In 1964 the Local Radio Association was formed to press for the introduction of commercial radio. It is worth briefly considering the nature of this lobby. It was made of three groups of people in advertising, industry and politics - though commercial interests and interlocking directorships meant that the three groups were by no means neatly separable.

Advertisers had long been campaigning for commercial broadcasting. Their lobbies had begun in the 1930s (Local Radio Workshop, 1983). In 1946 the Institute of Incorporated Practitioners in Advertising produced a pamphlet prepared by J. Walter Thompson arguing for advertising on the BBC. One of the M.P.s most active in the campaign for commercial broadcasting in the 1950s (John Rodgers) was a Director of J. Walter Thompson (Local Radio Workshop, 1983). By the

1960s the Institute of Incorporated Practitioners in Advertising and the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers had put their full weight behind commercial radio and were arguing for advertising on a 'scientific basis', with listening figures made quickly available to advertisers.

Another set of vested interests was represented by the industry lobby composed of people from the entertainments, television and broadcasting equipment industries. One of the key movers from the Entertainments industry was Rank Organisation who, following Pye's plan for one hundred stations, put in a bid to run twenty nine of them! According to one M.P., Rank Organisation gave the Conservative Party a donation of £25000 before the 1970 election campaign, to help them secure a victory (Local Radio Workshop, 1983). Associated Television was an important lobbyist and Pye, Rediffusion and many other equipment manufacturers also played major roles in the Local Radio Association. Other industries not directly connected also joined the lobby, and by 1965 there were hundreds of companies registered in the hope of operating commercial stations in Britain.

The political lobby for commercial radio was made up of a group of powerful Conservative M.P.s, some of whom had direct interests in commercial radio. In 1961 one report noted that at least five Tory M.P.s had interests in commercial radio companies. One of them, though, Tufton Beamish M.P., denied knowledge of

'any group in the House that is pressing for commercial radio' (quoted in Local Radio Workshop 1983a p.13)

At the time he was a member of the National Broadcasting Development Committee, formed earlier that year to press

for more commercial competition (Local Radio Workshop, 1983). Such severe instances of amnesia among Tory M.P.s were not unusual it seems: Jean Seaton (1981) describes how a prominent Conservative M.P., a member of the lobby for commercial television and the Director of several electronics firms which expected to profit greatly from the introduction of commercial television, was afflicted by a similar condition. He is reported to have stated in the House of Commons:

'Any suggestion that the Bill was fostered by commercial interests is a complete figment of the imagination of the Party opposite' (Captain Orr M.P., quoted in Seaton, 1981 p207).

In fact in many more ways than this the commercial television lobby was a precursor for the Local Radio Association. Initially reticent at being seen to support the illegal pirate stations, the lobby became more and more open in its support for their land-based counterparts. In 1966, Paul Bryan, Chair of the Conservatives Broadcasting Committee said that the pirates had been 'misunderstood' and praised their capacity to provide 'free choice' (Local radio Workshop, 1983 p13) The Conservatives were generously repaid for this praise with free election propaganda in the 1966 and 1970 election campaigns (Local Radio Workshop, 1983).

The lobby's arguments for commercial radio were two-fold. One argument was that commercial radio would promote 'healthy competition'. The BBC's monopoly in sound broadcasting was held to be contrary to the best interests of the listening public, and 'independent sound broadcasting organisations' would remedy this. Arguments always took the same form : the dangerous spectre of monopoly would be invoked, to be banished moments later by the argument for 'free choice' represented by commercial

radio. As Local Radio Workshop point out, the weakness of this sort of argument

'lay in the fact that it was possible, and still is, to wish to promote alternatives, break monopolies and give people more freedom of choice in radio without financing these ends through advertising revenue' (Local Radio Workshop, 1983 p15)

Indeed just such alternatives had been forcefully argued for in 1964 by Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall.

The second argument employed was that commercial radio would provide a form of local broadcasting. The lobby spoke of 'serving the community' and of 'public service without public expenditure', and presented itself as concerned with neighbourhood, community and locality. Certainly the appeal of localism had considerable ideological mileage, which some would argue was decisive in terms of achieving commercial radio in Britain (eg Lewis & Booth, 1989).

When, in 1970, the Conservatives won the General election, the introduction of commercial radio was inevitable. The Sound Broadcasting Act was passed in 1972. The Act introduced Independent Local Radio (ILR), to be supervised by the new Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA). The IBA was to run ILR in the same way as the ITA had run ITV, owning and leasing the transmitters to franchise holders who would obtain their revenue from 'spot' advertising. Companies could 'bid' for the franchise for an area (which would be awarded by the IBA) by putting forward 'Programme Plans'.

On the local nature of the radio stations the Act was vague. There was a technical description:

'A "local sound broadcast" means a programme which is broadcast...from a station so constructed and operated as to...ensure adequate

reception throughout a particular locality' (from Local Radio Workshop, 1983)

and one concerning programmes:

'In the case of local sound broadcasting services, that the programmes broadcast from different stations for reception in different localities do not consist of identical or similar material to an extent inconsistent with the character of the services as local sound broadcasting services' (quoted in Local Radio Workshop, 1983 p20).

Stations were also required to have some commitment to public service broadcasting.

The Conservative Government recommended the establishment of sixty ILR stations. When Labour came to power in 1974 this number was reduced to nineteen. To some extent these actions became the pattern of radio policy throughout the 1970s. It was, to oversimplify greatly, like a kind of ping-pong: when the Conservatives were in Government they established more ILR stations; when Labour were in Government they promoted BBC local stations. But by 1973 the basic structure of radio, as it was to remain for nearly two decades, was complete.

Radio One

One of the central debates among commentators on the recent history of broadcasting concerns the influence of the pirate stations. I have already considered some of the ways in which the pirates were significant in the development of commercial radio in Britain; the other issue concerns their impact on Radio One (Barnard, 1989; Chapman, 1990; Frith, 1983; Lewis & Booth, 1989). The timing of the establishment of Radio One, the fact that it immediately took on fourteen DJs from pirate stations and used many of

the same promotional activities as the pirates (even employing the same company as Radio London had used to make its jingles) lend support to the idea that Radio One was both a direct response to and an attempt to imitate the style of pirate radio. According to Stephen Barnard (1989) this is the conventional wisdom about the establishment of Radio One. He argues, in contrast, that organisational changes within the BBC and changes to programming (to include more pop music) were already underway in the early 1960s (before the pirates) and can be understood as preparing the way for Radio One. Moreover, when Radio One started broadcasting in 1967, it was less like a pirate station than a 'junior partner' to Radio Two, containing many features of the Light Programme. This is a view endorsed by the management of Caroline (Arena Programme, February 1991). The influence of the pirates on Radio One is perhaps best understood not in terms of direct imitation, but as being articulated through the particular style and ideology of the BBC at the time.

In its early years Radio One shared with Radio Two its studio, and its management and production teams, as well as many programmes. Programme-sharing was deemed to be necessary because of a lack of resources, but can also be attributed to the conservatism of the BBC's Popular Music Department which consistently went for tried and trusted Light Programme bands over what it saw as ephemeral pop; Lewis & Booth (1989) argue that it took Radio One many years to realise that pop was not a temporary 'fad'. For Barnard (1989) weekday daytime programmes on Radio One and Two were 'virtually indistinguishable and certainly interchangeable' (p.53). A further reason for this similarity lay in the limitations of the needle-time agreements made with the PPI, through which Radio One and Two were restricted to seven hours of records per day between them. The remainder of the day was taken up with

'radio play' records - recordings which imitated original songs or transposed them into big band arrangements.

If Radio One appears to have had no clear identity separate from Radio Two, this is in part attributable to the vagueness of its original brief. According to Robin Scott, joint Controller of Radios One and Two, the BBC was asked to

'provide a service of popular music during the hours which lie outside the period of peak viewing of television.' (quoted in Barnard, 1989 p.51)

With this brief, then, what became crucial was Radio One's understanding of pop itself. For Robin Scott, pop was defined as that which had broad appeal, beyond the scope of teenagers- and extending in particular to 'housewives' (see Chapters 2,6 & 7). This conception of pop continues to inform Radio One (Jeffries,1991) and has been critically discussed by Simon Frith. Frith argues that Radio One uses pop

'in a context that drains it of its significance as youth music and transforms it into an all-purpose Muzak' (Frith, 1983 p.126)

A slightly different argument has been put forward by Stephen Barnard who (echoing Scott) argues that pop is central to Radio One's personality but that it is not, for Radio One, identified with youth culture per se:

'What Radio One effectively does is to fashion programmes and select music according to its own definition not of youth culture but of a permanent traditional pop culture to which anybody of the post 1967 generation is admitted.' (Barnard,1989 p.126)

In relation to contemporary Radio One, Barnard's argument is supported by discussions both inside and outside the

network which highlight the fact that it is having to serve an evergrowing constituency of listeners, and to adapt its style and programmes accordingly (One on One Radio One's 21st Birthday Book, 1988; Higham, 1987)

A further aspect of the Light Programme inheritance on early Radio One was the stark division drawn between daytime and nighttime programming. If daytime Radio One was the province of mainstream pop, the evenings were reserved for music deemed more 'specialist' in appeal - particularly jazz and prgressive rock. The split in programming legitimated the idea that progressive rock was more intellectually worthwhile and culturally superior to the pop broadcast during the day. As Barnard (1989) has argued this division was both informed by and had profound implications for the polarisation of taste and attitude on class lines (see also Murdock & Phelps, 1973). In terms of the history of the BBC it can be seen as a further example of the BBC's division between programmes that entertain and programmes that stimulate (cf. Scannell, 1981; Frith, 1988).

The advent of commercial radio in 1973 lead to a number of changes in Radio One. In terms of music policy, the most significant among these was the introduction of a playlist system, to eliminate some of the inconsistencies in its producers' selection of records. This was made possible by a reorganisation within the BBC that transferred programme-making responsibilities from the Gramophone and Popular Music Departments to the networks themselves, facilitating a much clearer station identity for Radio One - something that was reinforced by the virtual end of daytime programme-sharing with Radio Two.

The introduction of playlisting was significant becuae it represented the start of a common music policy, which meant that people switching on at any time of day could be sure

about the style of programme they would hear. Radio One developed a clear station sound. The playlist consisted of fifty records to be 'regularly featured' on daytime output - in any half hour there would usually be two chart records, and three or four records which were either 'oldies' or had been identified as up and coming hits (Barnard, 1989).

The development of a clearer station identity was also enhanced by a number of other changes made by Radio One in anticipation of competition from ILR stations. It introduced a whole range of promotional gimmicks, which, ironically, were themselves aped by ILR stations - for example the creation of a logo, car stickers, tee-shirts, publicity stunts and open association with the promotional activities of record companies. Beerling, head of the network, wrote of

'the constant need for advertising and promotion to keep one step ahead of potential rivals... fun ideas and stunts to keep the station alive and full of friendly fun. The more successful promotions produce an added bonus when they are reported by other media, either press or television, so that we reach an even wider audience' (Happy Birthday Radio One, 1977).

Barnard argues that Radio One essentially refashioned itself as a commercial station:

'Radio One was fundamentally a music-based entertainment network working in a commercial sphere. After 1973, Radio One became commercial in the sense that nearly every aspect of its daily operation - the pursuit of audiences and satisfaction of same, the maintenance of a particular image and sound for the station, the attempts to involve its listeners in the life of the station through competitions and meet-the-people roadshows - drew much from commercial radio precedents.' (1989 p.58-9).

Barnard's central argument, however, is that Radio One made these changes and became a Top 40 radio station without really needing to. It did so on the assumption that its commercial competitors would adopt the pirate formula of patter and chart hits, but instead they pitched themselves somewhere between Radios One and Two.

One paradoxical effect of the coming of ILR, then, was that Radio One's position of dominance was actually reinforced, both in relation to its audience and to record companies, for whom the introduction of playlising made record promotion much more straightforward: it became a matter of getting their records on Radio One's playlist.

Barnard's analysis of the increasingly commercial operation of Radio One is valuable because it helps to illuminate some of the similarities between BBC and commercial radio. In Chapter 2 I discussed the way that LRW's (1983a) work ran into difficulties when trying to explain why the BBC's London station was characterised by some of the same problems as the commercial stations. I argued that by explaining 'low quality' programmes in terms of the need of individual stations to make a profit, they found themselves unable to offer a principled explanation for the equally low quality programming which they identified on BBC Radio London. The problem, it seems to me, was their attempt to locate the 'cause' of bad programming in the individual profit motives of radio stations. Barnard's emphasis would have allowed LRW to see BBC radio, as well as ILR, as subject to many of the pressures of operating within a commercial sphere (something that is even more true in the late 1980s and early 1990s - especially in the context of debates about whether Radio One should be 'privatised').

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw Radio One becoming increasingly self-confident and independent as a network.

By 1980, Radio One could claim that almost all its DJs had been externally recruited (most from ILR) and no longer bore the mantle of a traditional BBC training. Radio One's running costs (in relation to the other stations) were low, and listening to the network accounted for 28% of all radio listening (a figure which stands at 25% today [Laurance, 1991]). In recognition of this BBC management created the new post of Controller of Radio One, which gave Radio One parity with the other three networks. A feeling of increasing autonomy from the BBC was emphasised by the move to studios physically separate from Broadcasting House. This lent support to the notion that Radio One was being 'fattened up' for privatisation:

'It was even possible to believe that, in cultivating a separateness and making audience maximisation the major tenet of policy, Radio One was itself preparing to accomodate a politically imposed switch from public to commercial funding, and it was widely assumed in the run-up to the publication of the Peacock Committee's report in 1986 that Radio One would be the first network to be 'privatised' if any hiving off of BBC services was contemplated' (Barnard, 1989 p.61).

Within the network, increasing self-confidence was evidenced in two main ways. First by the dropping of the playlist, on the grounds that it was no longer necessary because producers automatically chose material that fitted the station sound, and that more adventurous music policy was needed. And second by the extension of broadcasting hours from 6.0 am to midnight, a decision made possible both by an extension of the needletime agreement and the decision to broadcast more speech-oriented material in the hours after 7.0 pm. The new weekday evening schedule comprised at least an hour of largely speech 'social action broadcasting' focusing on so-called 'youth issues' like unemployment and drug-taking. This development lead one

commentator to remark that Radio One had adopted a 'bolt-on social conscience' (Higham, 1986).

Durring the 1980s Radio One changed its policy in respect of both these develoments. Speech programming was dropped in 1983 when it was found that listeners were switching off at 7.0 pm, only to be re-introduced in a new form and on a less regular basis in the late 1980s when Radio One developed a wider editorial brief.: there were one-off series rather than daily programmes. Playlisting was also reintroduced (in 1986) in the face of competition from stations like Laser 558, paradoxically to ensure that sufficient non-Top 40 was featured in daytime shows (Barnard, 1989). In 1990 the singles playlist looked set to be abolished yet again, as Radio One took the decision to play more album-oriented music, acknowledging that the best-selling albums usually sell at least ten times as many copies as the number one single (Jeffries, 1991). Such changes are the subject of considerable debate within Radio One about the constituency the station should aim at, the degree of adventurousness (or not) of the station's music policy, how much speech the network should have, and many other issues (see One on One, Radio One's 21st Birthday Book; Savage, 1986). But they have to be understood not just in relation to internal BBC policy, but in terms of wider social, political, economic and demographic trends. The end of singles playlisting, for example, cannot be comprehended without a grasp of the restructuring of the British record industry underway in the late 1980s, something which lead the Director of Britain's biggest record company (HMV) to assert that the single would be obsolete by the end of 1991 (Frith, 1990).

As I write (in 1990) Radio One is a mainstream Top 40 singles based station by day and a more specialist music (and some speech) network by night. Top 40 singles make up

half the music played between 5.0 am and 7.30 pm, with singles on the A-list guaranteed fifteen spins per week and those on the B-list ten spins - computer-generated so that there is a three hour interval between each play (Jeffries, 1991). Radio One works with a traditional, commercial notion of 'consumer sovereignty' in relation to its daytime music policy, taking the Top 40 selling records as its frame of reference. Many writers have criticised the circularity of this 'policy'. As Simon Frith (1983) has pointed out

'A record on the playlist has a good chance of being popular; a record not on it has hardly a hope' (p.120)

This explains record companies' exhaustive efforts at promoting records to Radio One. But a chart position does not guarantee a record playlist exposure. This is because, Barnard has argued, Radio One works with a 'twin' ideology of 'suitability' which works to exclude musical styles which are considered 'disruptive' and to reflect a continuing, nostalgic pre-occupation with the 1960s. (The paradigm case of exclusion is, of course, punk, against which daytime Radio One used its entire battery of hostile techniques - banning some records outright, refusing to play others because of their supposed 'technical inferiority' and prefacing those which were played with jokes about safety pins or remarks suggesting that the listener would not like the record - until punk was safely incorporated [Hebdige, 1979]).

Night-time Radio One, in contrast, is the receptacle for Radio One's cultural, educational and minority programming, showcasing new bands, live concerts and session music and programmes devoted to particular styles of music ⁵. As such the split described by Barnard (1989) is perpetuated. If daytime Radio One plays background music, night-time Radio

One plays music to listen to and take seriously. The predominantly middle-class focus of night-time shows is evidenced by the sheer number of letters from A'level and University students read out on-air.

Daytime Radio One is divided into four shows, each presented and given their name by a male presenter, who punctuates the records with a steady stream of patter. It is this patter which I will be analysing in the next chapter. But first I will conclude with a discussion of contemporary popular radio more generally,

British pop radio: towards the 1990s

The 1970s and 1980s saw a huge expansion in local radio. By 1990, there were 78 ILR stations in Britain producing (because of the end of simulcasting) 100 services, whilst the BBC had 39 local stations. For both the BBC and commercial local radio, however, the 1980s were a period of considerable financial difficulties. For BBC local radio this was partly due to an identity crisis about whether it should be essentially a locally based national service or a genuinely local service, and thus about the nature of programming itself. The kind of community access envisaged when BBC local radio was first established rapidly gave way, under pressure from national journalistic ideology, national union agreements and severe restrictions on needletime (Lewis & Booth, 1989). Whenever the BBC made cuts, local radio suffered disproportionately, hitting local access programmes particularly hard. In 1990, listening to BBC local radio accounts for just 7.5% of radio listening and is concentrated among women in the over 55 year old age group (Riddell, 1991).

Independent Local Radio faced similar dilemmas about what it was to be, resolving them, though, in a much more

clear-cut and straightforward way with the 'decision' to be aspiring national radio. It may be produced in different towns and cities across the UK, but there its claims to localism stop. ILR is a homogeneous product which sounds much the same whether you listen in Southampton, Exeter or Newcastle, for the product on ILR is not programmes but audences to be sold to advertisers. This 'resolution' produced its own difficulties for ILR which existed on a financial knife-edge throughout the early 1980s. One of the main reasons for this lies in the failure of commercial radio to attract sufficient advertising. Radio is known witheringly as the '2% medium', because spending on it represents only 2% of the amount spent on advertising in Britain (Laurance, 1991) - a dramatic contrast with countries where commercial radio preceded the establishment of commercial television. In particular ILR failed to get enough national advertising which meant that it could only flourish in larger urban areas (Barbrook, 1989). In the mid-1980s Centre Radio in Leicester collapsed under economic pressures, sending shock-waves throughout the industry.

In response to the financial crisis hitting ILR, the IBA relaxed many of its rules on mergers and takeovers in order to maintain ILR presence in a maximum number of areas. This led to the development of 11 regional groups of ILR stations - a significant concentration of ownership. (The two stations whose staff were interviewed for this research, for example, are part of a company which owns all the radio stations in the region). On top of this the IBA waived rules about sponsorship and programme syndication - further eroding the claims of ILR to produce a local service, and effecting a highly profitable arrangement with Nescafe (the Nestle Group) who became sponsors of the Network Chart Show, competing with Radio One and syndicated to all stations. As Barbrook (1990) has argued, the IBA showed itself capable of turning a blind eye to all sorts

of regulations in the late 1980s - as such prefiguring the 'lighter touch' Radio Authority.

The IBA's relaxation of rules on, for example, public service commitment and minority programming, however, should not lead us to romanticise the period when they were adhered to. As Lewis & Booth (1989) have pointed out, companies often had cynical motives for the introduction of public service programming in commercial systems, such as the wish to improve corporate image or increase client goodwill, or for tax loss purposes (cf LRW, 1983b). Schools programmes were first introduced by British commercial television companies because they discovered that the revenue from adverts forbidden during these programmes could, when displaced to peak time slots, more than offset the cost of educational programming.

A further significant move by the IBA in 1987 was the dropping of the 'L' from ILR's acronym, so that it became simply Independent Radio (something that most people outside the industry continue to ignore). This move was calculated to enhance commercial radio's image in relation to potential advertisers, and can also be seen as a precursor to the changes announced in the Green Paper. In terms of advertising revenue the change in name had the desired effect: advertising increased by 26% in one year (Lewis & Booth, 1989), a fact also contributed to by the credit boom. 1987 also saw the IBA change its rules on simulcasting so that stations could provide different services on their AM and FM frequencies. The current trend is for AM frequencies to be used as an oldie service, whilst FM remains primarily devoted to Top 40 music.

Meanwhile the mid to late 1980s saw an unprecedented gain in confidence in the movement for community radio. The Community Communications Group (COMCOM) was formed in 1977,

responding to Annan with a call for a sector of community radio, co-existing with the BBC and the IBA, and producing in 1979 a Community Broadcasting Charter. Comcom later became the Community Radio Association and was supported in its call for community radio by the Greater London Council which developed an interventionist media policy and resourced a Community Radio Development Unit based in London (Lewis & Booth, 1989).

The case for community radio was strengthened in the mid-1980s by the fact that the Government's plans for cable accepted the principle that organisations other than the BBC and IBA could broadcast. Also land-based piracy was on the increase; in 1984 a Sunday Times article claimed that there were 80 pirates broadcasting in Britain. On top of this there were growing calls within the Tory party for an end to the duopoly and for deregulation of radio. Lewis & Booth (1989) describe a calculated move by one radio station describing itself as 'small business radio' to appeal to the Conservative government. In response to these pressures the Home Secretary announced an 'experiment' in community radio, whereby 21 radio stations were to be granted 'experimental' licences - some to be 'neighbourhood' stations and others serving 'communities of interest'. There was to be no balance requirement, but stations could not be primarily religious or political in nature.

By the closing date in 1986 286 applications had been received for just 21 licences. After some months the Home Secretary announced the withdrawal of the experiment. Instead the possibility of 'incremental' stations was announced - these were to be 'specialist' stations which could operate within ILR areas. No distinction was made between commercial ventures and genuine community stations,

and incremental stations can clearly be seen as forerunners to the 'hundreds' of stations proposed in the Green Paper.

The bizarre alliance of community groups, pirate stations and business and commercial interests which supported the community radio experiment also played a significant role in campaigning for the deregulatory changes announced in the 1987 Green Paper on Radio. Barbrook (1989) has discussed some of the main actors in the calls for deregulation, highlighting the significant part played by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, media corporations and other would-be station owners.

When it was published, Radio: Choices and Opportunities announced three national commercial stations and hundreds of local stations under lighter regulatory control. The Green Paper had a vision of free-market, deregulated radio. This vision was filled out in a speech by the Home Secretary in 1988 and in the White Paper on Broadcasting later that year. The IBA was to be replaced by the Independent Television Commission and the Radio Authority and the national radio stations, like television franchises, were to be auctioned to the highest bidder (discussion of 'quality thresholds' has been noticeably less vocal in considerations of radio, cf. television.)

The stipulation that the stations would go to the highest bidder was an attempt to manage a problem for the government with deregulation; namely the desire to see economic deregulation, coupled with strict political regulation. For the Conservative government deregulation produced attendant anxieties about not being able to control the nature of what was broadcast. One way this was dealt with is through the creation of the Broadcasting Standards Council, whose remit seems largely to concern matters of 'taste' and 'decency'; further insurance is

provided with the auctioning of stations to the highest bidders. This means that only the large corporations, the Murdochs and the Maxwells, could own stations: such people could be trusted politically. Barbrook (1989), discussing the considerations which informed the awarding of the Greater London FM franchise has argued persuasively that in many ways deregulation is better understood as reregulation - as a way of bringing pirates and community stations under political control (cf Murdock, 1990). The government's fear of real deregulation is evidenced by its unprecedented interventions into broadcasting in the 1980s - particularly in relation to the relative autonomy of the BBC.

Considerable interest has already been shown in the national commercial stations. Capital's owners are interested in acquiring a station, as are many of the regional IR conglomerates. The Virgin company is also clearly interested in a stake, and, with this in mind it seems, has established a satellite radio service Radio Radio which is networked every evening to all ILR stations which want to take it.

Recent announcements suggest that only one of the three national commercial stations will be on FM frequency. This will be reserved for programming other than pop music. Paradoxically this means that Radio One will remain the only national pop station on FM. As Riddell (1991) has argued this may mean that Radio One is more likely to be privatised, or at least forced to take advertising, something which although explicitly rejected in the Green Paper, remains very much on the agenda in the run-up to the renewal of the BBC's charter in 1996.

As we enter the 1990s, radio seems poised for the biggest changes in its history. As such an analysis of the nature of programming offered by the pop stations seems more

necessary than ever. It is to this that I turn in the next chapter.

Footnotes

1 Prior to the Second World War, the Newspaper Proprietors Association had used their influence to secure an arrangement whereby the BBC could only broadcast news after 7 p.m. (Crisell, 1986).

2 The Glasgow Media Group note how journalists covering the Falklands/Malvinas War who wanted to make it clear that their reports were being censored had even the word 'censored' removed from their stories before they appeared in the British media (Glasgow Media Group, 1985). In contrast 'the question of censorship' has been one of the key debates during the Gulf war (going on as I correct this). Obsessively discussed, the subtext of this concern with censorship seems to be that of displaying what a 'mature' and 'open' democracy Britain is. In reality the 'balanced' discussions in radio and television studios across the UK have been narrowly polarised around the issue of whether lack of censorship will endanger 'our boys', whilst all the significant questions about the war have not been raised.

3 The repeated 'time checks' so naturalised today were a source of amazement in the 1930s. Filson Young pointed out in 1933:

'The broadcasting of time which is one of the most commonplace and regular features of the daily programme is also rightly considered one of the strangest of the new things that the harnessing of the ether has brought us. It is something quite new in the history of mankind' (quoted in Moores, 1988 p.38)

4 The Regional and National Services had combined at the start of the war to become the Home Service.

5 The way in which Radio One dispatches its responsibilities to 'minority' musical tastes deserves detailed attention. In particular, analysis is needed of the way in which black musical styles are dealt with by the network. Radio One employs two black DJs whose shows are broadcast for one hour per week, playing 'black music'. What always strikes me when I hear these programmes (and indeed the trailers for them) is the way in which the DJs' blackness is made salient, deliberately highlighted, via the most crude stereotypes. Man Ezeke on his 'Sunshins Show' (!) speaks with a heavily camped up Jamaican accent, which does not characterise his speech at other times. Whilst for 'the Rankin' Miss P' a particular racial stereotype is articulated through ideologies of gender to produce a 'husky' voice and 'intimate' presentation style for her show (broadcast at midnight) which plays not so much a range of reggae as purely 'lovers rock'. These facts have an added significance in the context of Radio One's failure to employ any black presenters for programmes other than those explicitly signalled as black.

CHAPTER 5

POSTMODERN RADIO? DJ TALK ON RADIO ONE

'He had a brief honeymoon with Radio One that turned into a kind of sado-masochistic marriage. Waking early in the Rummidge hotel on that morning when his breath turned to steam, he had flicked on his transistor and listened to what he took, at the time, to be a very funny parody of the worst kind of American AM radio, based on the simple but effective formula of having non-commercial commercials. Instead of advertising products, the disc-jockey advertised *himself* - pouring out a torrent of drivel generally designed to convey what a jolly, amusing and lovable guy he was - and also advertised his listeners, every one of whose names and addresses he seemed determined to read out over the air, plus, on occasion, their birthdays and car registration numbers. Now and again he played musical jingles in praise of himself, or reported, in terms of unremitting jollity, a multiple accident on the freeway. There was almost no time left for playing records. It was a riot. Morris thought it was a little early in the morning for satire, but listened entranced. When the programme finished and was followed by one of exactly the same kind, he began to get restive. The British, he thought, must be gluttons for satire: even the weather forecast seemed to be some kind of spoof, predicting every possible combination of weather for the next twenty-four hours without actually committing itself to anything specific, not even the existing temperature. It was only after four successive programmes of almost exactly the same formula - DJ's narcissistic gabble, lists of names and addresses, meaningless anti-jingles - that the awful truth dawned on him: *Radio One was like this all the time.*'

(David Lodge, *Changing Places*, 1975).

'A garden gnome is no longer a garden gnome. This is the dilemma facing contemporary art, that is circumscribed by the unhappy concept of postmodernity...A garden gnome is no longer merely an object to advertise one's petty-

bourgeois taste. This quality is no longer self-evident now that the ironic appropriation of kitsch has been discovered as a sophisticated and effective means of distancing oneself from the most advanced forms of aesthetic consciousness. These days one cannot help suspecting a garden gnome of being an ironic quotation, which is particularly perplexing given that a garden gnome in quotation marks is in no way distinguishable from what one might call the real thing. However lovingly you lose yourself in contemplation of these garden midgets, they simply won't give away who or what they are.'

(Peter Burger, *Aporias of Modern Aesthetics*, 1990.)

The aim of this chapter is to produce an analysis of DJs' on-air talk on BBC Radio One. More specifically, what I am interested in is the extent to which and the ways in which DJ talk can be understood as ideological. As such the central questions which inform this analysis concern power, class and gender and, more generally, the ways in which language is used to sustain particular sets of social relations.

The chapter is divided into four broad sections. The first represents an introduction to Radio One (which develops that begun in the last chapter). The second section introduces the notion of postmodernism, as a way of thinking about contemporary popular radio. Section three considers ways in which Radio One DJs' talk may be understood as postmodern. Finally, there is a substantial analytic section which, drawing on examples of broadcast DJ talk, discusses some of the ways in which the postmodern features of Radio One relate to the ideological aspects of DJs' talk, raising the idea that ideology works differently in modern and postmodern texts. This section also considers two 'metanarratives' - individualism and a particular notion of the 'real world' - which structure much of the DJs' talk.

The focus of this chapter is daytime and weekday radio. As others have argued, there is a distinct 'break' between daytime and evening programming on Radio One. Occurring around the end of the 'drive-time' period (aimed at listeners returning from work in cars) at 6.30 pm or 7.0 pm (Barnard, 1989). The evening hours constitute a repository for 'alternative', minority interests and educational programming aimed at middle class youth. As Barnard argues:

'the "duty" of broadcasting to cater for all... has long been approached in a strictly pragmatic, not to say cynical, way: creating a separate stream of minority programming enables the broadcaster to remove from mainstream programming anything that might question or threaten the majority consensus, while conferring a limited legitimacy on the minorities concerned.'
(Barnard, 1989 p.157)

By dispatching its public service obligations to evening slots Radio One leaves itself free to broadcast a populist commercial product throughout the day. One of the most striking differences between day-time and night-time Radio One is the number of listeners tuning in to each. Whilst listening figures are difficult to interpret and the BBC research and research for the commercial sector are in constant dispute about them (Garner, 1990), evening listening can be counted in the thousands, whilst daytime audiences, Radio One claims, number up to ten million. Indeed, announcing listening figures on-air has become an increasingly prevalent rhetorical move in the current era of change and competition within broadcasting. Simon Bates, for example, claims to have a daily audience of '9 million people' for his feature 'Our Tune', whilst Steve Wright's afternoon show is billed in its opening credits as 'still Europe's fastest growing radio show', and claims an audience (reach) of 23 million people. There is considerable confusion even if one examines only the BBC's own official figures: as Ken Garner points out, BBC

audience research suggested that in the last quarter of 1988 the average weekly reach for the Radio One's breakfast show was 4.1 million, whilst in the following quarter Radio One claimed to have a daily audience of 8 million (Garner, 1990)

For some commentators daytime Radio One is a relatively unitary and homogeneous product with few differences between programmes. Barnard, for example, argues that it is largely meaningless to look at individual programmes both because this perpetuates the 'elitist and reactionary' assumption that the only worthwhile radio is that which follows 'Home Service norms' and because it misses the significance of how radio is actually used by the majority of its audience. He points out that there is little evidence

'that listeners continually comb the dial in channel-hopping fashion, switching from programme to programme, restlessly searching for diversion or stimulation' (Barnard, 1989 p.135).

Whilst accepting these points I would argue that there are, in fact, significant differences both between and within programmes on daytime Radio One, which may be overlooked by an approach which treats daytime radio as a homogeneous product. Moreover, the suggestion that people do not tirelessly 'channel-hop' through radio's frequencies does not rule out the possibility that certain programmes or items attract more attention and/or are more popular than others. Radio One's daily item Our Tune is a good example - it attracts significantly more listeners than the rest of the show in which it is broadcast - according to the show's presenter Simon Bates - and was designed (with great success) to coincide with the 'morning coffee' breaks in factories, offices and the houseworking day (personal interview).

The goal of this chapter, then, must be to deal with the fact that much of Radio One's daytime output is very similar, whilst remaining analytically open to the idea that important differences do exist within it. Because of the limits of space, and my desire to say something general about the ideological aspects of the DJs talk, I will approach this problem by discussing the broad themes of ideological significance, and singling out particular programmes or items to make more specific points.

The material discussed in this chapter is drawn from several full days broadcasts on Radio One, which were transcribed in detail (see appendix for sample transcript). Attempts to make the sample of transcribed broadcast days representative were limited to making recordings on different days of the week and at different times of the year. It is the argument of this thesis that with respect to whole days of output, each day on Radio One is much like any other. For this reason I have not provided full transcriptions of the recorded days in the appendix. I would argue that the themes and discourses identified in this chapter could be identified in any selection of days from Radio One's output, and indeed during my sampling I actually came across whole passages of material which I had heard broadcast previously. The analysis of the recorded material is supplemented by many weeks of unrecorded listening. Clearly, though, a more comprehensive study, beyond the scope of this thesis, is required to develop a fuller analysis. The following analysis should be considered as preliminary rather than exhaustive.

One of the things that is most immediately striking and illuminating about the transcriptions is the sheer volume of DJ talk on Radio One. To the casual listener, the impression of daytime broadcasts is one of mainly music, punctuated by brief remarks from the presenter. This

impression breaks down when one transcribes the material, revealing that on average one third or twenty minutes of every hour is made up of DJ's talk. Each transcribed day (from 7.30 am to 5.30 pm) represents forty pages of typed A4 (another reason for not providing transcripts in the appendix!).

During the period in which I have been doing this research there have been a number of 'experiments' to reduce the amount of time taken up by DJs' chatter, most notably in 1987 when the BBC tried a policy of 'non-stop music' for a day. One possible reason for this was the growing success of pirate stations such as Laser 558 in attracting large young audiences. Laser explicitly promoted itself as a station on which listeners would not have to 'suffer' DJs, with its identification jingle 'where music is never more than a minute away'. The verdict of Radio One listeners and management on the experiment was that the DJ as a 'personality' was an important part of the show. Similarly, an earlier IBA report found that over two thirds of listeners considered the existing balance between speech and music to be 'about right', whilst only one sixth thought that there was too much talk (IBA, 1977 p.6).

Daytime Radio One: An Overview

There are four shows which, at the time of writing, constitute the daytime output of Radio One. The schedule is as follows

6.30 - 9.00	Simon Mayo
9.00 - 12.30	Simon Bates
12.30 - 12.45	Newsbeat
12.45 - 3.00	Gary Davies
3.00 - 5.30	Steve Wright
5.30 - 6.00	News 90

Table 5.1 Daytime Radio One Schedule

In addition to what could perhaps be called 'generic' DJ talk - the fill-ins between records, chat and gossip about people in 'showbusiness' and the music industry, remarks about the weather or current affairs, the progress of the DJ's Christmas shopping or his drive to work, etc. - each show has its own distinctive features, which recur at the same time each day and by which the show becomes known.

The precise timing of features is most important on Simon Mayo's Breakfast Show which is designed to accompany the ritual of getting up in the morning and going to school or work, forming what Scannell (1989) would describe as a bridge between the private and public worlds of leisure and work. As the producer of the breakfast show has argued:

'We know that very many of our listeners know that they have to be leaving for work as the quiz ends' (Mark Story, quoted in Garner, 1990 p.200)

Because of this the breakfast show has an extremely tight format, mixing time checks with contemporary records, oldies, travel information and weather, news updates, regular dedication spots for schools, quizzes and pop telephone polls (where listeners dial a different last digit in order to vote for their favourite record - something which seems to me to have as its most important role the rhetorical function of 'displaying' the popularity

of the show rather than individual records). Ken Garner (1990), in a recent review of the 'traditional English breakfast show' has pointed to the striking similarities both between different editions of the same show (ie. monday through friday) and between breakfast shows on different stations. Discussing the 'reassuring' role that pop 'oldie' records play on the breakfast show, Garner has compared Simon Mayo's show with shows on two other popular stations:

'When is the listeners' need for reassurance greatest, but after the news? Without exception, every surveyed edition of Tarrant, Mayo and Marshall broadcast a golden oldie after the 7.30 am headlines. Mayo always has another after the 8.30 am news as well. Both Mayo and Tarrant almost always have an oldie or two sometimes between 8.06 and 8.15 am. The Radio One show then has its daily phone-in quiz, while Tarrant argues with Kane before receiving the traffic news. next, between 8.19 and 8.26 am, Mayo and Tarrant will both play one or two of their four current records they have to squeeze in; before possibly getting another oldie in before the 8.30 am news; if not, there is one immediately afterwards' (Garner, 1990 p.200)

Simon Mayo's breakfast show first came on air early in 1988. Within a year it was transformed by influences from an American radio format which was proving hugely popular in New York. Scott Shannon's WHTZ 'morning zoo' format was imported by a number of DJs and producers and anglicised - most notably by Capital Radio's Chris Tarrant and Radio One's Steve Wright. Simon Mayo's particular version of the 'zoo', which is tame (excuse the pun) by comparison to the original, involves sustained banter between himself, his travel and weather reporter Sybil Ruscoe and newsreader Rod MacKenzie. The show takes the friendly or witty remarks which traditionally form mediations between news and weather reports and the rest of the programme and elaborates upon them so that it becomes one long repartie

between the three of them. This produces a show which is very different from those which employ the usual demarcation between news and weather reports and DJ's talk. Sybil Ruscoe in particular plays a central role in fielding one-liners to Mayo and gently and humourously questioning his authority. It is fascinating for precisely the reason that it appears to subvert the standard form of presentation, only to reinforce it; in the context of debates about the lack of female presenters (Radio One has no female presenters during daytime radio), it can be seen as allowing Radio one a female presenter, whilst undermining her role as an equal to Mayo (Mayo is the presenter, Ruscoe just 'the weathergirl').

The Simon Bates Show (from 9.0 am - 12.30 am) is centred around two well-known and very popular daily features - the Golden Hour and Our Tune. The Golden Hour comprises two half hour segments in each of which Simon Bates plays records which were popular in a particular year (going back to the mid-1960s, like Radio One itself). Interspersed between these records he offers verbal 'clues' to help the listeners guess the year in question. Listeners are invited to phone in when they think they know which year it is, but rather than speaking on air their calls are logged by Bates' production assistant and at the end of the half hour Bates reads out names of people who 'got it right' before revealing to us the correct answer.

The Golden Hour is interesting partly because it helps to solve what is an increasing problem for Radio One : namely the ever-growing age-range of its listeners. Initially designed as a youth network, it finds itself increasingly having to serve listeners in their mid thirties who have grown up with Radio One and have not 'switched' to Radio Two (Higham, 1987). Indeed Radio Two has a similar dilemma in that its audience is now made up of both the youth of

the pre rock and roll era and those who grew up with rock and roll (Barbrook, 1990). Bates' Golden Hour is invariably made up of a half hour of music from the 1960s or early 1970s and half an hour from the late 1970s and 1980s in order to please both constituencies of listeners.

The other important item in the Simon Bates Show is Our Tune. Conceived as an opportunity for listeners to write in and say why a particular record was special to them, Our Tune has evolved from being merely an extended dedication to being a confessional-like spot in which listeners' stories about their experiences of being raped, sexually abused, having an abortion, losing a child or lover are told by Bates against the background of saccharine music. Our Tune has become something of a national institution with many workplaces grinding to a halt at 11.0 am for its broadcast. Suggestions that Our Tune should be scrapped or even change its time-slot provoke intense public anger and many articles in the tabloid press, as they are carefully engineered to do (personal interview, producer Simon Bates Show). As with announcing listening figures on air there is evidence that such suggestions are strategic rhetorical moves; a DJ and a programme feature receive considerable overt public support (for an 'older' DJ like Bates, dependent upon the annual renewal of a rolling contract, this may be particularly valuable).

The Gary Davies Show covers the period of lunchtime and early afternoon. Like the breakfast show it is orientated to the fact that many people will be listening in their time off from work or school, so phone-in quizzes and dedications are scheduled accordingly. The show, subtitled 'Gary's bit in the middle' (referring, it would seem, both to the time it is broadcast and the fact that it is sandwiched between the popular Simon Bates and Steve Wright shows) gets the following write-up in the Radio Times:

'Featuring the Battle of the Sexes, Spin and Win, the Sloppy Bit, the Classy Track, the Non-Stop Half Hour and Gobsnackers'.

The Battle of the Sexes is a pop quiz in which one contestant is male and the other female; Spin and Win is a competition in which listeners are invited to phone in with the answer to a cryptic clue about a record in the charts; the Sloppy Bit is a lovers dedication spot; and the Classy Track, Gobsnackers and the Non-stop Half Hour all refer to particular music sequences.

The Steve Wright in the Afternoon Show is the ultimate in 'zoo' shows on UK radio. It features presenter Steve Wright and a 'posse' of 'afternoon boys and girls', young production assistants who are all named and take part in what Wright calls the 'talkie bits' of his show, where they are invited to discourse on topics of the 'what is the most embarrassing thing that ever happened to you' variety. Much more than the breakfast show, the impression is of spontaneous conversation and relaxed and humorous banter. In addition to the (real) assistants, the show is also crammed full of wacky 'characters' who are either personifications of stereotypes (eg 'Mr Angry from Purley', 'Damien the Social Worker', 'Gervaise the hairdresser'); satires of people in the public eye (eg 'John Bole' the political corresepondent of the BBC - with a strong Irish brogue); or impersonations of well-known pop and film stars (eg Mick Jagger, Keith Richard, Jack Nicholson). Using the device of 'I've got so-and-so on the line now' or 'we've got so-and-so in the studio' the show careers from jokey 'conversations' with the characters to 'talkie bits' to 'true stories', to 'trivia' and to 'surveys' orchestrated and linked by Steve Wright. 'True stories' are short tales of 'real' bizarre occurrences, whilst 'surveys', usually culled from women's magazines, paint 'surprising' pictures

of some aspect of life or claim to reveal listeners 'true personalities'.

Faced with the volume, diversity and fragmentation of DJ talk on the Steve Wright show in particular and on Radio One more generally, the problem is how to make sense of it and how to begin to identify themes and patterns. Many of the traditional questions asked in studies of the media seem to be inappropriate to deal with this type of material. The questions asked by those interested in the ideological features of news, for example, seem redundant when confronted with the pastiche that is DJ talk on popular radio. DJ talk is fragmented and contradictory, rarely lasting more than one minute at any stretch, constantly changing its subject and being repeatedly interrupted by records, quizzes and various reports. Any approach which deals with it has to grasp these features: it is not appropriate to simply 'import' the styles of analysis used for either for other media or for other styles of programme. Moreover, as Martin Montgomery has argued, DJs' talk poses a challenge for studies of ideology in the media precisely because so little of it is bound up with reportings (the concern of much research on language and ideology) and so much of it is interpersonal (Montgomery, 1986). In contrast, much research on 'entertainments' or popular culture more generally seems to take a positively celebratory stance and eschews questions about ideology altogether (eg. Gamman & Marshment, 1988; Fiske 1989; 1990; Day, 1990;) As I have argued earlier in this thesis I take issue with this uncritical style of work, whose main project seems to be that of championing popular cultural forms as 'subversive' and thus 'rescuing' them for the Left. The question is, then, how to start to analyse DJs' talk?

As I made clear in Chapter Three the approach I am using is a discourse analytic one, but in order to start thinking about the material in a more focussed way in this chapter I will use the notion of postmodernism. At face value this at least has the merit of being able to deal with material which is fragmented and variable and in which there are no obvious meta-narratives. To employ the notion, however, is not to signal an acceptance of the varied and contradictory ideas which collect under the signifier 'postmodernism', which themselves have often been used in a rather celebratory fashion, but is merely a 'way in', a route to start thinking critically about DJs' talk. This forms part of a wider project (beyond the scope of this thesis) to interrogate the notion of postmodernism itself.

The discussion of postmodernism which follows is essentially a descriptive one. By looking at the profusion of terms deriving from the modern-postmodern couplet, at some of the debates about postmodernism, and at a number of the features which are said to define it, my aim is to give a sense of some of the themes of writing about postmodernism, and not to take up a position in relation to any particular author's work. My central concern is to examine whether and in what ways a cultural form which can be characterised as postmodern can also be understood as ideological.

Postmodernism: A Whirlwind Tour

The last decade has seen a huge blossoming of literature and discussion about 'the postmodern'. Hundreds of books and articles about postmodernism have appeared as the concept has gained currency in the spheres of music, art, fiction, film, drama, architecture, photography, literary theory, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology and geography. Not simply limited to the concerns of academics

'postmodernism' has been used and discussed in newspapers, magazines and TV chat shows and has attracted widespread public interest (Featherstone, 1988). As Dick Hebdige has argued, the very popularity and uptake of the notion of postmodernism shows that many people feel that there is something worth struggling over (Hebdige, 1988).

Part of its attraction lies in its apparent capacity to speak to some of the cultural changes currently being experienced in Europe, North America and elsewhere. The precise nature of those changes and how theories of 'the postmodern' seek to explain them is less clear. Conceptual confusion abounds. This is due in part to the number of disparate fields in which 'postmodernism' is used, to a lack of intellectual rigour among some theorists of the postmodern, and to the fact that a number of complex and key debates in sociology have become crystallised around the notion of postmodernism. It is a term that has become 'overloaded' (Hebdige, 1988), weighed down with different and contradictory meanings. Indeed, it is partly the feeling of struggling over problems central to sociology that makes the debates about postmodernism so exhilarating.

The publication of introductory books and articles about postmodernism has become something of a growth industry (eg. Foster, 1984; Featherstone, 1988; Punter, 1988; Parker, 1989; Sarup, 1989; Cormack, 1990), a fact which has prompted a recent writer on postmodernism to feel he has to justify his use of yet more trees to further the debate (Callinicos, 1989). In an excellent essay which introduces a Theory, Culture and Society special issue on postmodernism Mike Featherstone has suggested that to work towards some preliminary sense of the meaning of postmodernism, it is useful to examine the group of terms derived from 'the postmodern'. Here, I will follow him in

examining this 'family' of terms and contrasting them with those which derive from 'the modern'.

<u>Modern</u>	<u>Postmodern</u>
Modernity	Postmodernity
Modernité	Postmodernité
Modernization	Postmodernization
Modernism	Postmodernism

Modernity and postmodernity represent the 'epochal' meaning of the terms (Featherstone, 1988,p.197). Modernity is generally held to have come into being with the Renaissance and is understood as being defined by rationalisation and differentiation of the social world. To speak of postmodernity is to suggest the replacement of modernity with a new social totality with its own distinct organising principles - an argument associated with Lyotard who claims that the move to a postmodern age is premised on a move to a postindustrial order (Lyotard, 1984).

The french variants of the terms, modernité and postmodernité, are used to refer to the experience of the diferent epochs, something stressed by Marshall Berman in All That Is Solid Melts Into Air:

'To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world - and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are...it pours us all into a maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal, of struggle and contradiction, of ambiguity and anguish.To be modern is to be part of a universe in which, as Marx said, "all that is solid melts into air" (Berman, 1981, p.15)

and even more emphatically in his exchange with Perry Anderson in New Left Review in which he presents a collage of 'some of the people on my horizon' and warns us that

'reading Capital won't help us if we don't know how to read the signs in the street' (Berman, 1984 p.122-3). An example of the experience of postmodernity (postmodernité) is travelling in the 'hyperspace' of the Hotel Bonaventura in Los Angeles which is discussed by Frederic Jameson (1984 pp.80-84). As Featherstone argues, there are few discussions of the experience of postmodernity; too often intellectuals rely either upon their own readings or work with an 'ideal type' notion of a channel-hopping MTV viewer, rather than looking at

'the actual cultural practices and changing power balances of those groups engaged in the production, classification, circulation and consumption of postmodern cultural goods' (Featherstone, 1988 pp.200-201)

Clearly research on these issues is centrally important if we are to progress from a situation in which academics produce inferred readings of all those involved in the production and consumption of cultural products.

Turning to the modernization-postmodernization couplet, these terms seem to fit uncomfortably within discussions of modernism-postmodernism. As Featherstone (1988) has argued, the notion of modernization is most often used in the sociology of development to refer to the process of industrialisation, the growth of the modern nation state, the development of science and technology, and the cultural changes which are assumed to accompany these processes - eg. secularisation and the development of the national citizen identity. Whilst there is little work which is concerned with postmodernization, the notion does have the strength of suggesting a process of change rather than a complete break or rupture heralding a new social totality. Some of the most notable attempts to examine postmodernization have been made by geographers and planners interested in the restructuring of socio-spatial

relations by new patterns of production and investment, changes in labour market organisation and the service industries. Sharon Zukin's book Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change for example is important because it examines the economic and the cultural practices which contributed to the growth of the 'loft scene', considering how cultural meanings and the market became intertwined in the process of the enchantment of what had hitherto been regarded as grimy urban spaces (Zukin, 1988; see also Cooke, 1988; Soja, 1989).

A more encompassing attempt to elaborate a theory of postmodernization is that of David Harvey (1989a & b). Harvey develops the notion of flexible accumulation to argue that the changes in western capitalism since the mid 1970s can be understood in Marxian terms. Flexible accumulation is characterised by:

'the emergence of entirely new sectors of production, new ways of providing financial services, new markets, and above all, greatly intensified rates of commercial, technological and organisational innovation' (Harvey, 1989b p.147)

This economic change is held to have its counterpart in a particular kind of culture

'There is strong evidence that postmodernity is nothing more than the cultural clothing of flexible accumulation' (1989a p.247)

'The emphasis upon ephemerality, collage, fragmentation, and dispersal in philosophical and social thought mimics the conditions of flexible accumulation' (1989b p.302)

In making these claims Harvey lays himself open to the criticism that his notion of 'the cultural' relies on a simplistic 'reflection model', whereby the cultural is held to simply mirror the (prior and determining) economic.

Rather than arguing that the cultural reflects the economic, however, Harvey is claiming that a particular 'cultural logic' is necessary for flexible accumulation:

'[p]ostmodernism...has sought a creative and active rather than a passive role in the promotion of new cultural attitudes and practices consistent with flexible accumulation' (1989a p.258).

As such Harvey displays his debt to Jameson's (1984) notion of postmodernism as the 'cultural logic of late capitalism'. For Harvey there has been no complete break between the modern and the postmodern age - rather the poles of modernism and postmodernism co-exist within contemporary capitalism - in both the economic and cultural spheres. One of the central features of the postmodern is 'time-space compression', most obviously demonstrated in the economic sphere in the 1987 stock market crash (Cormack, 1990) and having its counterpart in postmodern cultural artefacts.

Around the terms modernism and postmodernism is perhaps the greatest proliferation of meanings (Anderson, 1984). In its most restricted sense modernism can be understood as an artistic movement encompassing Fauvism, Cubism, Expressionism, Constructivism, Futurism, Dada and Surrealism in painting; the work, of Joyce, Kafka, Mann, Lawrence, Musil, Proust, Gide and Cocteau in literature; Eliot, Lorca and Valera in poetry; Ibsen, Pirandello and Strindberg in drama; Stravinsky and Schoenberg in music; and Le Corbusier, Mies Van Der Rohe and Sant'Elia in architecture (Bradbury, 1990). Modernism in this sense is held to date from the late nineteenth century - although there is considerable debate about how far back it can be traced. Its basic features consist of:

' an aesthetic self-consciousness and reflexiveness; a rejection of narrative structure

in favour of simultaneity and montage; an exploration of the paradoxical, ambiguous and uncertain open-ended nature of reality; and a rejection of the notion of an integrated personality in favour of an emphasis upon the destructured, dehumanized subject' (Featherstone, 1988 p.202).

As Featherstone (1988) argues, one of the problems with trying to understand postmodernism in the arts is that many of its features were central to definitions of modernism. The term postmodernism became popular in the United States in the 1960s. It was used by artists and critics such as Cage, Burroughs, Hassan and Sontag to distinguish themselves from 'high' modernism which was seen as stultifying and exhausted, having been institutionalised in the museum and academic life. Postmodernism was pre-eminently important in architecture where it was associated in particular with the buildings of Robert Venturi, and discussed in detail by Charles Jencks (although it has now, Jencks argues, given way to 'new modernism' - a notion borrowed from Derrida [Jencks, interview on BBC2 's The Late Show, November 1990]). Jencks has identified six stylistic themes characteristic of postmodernism's reaction to modernism: historicism (allusions to historic styles eclectically mixed with contemporary images and references), straight revivalism (reconstructions of period styles), neo-vernacular buildings (with domestic and regional refer^ances), adhoc urbanism (emphasising the public and urban context), metaphor-metaphysical buildings (designed to resemble functions or incorporate particular symbols) and postmodern space. In short, a kind of 'radical eclecticism' (Jencks, 1987).

Used in their wider sense, modernism and postmodernism are understood as the cultures of modernity and postmodernity respectively. The meaning of modernism, as it is used in this wider sense, is highly contested. For Marshall Berman

(1984) modernism tears down every ancestral confinement and feudal restriction posing great emancipatory possibilities for people freed from rigid status and role hierarchies. But it also generates an alienated and atomised society riven by exploitation, and is, paradoxically, destructive of the very cultural and political values which it itself enabled to develop. Berman's aim is to restore to modernism the ambiguous, contradictory and dialectical meaning which, he argues, has been flattened out in twentieth century writing. It is precisely these contradictions and tensions which gave rise to the great modern art and literature. For others writing within a marxian problematic modernism is seen as similarly contradictory (Hall- in Grossberg, 1986; Jameson, 1984; Lovibond, 1989) - brutal and alienating, but containing the promise of emancipation to be brought about by the modern proletariat. In contrast Perry Anderson argues

'Modernism as a notion is the emptiest of all cultural categories... it designates no describable object in its own right at all: it is completely lacking in positive content' (1984 p.112-3).

Postmodern debates

The struggles around the meaning of postmodernism are fiercer still. Rather than trying to identify the (shifting and often contradictory) positions taken by various writers on the subject, it will be more useful to briefly sketch out what I see as the central debates about postmodernism. One of the most important concerns whether there has been a distinct break or rupture with modernism. An aspect of this debate centres on whether there has been an epochal shift, a move to a new social order or totality. For some writers such a shift has not occurred (Habermas, 1985; Hall - see his interview with Grossberg, 1986; Harvey, 1989a & b) whilst for others there is a tendency to argue that it has

(Baudrillard, 1985; Lyotard, 1984). I use the word 'tendency' because Lyotard (1984), for example, writes of the 'postmodern age' which is premised on a shift to a post-industrial order (but still within capitalism) but he also uses postmodernism in a different sense to refer to a mood or state of mind and has been known to chastise himself for falling into the modernist trap of periodising (see Kellner, 1988). Jameson (1984) stresses that his conception of postmodernism is an historical rather than a merely stylistic one.

One of the factors influencing whether postmodernism is seen as a complete break, of course, is how the nature of modernism is theorised. When modernism is understood as itself heterogeneous, complex and contradictory (made up, if you like, of many different modernisms) it seems that theorists are less likely to posit a distinct shift to postmodernism (cf Grossberg, 1986). Moreover, much depends on the extent to which the 'post' in postmodernism is seen as expressing affiliations or discontinuities with modernism - a notion often captured in writing by choosing to capitalise either the post or the modern part of the couplet (eg Harvey, 1989b). Of course the idea that writers take up positions in a straightforward shift-no shift way is oversimplifying. There are many nuances of argument. Chen, for example, rejects both the idea of a complete rupture and the notion that postmodernism simply represents the rearrangement of many of the elements of the modernist project. Postmodernism, he suggests, represents a rearrangement, but one which has exceeded the boundaries of modernity (Chen, 1991).

As well as debates about an epochal shift there are debates concerning the existence of an epistemological break. In particular there has been some discussion of whether modernist concepts can have any purchase in understanding

the contemporary social formation and its cultural forms (Grossberg, 1986). Key questions have concerned whether we should adopt a postmodern sociology (Bauman, 1988) or social psychology (Parker, 1989) or instead fashion a sociology of postmodernism (Featherstone, 1988). In the arts these concerns have been expressed through debates about a break with the modernist aesthetic (Krauss, 1985; Crimp, 1985), the crisis in western representation (Owens, 1985) and the 'antiaesthetic' of postmodernism (Foster, 1985; see also Burger, 1990).

A second set of debates about postmodernism have centred around the key question of where postmodernism is situated ideologically, that is whether it is complicit with or critical of the practices of late capitalism. Hal Foster (1985) argues that there are two kinds of postmodernism - the postmodernism of reaction and the postmodernism of resistance; it is the latter he is trying to fashion and defend. Although he gives no examples of the work which comprises the postmodernism of reaction Jameson has suggested Tom Wolfe, Robert Venturi and Leon Krier as contenders for this label. Stuart Hall would add (perhaps more controversially - certainly for Foster) the work of Baudrillard and Lyotard. Both, Hall argues, have collapsed analysis and celebration and produced 'theories' which are essentialist, uncritical and deeply ethnocentric (Grossberg, 1986; see also Chen, 1991 for a critique of Hall's position on Baudrillard and Gane, 1990 for an alternative reading of Baudrillard's position).

Foster, putting the case for a postmodernism of resistance, argues that the project of modernity is now highly problematic. It is no longer possible to hold onto the great narrative of the aesthetic - either in its articulation as 'art for art's sake' or the notion of art as a subversive force in a reactionary world. In the way

that modernism was critical at the beginning of this century, he argues, now a critical postmodernism is needed which will be characterised by:

'a critique of Western representation(s) and modern "supreme fictions"; a desire to think in terms sensitive to difference (of others without opposition, of heterogeneity without hierarchy); a scepticism regarding autonomous "spheres" of culture or separate "fields" of experts; an imperative to go beyond formal affiliations (of text to text) to trace social affiliations... in short, a will to grasp the present nexus of culture and politics and to affirm a practice resistant both to academic modernism and political reaction' (1985 p.xv)

Linda Hutcheon (1989) shares the view that postmodernism can be critical - in particular in its use of parody and reflexivity to subvert ideological certainties. She uses the concept of 'detoxification' to describe postmodernism's undermining of received truths and its deconstruction of the natural as historical and ideological.

For some, these arguments are unconvincing. Cormack (1990), for example, argues that Hutcheon's ideological situating of postmodernism is inadequate, depending as it does on ignoring postmodernism's more conservative manifestations, and because it rests upon a problematic and caricatured theory of ideology. More generally, Hall (1986) argues that much of the work on postmodernism lacks an adequate theorisation of power and in particular of articulation). Jameson (1984) has expressed disquiet over the nostalgic culture of postmodernism in which pastiche has replaced parody and historicism has replaced history, leaving us in a schizophrenic state, unable to think historically. This argument provokes questions about the possibility and nature of resistance in a postmodern age, the issue which, I argue, constitutes third crucial debate about postmodernism.

Jameson in his now classic (1984) paper and in subsequent work (eg 1988) has been centrally concerned with the issue of the nature of political activity in an age in which totalising theories are being interrogated. He argues

'Every position on postmodernism in culture - whether apologia or stigmatisation - is also at one and the same time and necessarily an implicitly or explicitly political stance on the nature of multi-national capitalism today.'
(Jameson, 1984 p.55)

He has argued the case for 'cognitive mapping' as an aesthetic and political project. Not a mimetic plan the cognitive map is a map of social space

'in which we may again begin to grasp our positioning as individual and collective subjects and regain a capacity to act and struggle which is at present neutralised by our spatial as well as our social confusion' (Jameson, 1984 p.92).

A not dissimilar strategy has been suggested by Edward Said - a critique of official representations, alternative uses of information modes (like photography) and the recovery of the history of others (Said, 1985). Contrasting interventions have been proposed by Mouffe (1989), Laclau (1989) and Hutcheon (1989). Mouffe accepts the postmodern rejection of totalising theory, offering in its place the concept of 'radical democracy' in which decentred subjects are concerned with localised issues, and difference is valued. Cormack (1990) has argued that what is needed rather than this total rejection is an awareness and acceptance of an unfounded metanarrative (what I have called in Chapter Three a position of political relativism). He maintains:

'the consequence of the decentering of the subject in cultural life should not be the abandonment of the concept of agency, but rather an awareness of the contingency of that concept

and its dependence on metanarratives'
(Cormack, 1990 p.549; see also Hall, 1990)

Laclau (1989) argues that political action in the form of argument is even more important in postmodern society because it constructs social reality - but he gives little sense of the political interventions necessary to produce the 'emancipatory possibilities' of which he talks. Hutcheon goes further still in suggesting that postmodernism's political intervention comes from its art itself - from its reflexive, critical and questioning spirit - and that it cannot come from a political programme. Reviewing Hutcheon's book Cormack remarks that this is a severe limitation on political activity - particularly since the audience of postmodern art may not even be aware of its 'de-naturalising critique' (a point Hutcheon concedes [Cormack, 1990]).

In many ways the polarities of the debate about political interventions in the postmodern age are played out in discussions of postmodernism and feminism. On the one hand it is argued that feminism is a straightforward part of the modernist project. Sabina Lovibond (1989), for example, warns us to be suspicious of those who ask us to bid farewell to the 'emancipatory metanarratives' and to resist the illusory temptations of an 'exciting' postmodernism. Whilst for others feminism is seen as being one of the most significant challenges to modernism (Owens, 1985). Owens argues that the crisis of modernism (of its authority and universal claims) was announced by previously marginal or repressed discourses, feminism most significant among them.

Finally there is argument about the precise nature of the cultural changes which are signified by the term postmodernism. In the remainder of this section I will outline ten features which have been identified by various

writers as defining postmodernism. The list represents a kind of synthesis of a number of texts and would not necessarily be endorsed by any single commentator.

Ten themes of postmodern culture

First, the rise of aesthetic populism (Jameson, 1984) and the collapse of the hierarchical distinction between 'high' and 'mass' or 'popular' culture (Stratton, 1989).

Second the effacement of the boundary between art and everyday life (Featherstone, 1988). Terry Eagleton has argued that this was the impulse of the revolutionary avant-garde at the beginning of the twentieth century, and that it has been reworked by postmodernism as a kind of 'sick joke':

'Postmodernism, from this perspective, mimes the formal resolution of art and social life attempted by the avant-garde, while remorselessly emptying it of its political content; Mayakovsky's poetry readings in the factory yard become Warhol's shoes and soup cans.' (Eagleton, 1985 p.61).

Third, there is a celebration of the surface 'depthlessness' of culture. Jameson argues that four fundamental depth models have been repudiated in contemporary theory:

'the dialectical one of essence and appearance (along with a whole range of concepts of ideology or false consciousness which tend to accompany it; the Freudian model of latent and manifest, or of repression; the existential model of authenticity and inauthenticity, whose heroic or tragic thematics are closely related to that other great opposition between alienation and disalienation, itself equally a casualty of the poststructural or postmodern period; and finally, latest in time, the great semiotic opposition between signifier and signified, which was itself rapidly unravelled and deconstructed during its

brief heyday in the 1960s and 1970s.' (Jameson, 1984 p.62).

This depthlessness and preoccupation with surfaces is not limited to social theory but is also manifest in art, architecture and in cultural artefacts more generally. Linked to it is what Jameson has called the 'waning of affect' in postmodern culture (see also Grossberg, 1989).

Fourth, it is argued that postmodernism is characterised by parody, pastiche, playfulness and irony (Featherstone, 1988). Jameson has argued that parody has been replaced by pastiche:

'Pastiche is like parody, the imitation of a peculiar mask, speech in a dead language; but it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter and of any conviction that alongside the abnormal tongue you have momentarily borrowed, some healthy linguistic normality exists.' (Jameson, 1984 p.65)

For Eagleton discussing this point, however, parody is not wholly alien to the culture of postmodernism. Postmodernism can be said to parody the revolutionary avant-garde. although:

'it is blatantly innocent of any such devious satirical impulse, and is entirely devoid of the kind of historical memory which might make such a disfiguring self-conscious.' (Eagleton, 1985 p.61)

This relates to the fifth feature of postmodern culture - the loss of a sense of historical past (Featherstone, 1988). Historicism, 'the random cannibalisation of all the styles of the past' (Jameson, 1984 p.65-6), has effaced history. The past becomes a vast collection of images of itself, pseudo events and spectacles (Debord, 1983).

In turn the

'desperate attempt to appropriate a missing past is... refracted through the iron law of fashion change and the emergent ideology of the "generation"' (Jameson, 1984 p.66)

The past is consumed via a 'nostalgic mode' (and this is the sixth feature) which Jameson characterises as 'well-nigh libidinal' (Jameson, 1984 p.66; see also Lumley, 1988; Hewison, 1987; West, 1988).

It is not only the past which is reduced (although the term 'reduced' implies a metaphysical opposition which postmodernists would reject) to images, but also the present. The seventh feature of postmodern society is that it is a simulational world (Baudrillard, 1983), the culture of the simulacrum (Jameson, 1984) (the copy where no original exists). For Baudrillard the development of commodity production and information technology have led to the triumph of 'signifying culture'; 'television is the world' (Baudrillard, quoted in Featherstone, 1988 p.200-201).

Eighth, and related to this, is what Baudrillard has described as the 'schizophrenia' of the self which becomes a 'pure screen...for all the networks of influence'. Jameson too uses the notion of schizophrenia, borrowed from Lacan, to refer to the breakdown of the signifying chain in postmodern culture.

Ninth there is the 'death', fragmentation or decentering of the subject discussed in so much post-structuralist work. Accompanying this is the 'death of the subject' in the institution of the star - so that stars (in cinema) become spaces or vehicles for the play of historical allusions (Jameson, 1984 p.68).

Finally there is a pervasive eclecticism (Jencks, 1987). In Lyotard's celebrated passage:

'Eclecticism is the degree zero of contemporary general culture: one listens to reggae, watches a western, eats MacDonald's food for lunch and local cuisine for dinner, wears Paris perfume in Tokyo and 'retro' clothes in Hong Kong; knowledge is a matter of TV games' (Lyotard, 1984 p.76)

This has been a brief and partial account of some of the themes and debates around the ideas of postmodernism. It is one upon which I will draw and elaborate in the remainder of this chapter.

Radio One: Postmodern Radio ?

There seem to be a number of features of Radio One's output which could be characterised as postmodern. Indeed the entire flow of daytime programming could be interpreted as such, made up as it is of a kaleidoscope of different items which fragment and recombine in different shows. In any given hour there is likely to be between fifteen and twenty-five records of various styles, spanning three decades; station identification jingles; DJ promotional jingles; jingles identifying different subsections of the shows; promotions for future programmes; time checks; weather reports; news updates; travel information; quizzes; telephone polls; dedications; and DJ chat about a range of subjects. All these items follow each other at a tremendous pace (and indeed often overlap, as when the DJ talks over the introductions and fade-outs of records) giving the impression of a smooth, seamless product - a station's worst nightmare is the existence of 'dead air', a time (however short) when no sound is broadcast and potential listeners turning their dial might miss the station.

This format has become synonymous with pop radio, and has thus come to seem as in some sense natural - in particular it has naturalised itself for listeners of my generation who were not radio audiences in the period before 1967. However it is important to stress the relative newness of this cultural form and to emphasise that it can be experienced as bizarre by listeners not familiar with it (something David Lodge has tried to show with his character Morris - see the quote at the beginning of this chapter). The format has no parrallel on television - even on 'youth' and magazine programmes which are probably closest to it.

Turning to specific programmes, part of Simon Bates' show, the Golden Hour, seems to have several features which could be understood as postmodern. As I noted earlier in the chapter, the Golden Hour is a feature in which listeners are asked to 'guess the year' from a number of records which were popular then and a number of verbal clues. Bates starts by playing a montage of about ten seconds from each of the records he is going to play from that year, before playing each of them in full, interrupted only by pieces of information about the year in question. The information concerns major political events, 'natural disasters', 'royal news' and happenings from the world of pop, television and film stars. The following are typical examples:

'The world and his wife were at it that year. Well, playboy Billy (inaud) was found dancing without his wife Princess Caroline of Monaco at a top class discotheque in London. It was also the year Bianca Jagger filed papers to divorce her husband. She began a legal battle to obtain a share of his twenty million dollar fortune. And on february the first that year the exile of Ayotollah Khomeni ended when he drove into Tehran in a blue Cadillac. Also

the year when punk star Sid Vicious died of 'an overdose of heroin. It's 9.45.'

'The Royal Premiere of the Muppet Movie was marred by Princess Anne in a flowing red dress who refused to cuddle Kermit the Frog. She said "I am not Mrs. Thatcher". Also Rhodesia said goodbye to itself and became Zimbabwe.'

The *Golden Hour*, then, is a pastiche or collage of snippets of information about a particular year. The events Bates mentions are presented as equivalent, and indeed they are functionally equivalent to the extent that they all fulfil the purpose of offering a clue to a particular year. Thus a coup in Nigeria or a famine in Ethiopia is made functionally equivalent to a snippet of 'news' about a motorist who drove the wrong way up the M61 for a few miles or the marriage of an actor and a dancer. There is no indication that the DJ accords more weight to one type of information or another - except that in terms of sheer numbers items about entertainment elites dramatically outnumber those about social or political events.

In the Golden Hour events are severed from any discussion of processes or structures which caused them. Instead history is presented as a series of images or spectacles - U.S. troops leaving Saigon, the wedding of a film star, a sportsplayer being 'busted' for drugs. The past becomes a collection of aural images to be consumed by the listener. As Jameson said '"historicism" effaces history' (Jameson, 1984 p.65). The impression of the past as spectacle, simulacrum is reinforced in the *Golden Hour* by the use of theatrical imagery - thus, giving clues for the year 1981, Simon Bates told us:

'A Royal wedding and inner city riots were the backdrop to this year'

Afloat from any conception of history or politics that might help to explain them, the events are spuriously linked by the fact that they occurred in the same year, and they are made safe through the 'nostalgia mode' (Jameson, 1984 p.66). This

'restructure[s] the whole issue of pastiche and projects it onto a collective and social level, where the desperate attempt to appropriate a missing past is now refracted through the iron law of fashion change and the emergent ideology of generation' (Jameson, 1984 p.66).

In the Golden Hour this is accomplished partly by reference to generational styles and fashions, but, more significantly, by the playing of 'oldies' relating to the year in question. As Ken Garner (1990) has noted the golden oldie works powerfully to reassure listeners (hence the tendency to broadcast oldies immediately after the news). Ros Coward has elaborated this point in relation to mid-morning radio's address to female listeners, arguing that both the music played and its framing by the presenter

'works to validate the choices which women have made. The phase of their lives when they went to parties, experienced their carnival of emotions, is treated nostalgically as part of a comfortable personal history...[it] tells women who are isolated and at home, and possibly very fed up, that the choices which they made were ok.' (Coward, 1984 p.145)

Claims that radio is postmodern reach the peak of their support with the Steve Wright in the Afternoon Show. Made up of 'true stories', 'surveys', 'talkie bits', conversations with the 'characters' and news from the 'trivia lab', the programme is famous for its humour. Indeed most of the show seems to function in the parodic

mode which Eagleton has argued is characteristic of postmodernism (Eagleton, 1985). One type of feature which exemplifies this is the 'true story', the status of which is ambiguous to say the least. Announced by their own incredulous-sounding jingle 'Another true story from Steve Wright' the items are clearly signalled as separate from other parts of the programme. Each is given its own aural headline (parodying news reports), like the following:

'Overweight newspaper kills dog.

Mission Impossible star Barbara Bain suffered a tragic loss after an overweight newspaper proved too much for her dog. Her fourteen year old pet was killed when the paperboy threw the *Los Angeles Times*, weighing three pounds, onto her lawn. The one hundred page plus newspaper landed, killing the dog. *Times* officials offered to pay compensation, but the actress was too heartbroken to reach an agreement.'

'Suicides in Nevada.

The lecture "Suicides in Nevada" at the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners was cancelled because its speaker, Ralph Bailey, the Washoe County Coroner shot himself in the head before the convention.'

Despite their introductions as 'true' stories, these items are clearly marked as humorous. Unlike the 'revelations' of the tabloid newspapers, which they parody, these stories draw attention to their status as fictions - with their ironic claim to be 'true', the manner of their introduction, and the nature of the stories themselves which are obviously signalled as humorous. The form of the stories mimics that of reports in the popular press and indeed it seems to be the 'unbelievable' stories in some

parts of the press that Steve Wright's stories work to parody, undermining their status as true.

A different style of parody or at least mocking is found in the surveys which are regularly broadcast on the show (two or three every afternoon). Drawn from women's magazines or the American media, the surveys are overwhelmingly concerned with personality and sexuality. Two types of survey predominate. One type offers listeners a chance to identify themselves from information provided - eg 'find out what sort of person you are from the shape of your feet' (to take an actual example). The other claims to reveal something surprising about people in general - eg. how many people report having sex on their first date (another real example). Often the two types combine as in the following:

'Sexual fantasies - are you getting enough?

OK do you get a fantasy a sexual fantasy every day? Have you had your sexual fantasy today? Sexual fantasies occur at least once a day in 97% of men and 80% of women. That's what researchers told the Association for Marriage and Family Therapy in the States. Fantasies may last only a few seconds but still be real sizzlers the researchers said. Zooming along in a fast car or meeting in a top class fancy hotel with a member of the opposite sex and suddenly finding you're sexually irresistible is apparently one of the most popular red hot fantasies. Another juicy item is that 20% single women are having affairs with married men.'

'The average British man is a softy. and that's official. Three out of four men hang on to prized possessions like teddy bears and cricket bats and enjoy looking at photographs. I actually have my

lucky stuff. I've got a lucky wallet, a a lucky pen and a lucky file and I figure that as long as I keep that stuff my luck will continue. And it goes on to say that they enjoy looking at photos and reminiscing about courting days. The soppiest lot live in Northern Ireland where 89% like to look back at happy snaps. Over 70% of women who responded to the survey in *Woman's World* had seen their man cry'.

One of the things which is interesting about the surveys on the Steve Wright show is the way in which the status of science is undermined. Whilst the surveys do not challenge science directly - indeed in many respects they buy into the notion that there are things to be uncovered or revealed by research - what they do is in a sense 'level out' the differences between academic research and surveys in women's magazines ('high' and 'popular' science to make a comparison with art). The findings from each are presented as equally valid; in fact often research which relies on a few hundred self-selecting women replying to a questionnaire in *Woman's Own* is elevated above traditional scientific research. The privileged status of academic science is undermined in several ways - through comments on the researchers names ('a made-up name if ever I heard one') which throw doubt upon the research, claims about the 'obviousness' of what has been discovered, or on other occasions the dubiousness of the findings (which are deconstructed using 'common-sense'), jokes about the sheer pointlessness of the research in the first place, as well as the mere fact that it is presented as equivalent knowledge to that generated by magazine quizzes and surveys. Science, then, is not treated with the reverence of, say, popular television programmes (Robins & Webster, 1984) and is only mentioned if it can be articulated to the particular notion of interest and fun with which the programme works. When (academic or

'serious') research is presented which does not fit this notion (ie does not centre on questions about personality, sexuality, gender difference), it is explicitly criticised. An example of this is Steve Wright's dismissal of a report indicating that listening to personal stereos at high volume can damage one's hearing, with the comment that it is 'rubbish': he has been listening to loud music over headphones for years and his hearing is not impaired. In this example the authors of the report were presented as part of a diffuse 'them' who are out to ruin 'our' fun (something I discuss later in the chapter).

Science is also mocked through a series of parodies of academics and scientists. Two of the 'characters' on the show are 'scientists' - 'Dr. Fish Filleta' and 'The Professor' - stereotypical figures of fun with long white lab coats which, in the case of the Professor 'bears the scars of some terrible miscalculations in the labs' (from the Steve Wright in the Afternoon Book).

In contrast to the treatment of 'real' science, the Steve Wright show has its very own lab - the 'Trivia Lab' - in the heart of the studio. From this important laboratory emanate many of the true stories and a number of the celebrity quizzes in which people are asked to guess the identity of a person from an ever-increasing number of 'trivial' clues. What is interesting about the notion of the trivia lab is precisely its self-consciousness of its status as trivia. Again a comparison with the popular press, and indeed with other programmes on Radio One, is instructive. Whereas for these information about the celebrities is treated as important, is often hallowed and made the subject of exclusives, on the Steve Wright show it is treated as trivia. However, its labelling as such does not mean that it does not have great importance within the show; as on many other popular quizzes and game-shows

'trivial' knowledge about the lives of celebrities, the plots of soaps, and the position of records in the charts is rewarded with prizes and publicity. This knowledge is also profoundly classed.

It is the self-consciousness and reflexivity of many aspects of the Steve Wright show that reinforce the extent to which it might be understood as postmodern. Not only is there the institution of the Trivia Lab but there are many other ways in which Steve Wright 'plays' with reflexivity. Indeed the show's jingle runs 'Steve Wright breaking down the boundaries and conventions of radio'. One of the things which is of particular interest is the way in which so much of what is said on the show is ironized. This even extends to the ironizing of the very conventions of contemporary popular radio itself, as when Wright, on the point of reading out a dedication from a listener to her husband, asked how the dedication should be read. He suggested a list of options - 'gruffly', 'humourously', etc. Among these 'sincerely' figured as just another choice, drawing a mocking attention to the conventions of radio presentation. This is a far cry from the presenters on ILR, whose interviews are discussed in the following chapters, who suggest straightforwardly that the DJ's role is to be 'a friend' to the listeners. It is as if Wright is a postmodern man who knows that 'everything has been said before', that he cannot say anything meaningful, original or truthful without it sounding hollow and clichéd. All that remains is to stand on the sidelines commenting reflexively upon his own speech. As Parker has argued, if the modern person would say 'I love you madly', the postmodern equivalent is 'As Barbara Cartland would say, I love you madly'.

'Even before devotees of deconstruction could get their hands on it, the notion of "love" itself slips away from the realms of "pure" meaning and

intention, into culturally constructed webs of signification.' (Parker, 1989 p.134)

Finally I want to explore how the plethora of 'characters' who people the Steve Wright show can also be seen as a postmodern feature. Over the years he has been broadcasting Wright has devised a number of characters some of which are 'killed off' after a short time, others of whom have remained features on the show for several years. Of these 'Mr. Angry' and 'Sid the Manager' stand out. At any one time there are up to ten different 'characters' who take part in the show. At the time of writing these include 'Mick Jagger', 'David Bowie', 'Keith Richards', 'John Bole' (an Irish television political commentator), 'Sid the Manager' (an inept, shambolic manager of celebrities), 'Mr. Angry' (from Purley), 'Mr. Contestant' (a less than bright contestant on a quiz show) and 'Music Journalist' (a pseudo-intellectual commentator upon music trends who seems at some point in his life to have taken too much acid). On any given show each 'character' might 'appear' two or three times. On one level then the sheer plethora of different voices disrupt the traditional narrative of the DJ and the conventions of pop radio presentation and lend support to the idea that the show is postmodern. It must be emphasised that the decentredness of this show is very unusual in British radio; most other shows follow the convention of the single DJ introducing and chatting between records. Some of the 'characters' work as parodies of well-known celebrities (eg. Mick Jagger, David Bowie, Jack Nicholson). They take particular aspects of that individual's persona - the intonation of their voice, the fact that they are known to have taken a lot of drugs, or the type of role they tend to be cast in - and exaggerate them, like an aural caricature. Although occasionally the characters are given 'straightforward' tasks to do within the programme - for example in David Bowie's case to

introduce time checks and weather reports (by singing 'can you tell me what the time is/temperature is') - most of the time the 'characters' speak lines which relate to shared knowledge about them - Keith Richards, for example is perpetually dazed, having taken too much heroin, whilst Jack Nicholson is always embroiled in some amorous situation. John Bole (a parody of the BBC's political editor John Cole) represents a slight deviation in that rather than his own character being mocked, it is 'the news' itself which is parodied. From 'outside the House of Commons' John Bole provides listeners with regular reports in a heavy Irish brogue.

'John Bole on the line here from Westminster. Yes, lots of MPs are body-popping down here in the square. And lots of health ministers have ordered an urgent investigation into the lifestyle of people in a Scottish village in which only one person has died in the last seventy years. it was the undertaker - he died of starvation!'

The other 'characters' work slightly differently. Rather than being parodies of specific individuals, they are easily recognisable stereotypes whose contributions are in keeping with the drawing of their characters. Thus 'Mr Angry' phones messages of machine-gun-fire pace complaining about the most trivial and innocuous of things, whilst 'Sid the Manager' stumbles over his words, forgets why he has phoned up, prefaces everything with 'Er listen ere boy you alright er' and continues talking after Steve Wright has ostensibly hung up the telephone: 'Hullo? Hullo? you there boy?'. Thus not only does the show contain a pastiche of different voices, but it also constructs for humorous parody a number of caricatures of 'types of person'.

To sum up, what I have argued in this section is that there are a number of aspects of daytime Radio One which could be understood as postmodern. In particular, I have suggested that the Golden Hour on the Simon Bates show, and the Steve Wright show display many features which are congruent with descriptions of postmodernism - pastiche, parody, play, historicism, nostalgia, reflexivity, the undermining of metanarratives of truth and science and the decentering of the traditional authorial anchor for pop radio programmes. This impression is reinforced by the music broadcast. Not only are there 'oldies' and cover versions with their own nostalgic focus and references, but also a considerable number of 'sampled' records. The very idea of sampling which involves taking a section or sample from one musical text and inserting it in another text - usually in a reprocessed form - raises all kinds of questions about authorship, ownership and copyright, intertextuality and meaning, which can be seen as pre-eminently postmodern questions. Moreover the sheer number of current chart records which receive their first (or first re-released) exposure on adverts (eg Praise - Fiat Tempora, The Clash - Levis, Free- Wrigleys chewing gum, etc) highlights issues of intertextuality. As I write no less than a quarter of Top 40 records are currently being used in adverts; many of the remainder come from current films.

Ideology and Popular Radio

Having suggested some ways in which Radio One might be understood as postmodern, I now want to subject this idea to some more critical interrogation. Specifically, I want to explore the extent to which Radio One DJs' talk is ideological. The aim is not to produce a definitive statement about whether it is postmodern or not, but rather to investigate how the features I have discussed, regardless of their characterisation as postmodern or

modern, function ideologically. I am particularly interested in the interaction between the form of DJ talk and the content of what is said.

Postmodern ideology?

Discussing the Golden Hour earlier in this chapter I suggested that it is characterised by pastiche, historicism and a nostalgic mode. What I want to argue is that these features of the Golden Hour work ideologically to construct a world in which events are presented as meaningless, unconnected and history is simply a parade of images. If we look again at the two examples discussed earlier (see pp). Whilst some of the items about royal and entertainment elites are presented as having some meaning or cause, and even, in the case of Bianca Jagger's lawsuit, as involving struggle, the information about social and political events is presented as fragmented and inexplicable (cf Higgins and Moss [1982] who contrast the frightening and inexplicable world of the news on Australian talkback radio with the reassuring tones of the adverts which follow it). Coups occur, riots 'break out', exiles end, and, of course, it is well known that Rhodesia simply 'said goodbye to itself'! The phenomenal aspects of the situation are focused on to the exclusion of any notion of history or politics that might help to explain them - thus Ayotollah Khomeini's exile is said to have ended 'when he drove into Tehran in a blue Cadillac'. This begs the question of why he did not end it before february 1st , if it was simply a matter of driving into Tehran , and indeed of whether the entire course of history would have changed if he had driven in to Tehran in a red Cadillac!

Whilst it is important not to over-analyse such quotes - they are after all, only clues in a quiz - they do seem to perform an important ideological function. In particular

they suggest that political events are essentially unconnected, without cause and inexplicable. History is reduced to a series of banana skins. It is de-politicised and de-historicised as time itself becomes posited as the only kind of explanation for random events. It is instructive to compare the Golden Hour with Colin McArthur's discussion of how television deals with history (McArthur, 1981). He argued that items about the past were refracted through a number of notions - a belief in the uniqueness of the event, the free-will and moral responsibility of individuals, a belief in the role of historical accident (which translated into no search for structural explanations), a strong reliance on the testimony of the individual, a strong concern with the nation state and a belief in the inevitability of progress. Some of these notions are clearly echoed in radio.

What I want to argue is that the form of presentation of clues on the Golden Hour is itself a kind of metanarrative and a highly ideological one. It mystifies the past suggesting that social, political historical events are random and inexplicable, having no cause and no relationship to other events. This is a potent ideological message.

The 'postmodern' aspects of the Steve Wright show can be subjected to similar critical analysis. First the status of the characters as representing a diversity of different voices is highly questionable. Despite the sheer numbers of characters and the large volume of their contributions to the show, their voices are not 'equal' to that of Steve Wright. Wright's voice and his discourse is supremely privileged within the show, and the impression of valuable diversity is artificial. Indeed, Wright's position at the centre of the show is positively reinforced by the presence of the 'characters', both because their contributions are

entirely orchestrated by him, and because of the presentational opportunities that a dialogue (however false) allow for him. He is not restricted to the opportunities for self-presentation allowed by traditional DJs monologue, but is able to 'bounce off' and banter with the 'characters' he has created, cracking jokes and responding wittily to their remarks.

I would argue that one of the main functions performed by the 'characters' within the show is that of enabling Steve Wright to present himself as reasonable, good humoured and generally a 'nice guy'. This opportunity is afforded in several ways. First through the implicit contrast which is drawn between Wright and his 'characters', all of whom, as crude stereotypes, are presented as flawed, inadequate or unreasonable in many respects - even when they are treated affectionately within the show. Second Steve Wright is able to enhance his self-presentations through particular interactions with the characters - in which almost without exception, he constructs himself as eminently reasonable, tolerant and pleasant, simply laughing at Mr. angry's outbursts, never losing his temper with Sid's struggle to remember why he phoned and asking friendly general questions of the other characters. Moreover he uses the views of the characters which are often coded as 'extreme' ridiculous' or 'biased' because of the fact that they are articulated by that character as a way of counterposing his own views which, in contrast, appear to epitomise impartiality and common-sense sound judgement. There is not space here to explore in detail the subtleties of exactly how Wright's discourse is privileged within the show and those of the characters undermined. This should be undertaken by a larger study, as should an investigation of how the programme is 'read'/heard and understood by listeners.

Whilst the characters perform an important role in allowing Wright to present himself as a 'nice guy' and to present his opinions as reasonable, I believe they are in a sense 'doubly coded' (cf Jencks, 1987). That is, they perform another significant role within the programme: they give voice to a numbers of views which Wright himself could not articulate. It is not straightforwardly that the characters are mouthpieces for Wright - in contrast I have already argued that their views are often explicitly undermined by him - but that the construction of particular characters buys into a number of ideological themes, saying something about both him and how he sees his audience. The point will become clearer if I illustrate it with an example of one of the 'characters'. The following is a description of 'Gervaise the hairdresser' which is taken from the Steve Wright in the Afternoon Book (the book of the show, which is valuable in giving a brief 'history' of each character on the show.)

Gervaise

Found it difficult to get on with girls at school, and was physically abused by the boys - although he says he didn't find it too bad. They were unimpressed by his collection of pressed flowers and his flamboyant mode of dress. He makes Boy George look manly. Turquoise has always been his colour. Confirmed as a bachelor at the age of sixteen, hairdressing was the only direction he could take, after his father - disappointed with his lack of interest in manly pursuits - sent him to Hendon police cadet college. Ran a hairdressing Salon in Palmers Green, and it was at this point he began to regularly telephone me during the show. Unfortunately his frail stature could not cope with the harsh English winters, and so he moved to San Franscisco and warmer climes. Was recently rushed

back to Engalnd for urgent blood tests at the beginning of the year with a medical complaint. He luckily survived, and now runs a salon in Luton. (Steve Wright in the Afternoon Book, p.31)

What I am arguing is that the very existence of Gervaise as a character on the show performs important ideological work. It is not that Wright is (necessarily) personally homophobic (or as I prefer heterosexualist, avoiding as it does the implications of individual pathology) but that the existence of 'Gervaise' buys into and reinforces populist heterosexualist ideology - much of the perniciousness of which is evidenced by this description. (The implication that Gervaise is carrying the HIV virus seems to do much to undermine the AIDS information campaign Radio One was concurrently running, which was explicitly aimed at the heterosexual community). Wright is able to buy into and reference a heterosexualist ideology without actually saying anything anti-gay himself. Indeed, on the contrary he might at times specifically distance himself from anti-gay remarks. It is precisely in the locus of this apparent contradiction that ideology works so effectively.

Another example of this kind of ideological work performed by the characters is that of 'Damien the Social Worker'. Damien was 'born and bred in Lambeth' and rebelled

'against the system during the 1960s as a flower child and subsequently seems to have been caught in a time warp...His wife Beth, who says that she once met Janet Street-Porter, is looking forward to giving natural birth on the Greenham site if only Damien can pitch his tent...Their lives revolve around Channel Four, the Guardian, dandelion wine, City limits, holidays in Morocco, CND and a proposed move from their ancestral homeland of Lambeth to

either Kennington or the Docklands' (Steve Wright in the Afternoon Book p.27)

Broadcast mainly in the early to mid-1980s, at the height of CND's influence and the period during which Lambeth was the primary target of an attack on Labour Councils by the Conservative government, the character of Damien begins to look not only ideological but explicitly (party) political. It draws on notions about the inadequacy and out-of-touchness of left wing Lambeth dwellers and CND members, as well as peddling a familiar story about the social work profession.

It is important not to overlook, however, that whilst the characters may 'carry' important ideological themes, their explicit role on the show is to entertain and to provide humour. Therein lies both much of their force and the difficulty in challenging them as ideological. For, as Suzanne Moore has argued in a discussion of the 'postmodern' soap 'Twin Peaks'

'the bottom line is that postmodern irony means never having to say you are sorry. or that you are serious.' (Guardian 27.11.90)

To question the stereotypical 'char^aacters' on the Steve Wright show, like questioning David Lynch's treatment of women, is to fall into the ultimate postmodern trap: 'Oh you didn't take it seriously did you!'. As Mike Mulkay has argued, this line is not unique to postmodernism, a variant of it has often been used against people challenging humour which is offensive - sexist or racist jokes - where the challenger is accused of having no sense of humour (Mulkay 1988). The elevation of 'fun' and humour on Radio One thus itself functions ideologically, implying in relation to particular items within the show that nothing is more important than 'having a laugh'.

By examining the construction of the characters we can learn a considerable amount about how Wright sees/constructs his audience. We can ask, following Winship (1981) 'who does this text think I am?'. The parody of a gay hairdresser suggests an audience assumed to be heterosexual, whilst a parody of a Lambeth-dwelling CND member suggests an audience whose political position is such that they would find such a person a figure of fun. Among the range of 'characters' who have peopled the show over the years there seem to be significant absences. The Lambeth social worker Damien has no right wing counterpart, nor are there characters of people who work in the city, managers or directors, or members of the armed services. It can surely not be that easily recognisable stereotypes of such people do not exist or could not be constructed; rather it seems that only particular types of people become parodied 'characters'. What they have in common is that they are constructed as lying outside the consensus of opinions and behaviours which Wright seems to assume to be held by his audience. In addition to allowing Steve Wright to present himself as pleasant and reasonable, the characters also allow listeners to positively differentiate themselves from the 'extremes' or 'misfits' that the characters represent. One is invited to laugh at these social oddities while being simultaneously reassured that one's laughter and one's opinions are normal and reasonable.

The surveys on the show seem to function in a way which is not dissimilar to that of the characters, in allowing Steve Wright particular self-presentational opportunities. The reading of the survey about male sentimentality, for example, enabled Wright to reveal that he too has his 'lucky stuff' - a pen, wallet, etc. In a sense all popular radio presentation is about producing opportunities for talk like this, in such a way that it does not sound

completely artificial - as it would perhaps if Wright had said out of the blue that he has 'a lucky pen'. The surveys also present opportunities for Wright to comment on the nature of the research, the status of the researcher and the validity of the findings. As I noted in the last section, such comments tend to elevate research from magazines and to be characterised by an anti-intellectualism.

Like the characters, the 'double coding' of the surveys allows them to play a further role - that of giving voice to ideas from which Wright is himself distanced but which nevertheless constitute part of the discourse of the show. The following examples, which Wright did not critically interrogate in any way, show how the content of the surveys can work to reinforce particular pernicious ideologies, in this case about gender, without Wright articulating those ideas himself.

Building site workers - good news! Women like wolf-whistling

Women don't mind being whistled at on the street and many secretly enjoy it, according to a recent survey in the magazine *Ladies Home Journal*. In all 74,000 women were polled, and the survey found that 70% were secretly pleased when someone whistled at them, 87%, even those over the age of 80, said they eyed men on the street, 91% were pleased with gentlemanly behaviour such as opening doors, and wives number one sexual complaint was that their love-making wasn't frequent enough, and their second most common complaint was that their husbands made love too quickly.

Meal-ticket syndrome

If your husband's been acting funny lately, and is

experiencing or approaching middle-age, he could be suffering from meal-ticket syndrome. According to expert Dr Robert Campbell, husbands normally regarded as responsible, dependable, 'bring home the bacon' types can show uncharacteristic signs of tiredness, irritability, heavy drinking and impatience when suddenly attacked by meal-ticket syndrome. Basically, they start asking themselves 'what's in it for me' after years of providing for the wife and kids. They start feeling used and abused - 'resentful of having devoted his adult life to taking care of others, he begins to grumble to himself' says Dr.Campbell.

Whilst it might be unacceptable for Steve Wright personally to express the view that (say) women enjoy being whistled at by building workers, the survey format allows this idea to enter the discourse of the show. Not only is it presented uncritically by the DJ but it is also presented as factual. The way in which the findings are presented distracts attention from any potential critical questions either about the research itself - for example, the sample, the wording of the questions, the nature of the analysis - or about gender relations more generally. Similarly in the case of the reported research on the so-called 'meal-ticket syndrome' its author is invoked as an expert and the notion of women and children as drains on male resources is subjected to no critical interrogation whatsoever. It is not simply that it happens not to be challenged, but that the entire form of its presentation makes it unchallengeable. This is an aural society of the spectacle writ large; decontextualised 'facts' - which have become naturalised because they have been severed from their context of production - are paraded in front of listeners. We are invited to gasp, sigh or laugh but not to question as this fragment of the show gives way to a quiz, a 'character' or a record.

Earlier in this chapter I suggested several features of Radio One which could be understood as postmodern. I argued that it was characterised by parody, pastiche, play with metanarratives (of, say, science and truth), historicism, nostalgia, reflexivity and a plurality of voices. What I have tried to show in this section of the chapter is that whilst daytime Radio One may be considered postmodern, this certainly does not mean it is non-ideological. I have indicated several aspects of it which work ideologically arguing that whilst there are many voices one is privileged over the others, that the parodies are limited to particular positions, that certain positions are repeatedly undermined, and that the content of surveys reproduces particular sets of values.

But to argue this is not to fully capture the working of ideology on Radio One for it suggests a product too systematic and too coherent in its ideological sweep. I want to argue that the ideological force of Radio One derives precisely from its fragmentation and contradictoriness, and from its particular articulation of 'fun'. Like women's magazines, it seems to me that Radio One's output is characterised by contradictions, which are dealt with within the shows in two ways. Firstly through the fragmented nature of the output whereby potentially contradictory items and features are separated by records and other items so that the contradiction does not become a problem for the DJ. This is something Janice Winship (1980;1987) discussed in her studies of magazines, showing how different and potentially contradictory items are separated - for example, fashion pages, problem pages, adverts for cosmetic surgery - and also how the visual discourse of such magazines often contradicts the written text with, say, pictures of young, glamorous models next to articles about the menopause. On Radio One this kind of fragmentation is most obvious in the way in which public

service commitments are despatched to the evening slots, but it is also evident in the way campaigns about drugs, AIDS, and unemployment are separated off from the rest of the output of the shows and Our Tune is clearly demarcated from other parts of programming.

Secondly and more importantly I want to argue that the very presence of contradictions is not problematic within the discourses of Radio One. Contradiction is a pre-eminently modern notion which seems to have little relevance for Radio One. Indeed, it is partly the co-existence of contradictory discourses which defines Radio One as postmodern, and which also function ideologically to (in Jameson's terms) negate 'depth models', reduce all positions to a mere cacophony of different voices, erasing politics and history. This is reinforced by the particular construction of 'fun' and 'entertainment' with which Radio One works and through which the discourses are articulated.

Writing about politics in the postmodern age, Parker argues that attempts to 'politicise aesthetics' have given way to appeals (by, for example, the Euro Communist Party) to aestheticise politics, with designer boxer shorts sporting hammer and sickle and filofaxes ('post' diaries in which the past can be taken out and conveniently thrown away' [Parker, 1989]) vying for space in the party's journal Marxism Today. Parker comments:

'This is recuperation in a new form, and works as if the activity of recuperation had itself been recuperated by the new culture. While the modern recuperation of radical political ideas works by reinterpreting them as interesting alternative opinions or suggestions for improvement, postmodern recuperation now consists in the representation of politics as just another representation. This is how it is possible, and not at all subversive, to walk around cities of America and Europe with carrier bags advertising "Che Guevara" or "Kalashnikov" boutiques, to read colour supplement articles on wine in the

Observer under the heading "Rival factions in the red brigade" or on clothing under the heading "Militant tendency"' (Parker, 1989 p.135)

Parker's remarks capture something of the feeling of Radio One, for what I am arguing is not so much (or not simply) that particular perspectives are systematically undermined, but that the discourses of Radio One reduce everything to images and spectacle constructed around 'fun'. As such a whole range of 'characters' or perspectives could be parodied (not just those of Damien and Gervase, for example) and Radio One would lose none of its ideological potency. For what is ideological is the fact that the world can be represented as a pastiche of images, surfaces, voices where nothing matters, and whoever challenges this is 'interpellated' by Radio One's text as boring, humourless and 'naff' (cf Parker, 1989).

The argument I am struggling and groping towards is that Radio One is both a postmodern and an ideological text. The operation of ideology, I would argue, is different in modern and postmodern texts. One of the ways I had of thinking about this was of trying to imagine discourses which could not be spoken, things which could not be said on Radio One. By considering the notion of class struggle - something as wholly alien to Radio One's discourses as I could imagine - I examined the possibilities that certain ideas could not be voiced on Radio One. My conclusion was that 'class struggle' could be 'talked about' on Radio One, and indeed that it was not too difficult to imagine this happening on, for example, the Steve Wright show. This is not to suggest the openness of the text - far from it - but precisely its ideological force, which is far more potent than that of a modern cultural product in its capacity to recuperate even the most progressive ideas. It works not through naturalising a particular set of historical social

relations or through incorporation, but through the recuperation of all ideas so that they become mere representations, images, devoid of any critical potential. Politics, as Parker (1989) argued, becomes just another representation.

It also works through the constructions of particular subject positions for its listeners and for those who criticise it from modernist stances - eg. feminists, anti-racist groups, etc. Listeners are constructed as fashionable, streetwise, having a sense of humour (I look in more detail at this in the remainder of the chapter), whilst those who challenge are written off as humourless and boring. Arguments about (for example) sexism are not engaged with at any level - instead those who propose them are derided as tedious, ridiculous or old fashioned.

This is a pernicious form of attack which is reflected in a wider political culture in which it is seen as acceptable for opponents of government policy to be written off as 'ugly' and in which (as I correct this at the beginning of the Gulf war) a protest I attended against the war is described by a BBC One newsreader as 'very 1960s'. Political protest is thus relativised to a particular period and made into a fashion - to protest is to be positioned as old fashioned, behind the times. If in modern political culture critical ideas were engaged with to only a very limited extent, in postmodern culture their proponents are as likely to have their dress-sense commented upon as the content of their arguments. This must raise profound worries about the nature of resistance.

It is important, having made these points about the functioning of ideology on Radio One, not to exaggerate the fragmentation and contradictoriness. For there are consistent positions, and others which are consistently

undermined. In this sense, Radio one does not represent such a 'break' from modern texts. In the remainder of this chapter I want to briefly explore the nature of some of the consistent ideological features of Radio one. I will do so under two sub-headings. In the first I will consider individualism. In the second I will examine DJs constructions of 'real life' or the 'real world' and their construction of subject positions for listeners.

The Political is Personal

One of the most pervasive and consistent themes of Radio One DJ talk is its individualism and its focus on the personal. The examples that I have already given of surveys, quizzes and 'true stories' indicate some of the interest in individual personality, the obsession (mirrored in psychology) with pinning down who you 'really' are, what you are 'really' like - questions which are a mainstay of Radio One DJ talk. This pre-occupation is also evident in much of the DJs' talk about celebrities from the music industry, television and film. Like the tabloid press (Edley, 1991) Radio One is concerned to reveal the 'real' person behind famous household names, where knowing what somebody is 'really' like is understood as knowing about their closest personal relationship and their sex life (cf Seabrook, 1986).

More than this, however, Radio One DJ talk is characterised by an individualism whereby social and political issues are repeatedly recast as individual problems. This is found in many aspects of DJ's talk, but is best illustrated in relation to the feature Our Tune.

As I noted at the start of this chapter Our Tune consists of DJ Simon Bates telling a 'personal' story based on a letter sent in by a listener. Letters concern the

breakdown of relationships, the death of loved ones, physical and sexual abuse, coping with major physical illness or infertility, abortion and rape. It must be stressed that the DJ does not read the letter but uses it as a resource from which he faithfully (he claims) tells listeners stories. Despite the fact that he constructs the narrative, rather than reading the listeners letters and thus letting them speak in their own voices, Bates is keen to distance himself from the stories and to present himself as the mere mouthpiece for listeners experiences. This is reinforced by occasions - usually at the end of stories when the moral of the tale is being spelled out - when he says 'now I'll read you exactly what she says here...'. An examination of those sections which are apparently read and the rest of the narrative would make an interesting study in its own right.

There are many fascinating aspects of Our Tune, and as the most popular feature on British radio it certainly merits considerable attention which could look in detail at how the narratives are constructed and how they differ from the original letters, how the letter or story is chosen (only 5% of letters received are broadcast [personal interview, producer Simon Bates show]) and at listeners responses to Our Tune. Here, though, I am concerned simply with how Our Tune exemplifies some of the individualistic themes of Radio One DJ talk.

What Our Tune does is present experiences as individual and personal whilst eschewing their social and political dimensions. In this way experiences of alienation and oppression are not denied but are presented simply as individual experiences, so that listeners are reinforced in what Dorothy Hobson (1980) has called their 'collective isolation'. Our Tune presents a world in which 'things just happen' and people are 'just the way they are'. Events

happen for no apparent reason and above all are presented as completely beyond our control. Thus in a recent Our Tune a man who beat up his partner and broke her nose was 'just that way', whilst in another a couple who forced their daughter to leave home when she told them she was pregnant are described as 'having their own reasons, they just felt that way about it'.

Such descriptions are ideological in several ways. Firstly they serve to naturalise existing social relations, to reinforce the inevitability of a particular set of social arrangements, suggesting that they cannot be changed. Secondly they serve to deny the fact that the vast majority of stories on Our Tune are about oppression, and predominantly women's oppression. The sheer number of Our Tunes which are written by the victims of domestic violence suggest something positively wilful in Bates' failure to even remark upon this as a problem which transcends individuals. Instead, and this is the third point, the explanations for events and problems are made to seem as if they reside in particular personalities 'the way some people are'.

This has a further twist in the repetitive drawing on a stock of stable characters for Our Tune. These characters people every story, being 'wheeled on' by Simon Bates regardless of the topic. There is the man who is 'solid gold' (otherwise known as 'Mr Right'), the 'tough cookie' (usually female), the 'jealous friend' (also female), the 'solid gold mum' (who sticks by you in adversity), the 'ratbag' (male, and responsible for all the violence and sexual abuse in these stories) and the ratbag's counterpart 'the type of lady who attracts real ratbags'. These narrative characters are much more than simply ways of telling the story with flair, they constitute key elements in explaining situations. The phrases 'the kind of person

who' and 'the type of lady' recur again and again precisely because all the power to account for injustice, inequality and oppression depends on them. In this way, rape, domestic violence, and the abandonment of women by their 'partners' and parents when they become pregnant come to be seen as purely personal issues. As such Our Tune and other Radio One discourse stands the feminist slogan that the personal is political on its head. For Radio One the personal is not political , rather the political is personal, and thus requires, crucially, a personal individual solution.

It would be inaccurate to suggest that these stories encourage a complete resignation and fatalism, for they do not. The stories contain a limited but significant current of individualistic agency - women are told of taking the courageous decision to leave men who abuse them and others are offered moral support to do the same; victims of child sexual abuse tell of the relief of being able to discuss their feelings with counsellors; and women with experiences of multiply damaging relationships are told to 'hang on until Mr. Right comes along'. What is not encouraged is any way of analysing ones situation as anything other than the product of a few 'ratbags', anything other than a purely personal tragedy. The limits to individualism and personal action fall at the point where personal unhappiness starts to look like part of a wider pattern of social relations.

The DJ's failure to even note gender patterns in Our Tunes stands in stark contrast with the overwhelming interest shown in gender in other parts of Radio One's output. For example in the surveys and quizzes which ask what we are 'really' like the questions are weighed down with assumptions about gender. To find out who you are from such surveys is to be positioned as gendered subject. The survey about 'soft' men (see p.264) is a good example of this. One of the interesting features of it is that it purports to tell us something surprising about the male psyche and behaviour: men are not the tough, unsentimental people we thought they were but rather ('underneath') they have soft centres, they look back nostalgically on old photos and mementoes and keep possessions which they consider 'lucky'. At one level then, the survey seems to work to undermine the traditional stereotype of masculinity. But paradoxically in doing so it actually reinforces the very idea of meaningful gender difference. This is a point which Margaret Wetherell has argued very forcefully in her discussion of social psychology's treatment of gender. She argues:

'[I]t seems probable that the force of femininity/ masculinity discourse lies in the very assumption of meaningful categorical difference rather than in the specific content identified through research as constitutive of that difference.' (Wetherell, 1986 p.81)

Drawing on this argument I want to suggest that the substance of descriptions of masculinity and femininity may be considerably more flexible than is traditionally assumed. The force of gender discourse does not lie in particular words or stereotypical descriptions. Rather men can be described as 'soft' and women as 'tough cookies' without gender losing any of its ideological significance. We should not assume that just because a woman is not described in traditional, stereotypical terms as passive or

dependent, and a man as active and independent that gender is somehow not relevant or salient (this is something I discuss in more detail in Chapter 6). Instead we should examine the construction of masculinity and femininity in all their messiness, and look at how notions of gender are flexibly drawn on to achieve different functions within particular discourses. Considerably more analysis of these issues is needed in relation to Radio One.

However, the fact that discourses of gender are flexible so that 'counter-stereotypical' descriptions can work to reinforce the ideological significance of gender does not mean that Radio One DJs' talk is not characterised by many ways of talking about masculinity and femininity which are highly traditional and stereotypical. We should not overlook the very traditional forms of sexism which pervade Radio One. 'Jokes' are a mainstay of this - 'women driver jokes', 'mother-in-law jokes', 'dumb blonde/bimbo jokes'. Usually these are told not explicitly as jokes (eg 'knock knock' or 'have you heard the one about..') but are presented in the form of reports about humorous situations or as snide remarks. The following example was actually a 'clue' for a year in the Golden Hour.

'Lost motorist Eileen Millard, where are you now?
Police followed her six miles to tell her she was in
the fast lane of the M61 (pause) going the wrong
way. "Oh dear" (falsetto) she said when finally they
caught up with her, "so that's why the other drivers
were flashing me" (laughs)'

The 'humour' depends not just on a bedrock of sexist assumptions about women's supposed poor driving, but also on the idea that the driver was too stupid even to realise her mistake despite being 'flashed' by other motorists.

What could be called 'generic' DJ talk - the chat between records which does not fall into the category of quizzes, surveys, etc - is also characterised by repeated comments about women's appearance. Any woman is a legitimate target, with singers, television personalities, sports women and members of the royal family perhaps the most likely to be meted out this treatment. A random sample of comments from a few days listening revealed 'a sexy lady', 'frumpy', 'a real stunner', 'getting a bit fat', 'gorgeous', 'dowdy', 'beautiful' and 'not bad for thirty-five' as a selection of descriptions applied to women. (The last remark was a comment by Steve Wright about one of his female colleagues!) Indeed it is probably not an exaggeration to say that women are rarely talked about Radio One without their appearance being made salient (I have not done the detailed content analytic study needed to support this claim). In addition to comments about their attractiveness or otherwise the very category of 'woman' is frequently used to stand for or signify sexuality (as it does in almost all cultural forms). Every show is replete with innuendo and double entendres, something Robin Gutch has described as populist, offering

'the pleasure of our animal instinctive natures triumphing over the attempts of institutions and official discourses to deny them' (Gutch, 1984 p.12)

Gutch's argument, however, (made in relation to the television programme That's Life) misses the way in which innuendo is articulated through an oppressive ideology of gender in which it is the presence of a woman which marks a situation as sexual, and in which all situations that women participate in can be recast in innuendo as 'really' being about sex, lust, desire.

As well as the sexist jokes, the innuendo and the comments on women's appearance there are several occasions in DJs' talk where they profess complete support for gender equality, sympathise with what women 'have to put up with' from men and even question ideas such as the convention that women should change their name when they marry. No one would suggest that these were feminist interventions; they fit comfortably with what Helen Baehr (1980) has described as the media's incorporation of feminist ideas . The 'liberated woman' constructed by the mass media, Baehr argues, is the woman who wants to get on in a man's world. She has become a new media cliché whilst

'feminists who continue to question the very notion of equality within existing structures... continue to be omitted and discredited in the media' (Baehr, 1980 p.31)

On Radio One women's rights are (weakly) championed when men go 'too far'; sexism is viewed as an occasional excess, or as the property of a small number of individuals, rather than something which fundamentally structures social relations. This can be seen from the following example from Simon Bates, just before Christmas:

'At the moment office parties are looming on the horizon. You know the dorks, the nerds, the real posers, the kind of guys who give you a real hard time if you're a lady? What I want are some good put-down lines. the kind of thing that sends the posers screaming out of the party and stops them bothering you. Please tell me. How do you get rid of the molesters, of the real office-party bores. How do you get rid of 'em? Two words I know you use sometimes but when you're being polite, what do you say?'

Here sexual harrassment is constructed as the province of a few men who (we all know) are 'dorks' or 'nerds' and who can be dealt with once and for all by a witty put-down.

Limited though such interventions are, they do represent a quite different discourse than that of the humour at women's expense - one which affirms women's rights as individuals. I believe that it is crucial to take them seriously, not as deviations from the 'real' ideological focus of the DJ's talk but as a central part of the ideological functioning of Radio One's text, in all its contradictoriness. This point of course relates to my argument earlier in the chapter. The contradictions are part of the very way it effaces its status as ideological. From the perspective of someone interested in ideology the fact that a 'woman-driver joke' can co-exist side-by-side with a condemnation of a firm which breaks equal opportunities legislation is precisely what makes it so interesting - and so difficult.

The 'real world' of Radio One

If Radio One discourse systematically displaces issues to the level of the individual, it is also a discourse centrally concerned with 'real life' or the 'real world'. The 'real world' for Radio One is constructed from an 'everyday' 'common-sense' perspective, from what 'we all know'. In this section of the chapter I want to look at how notions of work, class, and politics are articulated through Radio One's construction of the 'real world'. I will argue that far from what postmodern theories might suggest, Radio One's construction of the 'real world' is a coherent one, and that it plays a central role in constructing both the audience of Radio one ('us') and those people who are positioned outside its discourse ('them').

DJs' talk on Radio one positions ordinary people as its source. It adopts what Morley and Brunsdon (1978) in their study of Nationwide called a 'popular ventriloquism'. The DJ constructs himself as an ordinary person - like us but famous (cf Dyer, 1979; Langer, 1981). The talk is informal and mimics the phrases of ordinary speech - eg 'leave it out' or 'give us a break'. It also effaces the differences in power between the audience and the DJ, with the frequent elision of 'you' into 'we' and the repeated use of words like 'lets' with their implication of democracy and equal partnership. But it is not only the forms of popular talk which are mimicked on Radio one; it also takes what it assumes are popular common-sense concerns as its subject. One example of this is DJs's talk about work. Much of this takes the form of an acknowledgement of the tedium and unpleasantness of work. This is never explicitly articulated but is evidenced in wry remarks about work as something to be 'got through', and a pre-occupation with the weekend, which can sometimes border on the ridiculous:

'Today's thursday, tomorrows's friday, and then it's the weekend'.

Mondays and tuesdays on Radio One are taken up with questions to studio guests, quiz contestants and anyone else who participates in the shows about the sort of weekend they had, whilst thursdays and fridays can be spent discussing plans for the forthcoming weekend. Phone-in quiz contestants, for example, are almost always asked 'what are you doing at the weekend?' before the quiz questions begin.

Many other remarks also draw on shared assumptions about the drudgery of work, such as the following:

'Congratulations to a shop in a village in Wiltshire. A sign outside says "closed because of illness - sick of the nine to five!"'

We are invited to laugh in vicarious glee at this gesture against the 'nine to five', whilst we continue to work, whether in a factory, garage, office or on a building site or in the home. What this remark (and many others like it) offers is a humourous and symbolic 'solution' to popular disgruntlement with work. It poses no questions about working conditions, pay, hours, rights - or even the need to sell our labour in the first place - but absorbs popular angers about work, reinforcing, even as it seems to complain about, the legitimacy and inevitability of 'the daily grind' (whose reward of course is the weekend.)

In their analysis of Nationwide, Morley and Brunsdon (1978) argued that on the programme life was polarised into the 'real' world and that of 'play', which can be loosely mapped onto distinctions between work and play or public and private, an opposition which they note is particularly problematic for women for whom the home is not unambiguously the sphere of leisure . The programme was made up of items about both these worlds: 'the Postmaster General mixed with a tattooed cat'. This has become widely known as Nationwide's skateboarding duck/the Budget polarisation (cf Gutch,1984). Radio One, in contrast, does not polarise these two worlds but instead constructs a version of the 'real world' which includes both work and leisure. One obvious reason for this is the fact that unlike Nationwide daytime Radio One is broadcast during traditional working hours and a large majority of its audience are listening as they work. Because of this a considerable amount of DJs' talk about work centres around it as a social activity. Thus it is not simply 'a grind' or the 'dreaded nine to five' but also for Radio One a place

where we have fun, make good friends, have laughs and play tricks on our work mates. These aspects of work have been institutionalised into Radio One's day with items such as 'Office of the Day' in which the staff of an 'office' (loosely defined, but it is still significant that it is an office not a factory [cf.Griffin, 1985]) receive a dedication and are sent a special Radio One certificate nominating them 'Office of the Day' on a particular date. There is also 'Mr Spoons', a daily search for a disliked and inadequate work mate 'the type of guy who makes you delirious...vacant stare, tap him on the shoulder, there's nothing there' (as the 'song' introducing the feature goes). The 'punishment' for 'Mr Spoons' is to be dressed up with his clothes on inside out and back to front ('all spammed up') and to have 'Mr Spoons' written on his forehead before being taken to a very public place for the rest of the day.

More significant than specific items like this, however, is the fact that the vast majority of dedications/requests are for people listening in the workplace, and that people taking part in Radio One's phone quizzes almost always do so at work. This makes answering the quiz questions a peculiarly collective activity; although one person is 'named' as the contestant, shouts of potential answers, encouragement and loud laughter are heard in the background. And the remarks of contestants frequently suggest that although it is they as an individual who is actually speaking to the DJ, they are doing so 'on behalf of' their work mates and indeed of the company for which they work. This is not frowned upon by DJs: there is no sense that the contestants are 'cheating' by being helped by their colleagues. Rather the fact that people are listening as they work profoundly structures the whole of daytime Radio One.

We can examine this further by looking at who is addressed by Radio One; another way of putting this is to ask what subject position is constructed for the audience by DJs. What is clear is that one subject position implicitly constructed for the audience is that of 'ordinary working people'. It is not simply that the audience is often addressed in a work setting but also that Radio One listeners are constructed as ordinary workers in contradistinction to 'bosses'. Unlike some research which argues that media texts work to obscure the differences of power and the conflict of interests between workers and management, I want to argue that DJs' talk does not hide the differential power and interests; it does not pretend that inequalities of power do not exist. What it does though is to reduce these structural inequalities to the personal qualities of the boss. Thus the question which is repeatedly asked of people who are phoning in from work is 'what's your boss like?' 'is he a nice guy?' In this way any problems at work come to be seen as the result not of a particular social structure but of the personalities of occupants of particular positions within that structure.

What is noteworthy is that the DJ addresses 'us', but talks about 'the boss' in the third person, implying that he or she is not part of the constituency of 'us'. Related to this one of the things which is interesting is the way in which DJs construct their own subject position within this 'us' and 'them' (the bosses) dichotomy as one of 'us'. This is achieved mainly by repeated references to 'the boss' or 'BBC management' by DJs. The management are presented as 'out of touch with reality'. The DJs construct their own position as that of battling against the management on 'our' behalf - to bring us better quiz prizes, Our Tune (despite management complaints) or more roadshows. They frequently present themselves as under-resourced ('this is the show with no budget'),

unappreciated, indeed harrassed ('the BBC bosses have been on at me again') and as producing the shows for us against all the odds ('Our legal reps are working on it now. We will bring it to you whatever flak comes our way. Stay tuned'). References to 'the boss' or 'management' seem to be one of the main ways in which DJs 'do ordinariness' within the shows; another central vehicle for doing this being talk about the family, a great universaliser. The construction of themselves as 'ordinary' as 'embodiments of typical ways of being' (Dyer, 1979 p.24) is selective. What is fascinating is the way this contrasts with constructions of stardom (cf Dyer, 1979; Langer, 1981). There is not space to develop this here but it merits considerable further attention.

One way in which DJs construct the world as stratified, then, is between 'us' and 'them' (management), where the latter are depicted as being out of touch with the 'real world', and we, by implication, are presented as firmly grounded in reality.

A similar polarisation is found in DJs talk about what can be understood broadly as class. A repeated distinction is drawn between 'us', constructed, it should be noted as 'people' or 'most people' not as classed subjects, and 'them' who are 'not living in the real world'. I want to argue that much of the force of this discourse lies in the very fact that an us-them distinction is made. Through it 'we' are constructed as sharing a set of consensual values, the 'rightness' of which is warranted by the fact that 'we' in contrast to 'they' are living in the 'real world'. It must be stressed that the notion of class is never explicitly talked about on daytime Radio One; it is a notion which has no place in the DJs' articulation of common-sense. But one of the 'outgroups' constructed by DJs is indexed in several ways which make it difficult for an

analyst to avoid reading it in class terms. 'They' are signified most frequently by references to particular patterns of consumption, particular leisure activities, specific localities, and imitations of 'plummy' voices. It is these things and not class position which are held to distinguish 'them' from 'us', and mean that very often DJs do not have to make explicit who they are talking about. One interesting point is that those people who are mentioned as falling into this 'outgroup' are not reducible to socio-economic group in any straightforward way; analysis of broadcasts indicates that 'they' include judges, Directors of the BBC, people educated at Oxford and Cambridge, and 'sloanes'; but not Directors of private companies, entrepreneurs or people university-educated outside Oxbridge. More analysis is needed to examine the nature of the categorisation. But it is important to remember that it is flexible, and that it will not be possible to specify in some definitive way those groups who fall into the categories constructed as outgroups.

'They' are depicted as ridiculous because of their voices and their leisure activities (eg opera), and as humourless (cf discussion of how notion of lack of sense of humour is used to attack critics of Radio One). Most importantly, however, they are held to be out of touch with reality, as the following example indicates:

'And some unfortunate news today because a Sloane Ranger has escaped from the Fulham Palace Road in SW6. Police are hoping to catch the Sloane before it escapes into the real world. We'll keep you posted on that disturbing incident in SW6. Twenty six minutes to nine.'

The pattern which I hope is beginning to emerge, then, is one in which the audience is at least partly constructed by

its relation to the 'real world', and in which other's are criticised through a construction of their lack of contact with reality. Indeed, in relation to what I am taking to be class, part of what defines judges, sloanes, etc as an outgroup is that they are deemed not to live in the 'real world'.

Two more straightforward examples are to be found in DJs' talk about politics and politicians, and 'bureacrats' or 'officials'. Both politicians and bureaucrats are constructed as being outside the domain of 'us' and out of touch with 'reality'. Politicians are constructed as cynical, self-interested and even childish:

'The Prime Minister's on Radio Four tonight. She'll be talking about what a terrific person she is. And Neil Kinnock's on later - saying what a terrific person he is. Also an all-night sitting going on in the House of Commons has wiped out Prime Minister's Question Time. Phew! We don't have to go through all that "did"/"didn't", "did"/"didn't" stuff.'

Not only are politicians portrayed as out of touch with reality, but the entire political process is depicted as irrelevant to the 'real world'. DJs, then, construct a critique of politics which is ostensibly a-political, despite the obviously ideological aspects of common-sense. Like Nationwide's discourse many DJs' comments are not seen to transgress the requirements of balance and impartiality because they derive not from a party political stance, but from a position which locates itself outside politics in a common-sense understanding of 'what we all know'. Likewise 'bureaucrats' are seen as similarly irrelevant and out of touch. Their activities ('red tape') are constructed either as pointless interventions in otherwise spontaneous processes, or relatedly as deliberate attempts to stop

people enjoying themselves, to 'spoil our fun'. In a recent programme for example Steve Wright attacked 'officials' who were trying to 'clamp down on' loud music played in discos. (Those traditional figures of fun, traffic wardens, also form the brunt of many such remarks).

Overall the notion of the 'real world' is central to the DJs' construction of the audience. What is significant is that who 'we' are and what the 'real world' is are not made clear. We can only begin to build a picture of what for Radio One is unproblematically the 'real world' by examining what groups and what views are depicted as lying outside it. 'We' are not constructed as a particular section of society or a particular configuration of interest groups, we are not gendered or classed subjects, but simply 'people' or 'most people' or 'everybody' - the subjects of common sense. In this way 'our' views are constructed as consensual, common-sense views which derive from the fact that we live in the 'real world' and are in touch with 'reality'. It is as if our views come, in a naive empiricist way, from our direct contact with reality.

Earlier I looked at the way that the notion of humourlessness is used to criticise particular groups and individuals. In conclusion I want to argue that the notion of the 'real world' is used in a similar way. What Radio One does is construct itself as concerned with the 'real world' and then use the notions of 'out of touch with reality' and 'not living in the real world' to criticise particular groups. The notion of the real world thus forms a kind of discursive resource or metanarrative on Radio One which can be drawn on to criticise not only particular groups (bosses, politicians, particular class fractions or rather the consumers of particular cultural products) but also specific individuals. Thus anyone who writes or phones in to criticise particular item on Radio One can be

'written off' as being 'out of touch with reality'. There are many examples of this, particularly in relation to Our Tune. Some of the frequent comments by Simon Bates are summed up in the following example:

'People do complain and its understandable because people do feel that way about it, and you can pick up the phone and complain about it if you want to. Complaints are usually based on the fact that people don't want to hear about reality at this time in the morning. Well, if you feel like that, apologies, but this is a true story.'

The point is, then, that to criticise Radio One is to be positioned as someone who cannot 'face up to reality' or as someone who is 'out of touch with the real world'. The discourse of the 'real world' affords no independent space from which an individual or group can criticise the 'real world' of Radio One. For the construction of the real world which pervades Radio One passes itself off as unproblematic, effacing its own status as a construction - and a highly ideological one at that.

Discussion

What I have tried to do in this chapter is to give a very general picture of the ways in which DJs' talk can be understood as ideological. I have attempted in particular to capture in my analysis the sense that Radio One DJs' talk is characterised both by a stable and coherent view of the world and consistent ideological themes, and by fragmentariness and contradiction. If there seems to be a tension between these two notions of ideological functioning, it is because I believe that such a tension exists on Radio One. Throughout the chapter I have tried to highlight this tension between understanding DJs' talk as

being constituted by consistent ideological themes and seeing it as flexible and contradictory.

It seems to me that there may be two distinct ways in which ideology 'works' on Radio One. It works by constructing a particular view of the world, by presenting existing social relations as natural and inevitable, by repeatedly casting situations in the same way (eg. by recasting social and political issues as personal problems) and by systematically parodying particular positions. But there also seems to be another way in which ideology functions, which can perhaps be understood as postmodern, and has to do with the forms of popular radio (with forms understood in a broad, encompassing not a narrow linguistic sense) and the particular notion of fun with which programmes work. It was in this sense that I argued that not all of Radio One's ideological significance derived from its systematic parodying of particular positions, but that a whole range of characters or perspectives could be parodied without it losing any of its ideological force. The point is, of course, that not all perspectives are parodied on Radio One (or at least not in that same systematic way that is reserved for the likes of gay men and CND-member Lambeth dwellers) This 'intersection' of the two operations of ideology needs more critical examination.

The analysis presented here has been a preliminary one. Not only do we need considerably more analysis of how ideology works on Radio One, looking in particular at the articulations of 'fun' and 'fashion' which seem central to its functioning, and at the subject positions constructed for listeners, but we also need detailed analyses of specific programmes. The inadequacies of an approach which looks at 'Radio One' as a whole can be highlighted by suggesting a contrasting study of television which looks at

'BBC One' or 'ITV'. Such is the paucity of research on radio.

In addition to research about on-air talk, we need further work on how radio is used and interpreted. In the next chapter, however, I turn to an analysis of interviews with DJs and Programme Controllers from two ILR stations.

CHAPTER 6

'HOUSEWIFE RADIO'? CONSTRUCTING THE GENDERED AUDIENCE

'I think I still go for a female audience. I mean you flirt with them (.) that's exactly what you do for three hours. But what you've not got to do is to do it to the extent that it annoys the men listening. What you've got to be is a brother to the men listening (.) you've got to be a son to the mothers listening (.) a potential boyfriend to the girls listening (.) you've got to be (2.0). All listeners are part of your family and you've got to find your role and associate with them.

(Disc Jockey and Deputy Programme Controller,
Radio Matchdale.)

The central argument of this thesis so far has been that the neglected medium of radio merits serious attention. In particular I have argued that DJ talk on popular radio contains many themes and assumptions that are highly ideological. In the last chapter I begun to analyse some of the themes of DJs' patter. I attempted to show that far from being 'mere wallpaper', DJs' talk is characterised by recurrent forms of explanation and justification which serve to legitimate existing social relations. Its similarity to wallpaper resides only in its dominant and repeated patterning, and the way it 'papers over' or obscures alternative accounts of social relations.

In this chapter and the remainder of the thesis the emphasis shifts from DJs' on-air talk, and is concerned rather with the analysis of several interviews with DJs and Programme Controllers (PCs).

The analyses presented in this and the next chapter are based on detailed interviews with five male DJs and PCs from the two Independent Local Radio (ILR) stations in the Midlands'. The stations are 'sister stations' (though as I argue later the notion of 'brother stations' would be more appropriate), that is, they are owned by the same company (see Appendix Two for details of shareholdings, etc.), and their staff are relatively interchangeable - three of the five interviewed for this research had worked for the other station at some time, and one of the PCs had responsibility for both stations. This did not seem to be atypical.

A DJ at each of the stations was contacted by letter in November 1987, asking him if he would be prepared to be interviewed for a research project concerned with gender and popular radio. This approach was followed up by a phone-call to each radio station, at which time an appointment was made to visit each of the DJs the following month.

The first interviews were carried out in December 1987. The DJs showed little interest in the research itself, but were extremely friendly and helpful, not only giving generously of their time and talking openly about their work, but also suggesting (and indeed contacting) other broadcasters who would be prepared to participate in the research. It was on this basis that the remaining three interviews - which took place in January 1988 - were arranged.

In total five broadcasters were interviewed. Two were DJs, two were PCs and the fifth worked as a DJ and a Deputy

Programme Controller. The interviews with the DJs each lasted 1 hours, whilst those with the PCs were of 45 minutes duration. Transcribed the interviews represent 114 pages of typed script (see Appendix Three for full transcripts and details of the transcription notation used).

The interviews were 'semi-structured' in style; the researcher followed a broad interview schedule, but the broadcasters were encouraged to talk freely, elaborating upon points or occasionally shifting between topics. The transcripts thus differ in form, but all cover the same issues overall. The interviews covered a wide range of topics including the personal biography of the broadcaster, his role, responsibilities and the degree of autonomy he feels he has, his views of his audience, the content of shows and how this is determined, the structure and function of the radio station and the reasons for the lack of female DJs both at these particular stations and more generally (see Appendix Four for more details of the specific questions asked).

The analyses presented in this thesis deal only with a fraction of the issues covered in the interviews. In this chapter I examine the broadcasters' construction of the audience as gendered and in Chapter Seven I analyse the accounts put forward by them for the lack of female DJs at the stations. Considerably more analysis is needed of other issues raised by the interviews - in particular of broadcasters' accounts of their role, the content of their shows and their audience.

What follows is thus a partial analysis of the material generated by the interviews which focuses on the theme of gender. Whilst much of considerable interest is neglected the remainder of the thesis does, I hope, point to a

coherent and principled way in which an analysis of this type of material can be fashioned.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into four sections. In the first I examine broadcasters' responses to questions about their listeners, looking in detail at how they construct their audience as female, and indeed as largely made up of 'housewives' listening in the home. In the second section of the chapter I discuss the notion of 'housewife radio' and examine how traditional realist approaches to language might deal with the existence in the interviews of both many endorsements of 'housewife radio' and assertions that 'housewife radio' does not exist. I go on to look critically at the discourse analytic notion of 'interpretative repertoire' as an alternative way of conceptualising this issue, arguing that there are a number of problems with its theorisation and application. In the third section, broadcasters' formulations of what women and men want of radio are examined, highlighting the way in which the notion of 'giving listeners what they want' is used to justify a way of relating to listeners which reproduces existing gender relations in a particularly pernicious way. Finally, there is a considerable discussion section in which I raise a further critical issue in relation to discourse analysis - namely its inability to adequately deal with questions of power.

'Doreen': Constructing the 'average listener'

One way of getting the broadcasters to talk about how they see their listeners is to ask them who they talk to or what their impression of their audience is. We will start by analysing the response of the DJ and Deputy PC Dale to such a question.

Extract One (Dale)

Int: How do you picture an average listener? Have you got an impression in mind?

DJ: She's female (.) she's thirty-five um (1.0) she's probably got a son like me. Um//

Int: A bit like you ((laughs))

DJ: Yeah ((laughs))

Int: Can you enlarge on that?

DJ: No ((laughs)) I'd rather not

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: That's who I talk to. Having said all that (.) you obviously have to bear in mind that I mean your audience is made up of so many different kinds of people which is why we'll play a fast record followed by a slow one or an old record followed by a new record. Um (.) you've got to realise that your audience is from six to a hundred and six and you've always got to be aware not to do the same thing for too long a period of time within the show (.) to balance it out.

The first thing to note about this extract is how quickly Dale responds. He does not hesitate or pause for thought, but responds immediately. Moreover, he is very specific in his reply

She's female (.) she's thirty-five um (1.0) she's probably got a son like me (...) that's who I talk to.

The idea that a thirty-five year old female listener would have a son 'like him' stretches the bounds of credulity - Dale was twenty-six at the time of this interview. What is interesting, however, is not whether it is in some sense

'true' or 'accurate', but rather what this construction achieves for Dale. One of the things which is striking about this 'thumbnail sketch' of the person to whom Dale says he talks is its similarity to descriptions of the 'typical listener' given in other research (eg Karpf, 1980; Baehr & Ryan, 1984). In particular it resembles the composite picture of the 'housewife listener' - 'Doreen' - well-known in radio and frequently reproduced by broadcasters in ILR as their 'typical listener'. According to Baehr & Ryan (1984), Doreen is

'young at heart, married with a husband (out at work) and children (at school). Doreen does not work outside the home, does all the housework and is generally content.' (Baehr & Ryan, 1984 p.7)

Dale's description of 'his' listener as a thirty-five year old woman with a child (who, it is later implied, is a housewife) emerges, then, as far from idiosyncratic; rather it seems to reproduce a version of the notion of 'Doreen', something which constitutes an important discursive resource for broadcasters, tied to the enduring idea of 'housewife radio' (see also Chapter Seven pp. 417 ff.).

Having produced this picture of 'his' listener, however, Dale immediately offers a qualification.

DJ: Having said all that (.) you obviously have to bear in mind that I mean your audience is made up of so many different kinds of people which is why we'll play a fast record followed by a slow one or an old record followed by a new record. Um (.) you've got to realise your audience is from six to a hundred and six and you've always got to be aware not to do the same thing for too long a period of time within the show (.) to balance it out. But I think it is

important to have some idea of the kind of person you would appeal to.

Dale seems here to be doing recuperative work on the impression he may have given of only addressing one listener or one type of listener. He is engaged in what Hewitt & Stokes (1975) have called 'credentialling'; heading off potential criticisms before they are made. It is, however, an internal argument (Billig, 1990): it was Dale who argued that he 'talks to' a thirty-five year old woman, and it is he who is here reminding us ('you obviously have to bear in mind' 'you've got to realise') that the audience is composed of many different types of people. The variety and heterogeneity of the audience is emphasised by Dale's use of extremes: 'so many different kinds of people (...) from six to a hundred and six'. Dale is not simply demonstrating an awareness of the varied constitution of the audience, however, but also arguing that he caters for all their tastes. He gives the example of music programming:

'which is why we'll play a fast record followed by a slow one or an old record followed by a new record'.

Moreover, he argues, he is careful not to focus on any one thing for too long in the show but to 'balance it out'. The notion of balance with its connotations of harmony and fairness does considerable work in this passage in dispelling the impression that Dale talks to one type of listener to the exclusion of others. In the next sentence, however, he asserts:

But I think it is important to have some idea of the kind of person you would appeal to.

What Dale is doing here is providing a form of defence for his claim that he 'talks to' a thirty-five year old woman with a son like him. The terms are changed and the passage is organised to refute potential criticisms. In the context of his credentialling work,⁴ the demonstrations of his awareness of the whole audience and his responsiveness to a variety of tastes/needs, what could have seemed like a personal whim is recast as having sound and well-thought out bases. Gone are the flippant and jokey tones that accompanied his talk of the thirty-five year old woman, and in their place are the terms of professional practice with their attendant imperative: 'it is important to'. Significantly, even mention of the thirty-five year old woman is absent; what was a very specific picture of his listener becomes having 'some idea', whilst the thirty-five year old woman is replaced by the much more general 'the kind of person'. Moreover, Dale no longer speaks of the person he 'talks to' but rather the kind of person he 'would appeal to'. All agency is deleted. All the work of doing 'being appealing' - precisely that involved in choosing to 'talk to' one 'kind of person' rather than another - is made invisible. In this formulation it is as if Dale simply comes naturally to appeal to some listeners not others. Contrast this with the considerable stress on constructing a role which I have discussed elsewhere (Gill, 1989). Dale's role as it is formulated here is reduced to simply being 'aware' of the kind of person to whom he would appeal .

Immediately after this passage the argument changes.

Extract Two (Dale)

DJ: Obviously different presenters have different people in mind which is why in a radio station you have different presenters and together they please just

about everyone. You know (.) because the presenter who follows me may have a sixteen year old girl in his mind (.) probably has ((laughs)). But I mean that's my listener.

This passage represents quite a dramatic shift in Dale's argument. Where he argued before that he was aware of the different types of people who made up the audience and was careful to 'balance it out' within his show, here he argues that balance is achieved across the station's output as a whole, rather than within each programme.

DJ: Obviously different presenters have different people in mind (...) and together they please just about everyone.

Consistent with this new argument Dale reverts to a form of words which suggests some agency involved in pleasing listeners: it becomes a matter of actually having someone 'in mind'. Furthermore, this is presented as a general phenomenon, not unique to Dale - 'different presenters have different people in mind'. Indeed, it is because of the pervasiveness of this phenomenon, Dale argues, that the radio station has different presenters at all. That is, the fact that presenters have someone in mind when they are broadcasting is constructed as the very reason for 'strip' programming itself: if it were not for that fact, Dale seems to be implying, the same presenter could present all the station's programmes.

Overall it is clear that the argument is organised according to particular accounting considerations. It undergoes a number of subtle and complex shifts. The argument can be represented in four parts

1. I talk to a thirty-five year old woman with a son like me

2. Having said that you have got to realise that the audience is made up of so many different people from six to a hundred and six
3. But it is important to have some idea of the kind of person you would appeal to
4. Different presenters have different people in mind and together they please everyone.

The fourth part of the argument introduces new terms to offer a justification or make accountable Dale's claim that he talks to a thirty five year old female. To illustrate his argument that different presenters have different people in mind Dale claims 'because the presenter who follows me may have a sixteen year old girl in his mind'. He laughs: 'probably has'. Not only might his colleague address a sixteen year old listener, he seems to be saying, but he also probably has a sexual fantasy about a sixteen year old girl 'in mind' more generally. The laughter derives from the sexual innuendo, which in turn is dependent upon a set of commonly held and sexist beliefs about the sexual desirability of teenage girls. Dale concludes by referring back to 'his' thirty-five year old female listener: 'but I mean that's my listener'.

'Housewife Radio'

The next part of the extract we will consider follows directly from this. Why, the interviewer asks, do you see your listener as a thirty-five year old woman with a son.

Extract Three (Dale)

- Int: Why do you see her as a woman thirty-five with a son like you? There must be//
- DJ: Well I think ((laughs)) mid-morning radio mid-morning radio has always been considered housewife radio. It isn't to the same extent now (.) Um

actually in some periods of the morning you have more men listening than women. It was considered housewife radio because the man went out to work and the woman stayed at home but now a lot of women work and men are at home because of unemployment and whatever (.) or listening at work so your ideas of 1977 mid-morning radio and Glen Campbell records you can't really apply them to 1987 but I think to a certain extent (.) I think I still go for a female audience.

Dale starts by justifying 'his listener' in terms of what he claims is a general tradition for mid-morning radio. 'Well I think ((laughs)) mid-morning radio mid-morning radio has always been considered housewife radio'. Immediately, however, he qualifies this: 'It isn't to the same extent now'. He then goes on to offer evidence to support this qualification.

DJ: Um actually in some periods of the morning you have more men listening than women. It was considered housewife radio because the man went out to work and the woman stayed at home but now a lot of women work and men are at home because of unemployment and whatever (.) or listening at work

One of the interesting things about this passage is the force of the evidence Dale puts forward to support this qualification; so strong is it that it threatens to completely undermine his original claim. If 'housewife radio' is characterised by a largely female audience listening in the home, then a state of affairs where males routinely outnumber female listeners and large numbers of women are employed outside the home would seem to threaten the very basis of the categorisation. For Dale, however,

what is undermined is not the notion of 'housewife radio' per se but a particular conception of housewife radio:

so your ideas of 1977 mid-morning radio and Glen Campbell records (.) you can't really apply them to 1987 (.) but I think to a certain extent (.) I think I still go for a female audience.

What Dale seems to be doing, then, is distancing himself from a risible, negative and much-parodied image of 'housewife radio' summed up in caricature by the idea of endless Glen Campbell records, whilst simultaneously buying into the idea that it is legitimate to 'go for' a female audience. In this context, his displays of knowledge or awareness concerning both the station's audience research and more general social trends serve to reinforce the idea that he does not see his show as being part of the old-fashioned and unsophisticated tradition of 'housewife radio'. I am aware that things have changed, he seems to be saying, and my show is not like 1977 mid-morning radio with its Glen Campbell records.

However, having distanced himself from this risible and old-fashioned conception of 'housewife radio', Dale continues 'but I think to a certain extent (.) I think I still go for a female audience'. What is interesting about this claim is that Dale does not offer any justification for it, yet it consists in broad outline of a reassertion of the very issue for which he has been asked to account - namely why he addresses a female/females. Moreover his earlier assertion that 'in some periods of the morning you have more men listening than women' seems to reinforce not detract from the need to account for the choice of 'his listener'. His failure to do so is thus noteworthy. It leads to the question of how he is able to successfully accomplish this in the interview, that is, how he is able

to 'bring it off' without the interviewer asking 'why (if there is not a large majority of female listeners) do you address a female audience?'

One set of reasons why Dale is able to (in crude terms) 'get away with it' has to do with the interpretative context in which the argument is made. It should not be forgotten that Dale was in fact already responding to a question about why he talks to a thirty-five year old women. To repeat the question or even to ask it slightly differently might have been perceived as hostile in a situation in which the interviewer was dependent upon the goodwill of the DJ. Also Dale did not pause after his assertion 'I think I still go for a female audience' signalling an opening for the interviewer, but continued speaking, raising a subject of particular interest to the research. This suggests then that the interviewer noted the fact that Dale had not accounted for his claim that he addresses a female audience, but chose not to follow it up.

However there is another possible set of reasons which seem to relate to the very form or structure of the argument. Whilst the assertion of a form-content distinction is clearly problematic - discourse analysts have been prominent in collapsing this distinction, arguing that the socially constitutive role of discourse is not separate from the ways in which it is made effective - passages such as this raise questions about whether some forms are rhetorically more persuasive than others. Dale's argument, the form of which has significant parallels with that discussed earlier in this section, can be represented in three parts.

1. (I talk to a thirty-five year old female because) mid-morning radio has always been considered housewife radio

2. It isn't to the same extent now (actually in some periods of the morning there are more men listening than women...)

3. But I think I still go for a female audience

What I want to argue is that the qualifying and credentialling work done in the second part of the argument - the displays of awareness about audience research, the distancing and implied contrasts with old-fashioned 'housewife radio' and the discussion of general social trends - constitute 'doing reasonableness'. This places the assertion in the third part of the argument in a context where it is likely to be heard as reasonable in spite of the fact that the substantive claims made by Dale actually undermine the suggestion that it is appropriate to address a female audience.

The impression of reasonableness (such that it exists) is enhanced by two other features of Dale's assertion in the third part of the argument. The first is his use of tentative, qualified language - 'I think' and 'to a certain extent'. And the second concerns the fact that his assertion in part three of the argument is not a simple restatement of his claim to talk to a thirty-five year old woman with a son like him, but rather a claim to 'go for' a much more general constituency - a female audience.

Addressing the listener

The idea that the DJ should 'go for' a female audience or even a 'housewife' audience was far from unique to Dale, but was drawn on by all the DJs. The interviewer's question in the next extract follows Toller's claim that friendliness is the most important part of being a DJ.

Extract Four (Toller)

Int: Mmm. How do you create that friendly atmosphere?

DJ: It's difficult I mean I (1.0) I when I (1.0) if you saw me working in the studio I I I just ignore the microphone and I look beyond it and I have a picture in my mind of who I'm broadcasting to (.) but that picture sort of changes and it's never really fixed (.) I I couldn't tell you (.) 'oh now I'm thinking of a woman in Clifton that wrote to me last week' (.) it's just it's it's right in the back of your very mind and you just thinking of one person and you're talking to her and (.) Instead of imagining you're broadcasting in a discotheque when you're talking to crowds of people you (.) it's just one person you've got to get across to um (2.0) I mean it might be (.) um sometimes I I get a letter one morning from a lady who says 'oh I enjoy the programme' (.) so it'll be then I'm very conscious of broadcasting to her and doing everything for her um (.) whatever happens I have a different picture (.) but it's usually a woman

Int: Yeah

DJ: Um (2.0) because I mean the show that I do in the morning it's based on I mean you know it's for housewives really isn't it (2.0) and people in factories and shops and things.

In this extract it is the DJ not the interviewer who introduces the idea that Toller addresses or has in mind one person rather than a collectivity, the audience as a whole.

I I I just ignore the microphone and I look beyond it and I have a picture in my mind of who I'm broadcasting to (...) it's just one person you've got to get across to

The picture of this listener is not fixed, Toller argues, it changes. Nor could he explicitly identify the person and say 'oh now I'm thinking of a woman in Clifton that wrote to me last week'. Rather

it's just right in the back of your very mind and
you just thinking of one person and you're talking
to her

This passage gives the first indication that the person Toller talks to may be female. The use of the gendered pronoun is significant. In a society in which the masculine pronouns are still widely taken to be more 'comprehensive' or 'inclusive' the use of 'she' or 'her' constitutes a meaningful act (Spender, 1985). As Dale Spender has argued, the use of feminine pronouns to refer to mothers, secretaries, nurses and others gives the lie to the notion that 'he' should be taken to automatically include 'she'. To this list it seems could be added mid-morning ILR listeners, who are referred to individually as 'she' on many occasions in these interviews.

If Toller initially argued that he 'could not tell you' that he thinks of specific individuals who have written to him, a few moments (or transcribed lines) later he seemed to have changed his argument:

um sometimes I I get a letter one morning from a
lady who says 'oh I enjoy the programme' (.) so
It'll be then I'm very conscious of broadcasting to
her and doing everything for her

Both the example in which Toller said he did not address specific individuals and the example he gave to illustrate the claim that he does concern letters from women, adding

to the impression that the person he is 'broadcasting to' is female. A moment later he makes this explicit:

whatever happens I have a different picture (.) but
it's usually a woman

In the next part of the extract, following the interviewer's 'yeah' Toller offers an account for his claim to usually talk to a woman

Um (2.0) because I mean the show that I do in the
morning it's based on I mean you know it's for
housewives really isn't it

One of the interesting features of this extract is the extent to which Toller pauses and stumbles over his answer - 'um' 'I mean' 'it's based on I mean you know'. Yet it also conveys a sense of 'obviousness' about the claim 'it's for housewives really isn't it' which was not present in Dale's argument. Even the 'tag' at the end - 'isn't it' - seems to demand not just affirmation of the claim itself, but also affirmation of the very obviousness of the notion that his show 'is for housewives really'. Affirmation is not forthcoming from the interviewer, however, and after a relatively long pause Toller adds, as if as an afterthought, 'and people in factories and shops and things'.

Audience research: 'men, women and housewives'

The combination of stumbling hesitancy and bluntness is interesting, suggesting something which is judged both problematic and common-sensical. This sense of the obviousness of the existence of 'housewife radio' and the need to address 'housewives' is also found in the following

extract from the PC Lightfoot. He is talking about the station's audience research.

Extract Five (Lightfoot)

PC: And it breaks down into half hour segments over the seven day week so we've got forty-eight segments per day we've got segments monday tuesday wednesday thursday friday and saturday we've also got columns which are under eighteen eighteen to twenty-four twenty-five to thirty-five thirty-six to forty-five and so on up to fifty-five plus. We've got housewives at home without children housewives at home with children and so on so we can tell if a certain DJ is pulling more response from males or females more response from housewives than from women (.) generally and we obviously want a housewife DJ on the mid-morning show (.) not as much as it used to be but the person on the mid-morning has got to appeal to the housewives who are at home plus the people in the offices so he's again steering a careful line because what appeals to a woman at home isn't quite the same as what appeals to an office worker or somebody working in a factory. But you want someone who (.) women like the voice of basically.

Lightfoot starts by talking about the categories used in audience research for ILR. The research uses not simply age categories but also distinguishes between males, females 'housewives at home without children housewives at home with children'. With this information

we can tell if a certain DJ is pulling more response from males or females more response from housewives than from women (.) generally

It is a distinction, Lightfoot suggests, which is significant. Subsequently, however, it becomes blurred. Lightfoot continues 'and we obviously want a housewife DJ on the mid-morning show'. Here, then, very clearly, the need for a 'housewife DJ' (not, it should be noted, a 'housewife', but rather someone who will 'appeal to' 'housewives' - see Chapter Seven) is presented as obvious and indisputable. This indicates the pervasiveness of the notion of 'housewife radio' as a way of talking about radio station decisions and activity; it is something, Lightfoot's formulation suggests, which needs no explanation. It also serves to distance Lightfoot personally from what could be seen as a controversial and sexist assertion. Having made this 'obvious' claim, though, Lightfoot offers a qualification - 'not as much as it used to be'. Like Dale in extract three Lightfoot is distancing himself from an old-fashioned image of 'housewife radio'.

It may not be 'as much as it used to be' but nevertheless, Lightfoot continues, the mid-morning DJ has 'got to appeal to the housewives'. Like Toller in the previous extract, Lightfoot prioritises the 'housewife' audience, mentioning it first, and then adds 'plus the people in the offices'. What is particularly interesting about this extract is that 'housewives' are presented as being a group set apart from others in society, with very different interests

But the person on the mid-morning has got to appeal to the housewives who are at home plus the people in the offices so he's again steering a careful line because what appeals to a woman at home isn't quite the same as what appeals to an office worker or somebody working in a factory.

Not only does this suggest that 'housewives' constitute a group whose interests and wants and needs of the radio

station differ from those of women and men working outside the home but it also reinforces, with the notion of 'steering a careful line' the idea that the DJ is serving listeners with all the complexities and attention to their different desires that this implies. It is also worth noting the use of the masculine personal pronoun here to describe 'the person on the mid-morning'. This contrasts with the use of the feminine pronoun to describe listeners in the last extract. The significance of such apparently minor discursive adjustments should not be overlooked.

Throughout much of this extract, then, Lightfoot differentiates 'housewives' from other women (and from men). By the end, however, the categories have begun to blur. In fact the category 'housewife' is collapsed into the category 'women' from which it was originally distinct; wanting someone who will 'appeal to the housewives' becomes wanting a person who 'women will like the voice of'. Again there are clear parallels with the extract from Dale who shifted from arguing that mid-morning radio was 'housewife radio' to claiming to 'go for' a female audience.

The final extract I want to consider briefly in this section comes from Toller. it is to be found just a few transcribed pages after the section discussed in extract four .

Extract Six (Toller)

DJ: Yeah (.) oh your tape's nearly run out

Int: Yeah it'll start clicking soon. Next question er is your show (.) will it be more appealing to a female audience you've already said that it is.

DJ: I think so just basically because of the time of day I mean (.) you've got a lot of housewives and their husbands and kids have gone off to school and to

work and and they're doing the housework and everything (.) maybe maybe that's sort of an old fashioned (.) type of thing but still true I mean there's a big housewife audience yes basically housewives (.) but I'm also aware that we have a lot of people in factories cos they write to us (.) obviously a lot of ladies. It's mainly I'd say a female audience (.) well I don't know (.) I think it's more a female audience than a male one.

One of the things which is striking about this extract is its sheer similarity to the other pieces discussed in this section - in particular to extract one from Dale. The DJs and PCs seem to have standard stereotypical ways of talking about this topic - not only are the terms and figures of speech similar but so is the very structure of the argument itself in three parts. First we see the assertion that the audience is largely made up of housewives. In this case the claim is tied to a short narrative about the 'time of day' and the associated activities of 'housewives' now that 'their husbands and kids have gone off to school and to work'. The notion of 'time of day' and the idea that husbands and children are out of the house are used as a kind of shorthand to evoke the obviousness of talking to 'housewives'. This is followed by some disclaiming work which closely resembles that found in the extracts from Dale and Lightfoot, indicating the DJ's awareness that the idea of a 'housewife' audience may be 'sort of an old fashioned (.) type of thing'. Then this in turn is followed by a reassertion: 'but still true I mean there's a big housewife audience yes basically housewives'.

Next comes the credentialling work, discussed in some detail in our consideration of extract two, in which DJs credential their awareness of the other groups which make up the audience:

but I'm also aware that we have a lot of people in factories because they write to us (.) obviously a lot of ladies

This passage from Toller is interesting because he seems to use even the idea that 'people in factories' are listening to suggest that the audience is female, at the same time as demonstrating his awareness that it is not entirely made up of housewives.

It's mainly I'd say a female audience (.) well I don't know (.) I think it's more a female audience than a male one'

The language is tentative - 'I think' 'well I don't know' . As in the other extracts 'a big housewife audience' has become ' a female audience' in the space of a few lines. By the end it is no longer even straightforwardly 'a female audience' but simply 'more of a female audience than a male one'.

The 'housewife' audience: a discursive accomplishment

I have discussed these three extracts from Dale, Toller and Lightfoot in some detail, examining how they attempt to discursively accomplish their audience as female. Part of the reason for doing so is to try to shed light on a question which perennially perplexes writers on radio - that is, why the notion of 'housewife radio' persists, despite considerable evidence from radio stations' own research that the audience is not largely constituted by a listenership of women in the home (Baehr & Ryan, 1984; Barnard, 1989; and see appendix five for Radio Matchdale's audience research which shows that not only do housewives constitute a minority of listeners - even on the mid-

morning 'housewife' show - but also that males significantly outnumber females as a percentage of the total audience.)

The most recent attempt to discuss this question is made by Stephen Barnard in his excellent book On the Radio: Music Radio in Britain (1989). Reviewing other literature on the issue he asks why the ILR management persist with the image of 'housewife' listener:

'can it be put down simply to the prejudice of the male management, is it simple ignorance of the changing socio-economic fabric of Britain, or a pandering to the stereotypes beloved of the advertising world on which ILR depends for its commercial survival?' (Barnard, 1989 p.144)

Barnard argues that the maintenance of this image of the daytime audience is not simply a matter of tradition or convenience, but a deliberate policy. To illustrate this he quotes from an article written by an ILR Programme Controller in the IBA's journal Independent Broadcasting in 1984:

'When I joined Mercia Sound in Coventry, prior to going on air in 1980, I discussed the format of my programme - which was 9.30a.m. to 1p.m. - with my Programme Controller. He gave me a clear, if broad, outline of what he wanted and left me to it. From our discussion I gathered he wanted to go for the housewives. And so we did. But people kept saying "there's 20 per cent unemployment in Coventry - shouldn't you be catering for the male listener at that time of day?". The Head of Music at the time was at the end of his tether with me because I would insist on playing Mario Lonza or Montavani next to Slade or Shakin' Stevens. but I remained totally sexist in a pro-female way, and it worked. The increase in the JICRAR (Joint Industry Committee for Radio Audience Research) figure was quite appreciable. We aimed for a particular segment of the audience, our assessment of the potential was apparently right, and we got results' (quoted in Barnard 1989, p.144)

Barnard comments

'The assumption that particular artists have automatic feminine appeal, that it is actually possible to be both 'totally sexist' and pro-female, that 'results' matter more than devising ways to meet the needs of the whole listening community, all indicate the nature, if not the origins, of ILR's housewife preoccupation.' (Barnard, 1989 p.144-5)

Like Barnard's work, other research on popular radio has tended to focus on the nature rather than the reasons for ILR's continuing obsession with 'housewives'. The quote from Independent Broadcasting above, however, indicates a possible reason for this preoccupation - namely that advertisers have found it profitable to aim at one segment of the audience, albeit a small minority, housewives, even at the expense of potentially alienating the majority of listeners. This is niche marketing, aimed at the group who, it should be remembered, make most purchasing decisions. At this stage such an argument remains speculation. No research has been able to convincingly explain why ILR broadcasters unremittingly 'go for' housewives or at least females.

What discourse analysis can do is show how the idea that daytime radio is 'housewife radio' is discursively accomplished, and how broadcasters construct it as legitimate and indeed appropriate to talk to females on air. This analysis suggests that part of the reason the notion of 'housewife radio' is so resilient lies in the ability of those working in radio to interpretively manage tensions, contradictions and other threats to their arguments - even as they construct them themselves. It is worth remembering that it was Dale himself who invoked the spectre of male listeners outnumbering female during his 'housewife show', yet he went on to present it as legitimate to 'go for' a female audience. I have indicated

several of the ways in which the idea of 'housewife radio' is managed - for example by blurring and making distinct the categories 'housewife' and 'woman' (cf Billig, 1985 & 1987 on categorisation and particularisation), by use of particular rhetorical forms and by moving between arguments which suggest the audience should be served equally by each individual programme and others which argue that the various sections of the community will be served by the station's programming as a whole. The notion of 'housewife radio' is like a particularly resilient virus which mutates in response to various attacks on it: the arguments of the DJs and PCs change in response to criticisms or attacks - talking to 'housewives' becomes talking to 'females', housewife radio becomes distanced from a caricatured 1977 version, serving all the listeners within a show becomes serving all listeners across the entire output of the station. The attacks may not necessarily be external (ie addressed by the interviewer), nor are they necessarily even made explicit - at some points DJs and PCs appear to orientate to potential criticisms, and move to defend potential weak spots in their arguments. For example Dale claimed to 'talk to' a thirty-five year old woman with a son like him but added

but having said all that you've got to realise that your audience is made up of so many different kinds of people...

So numerous and so similar are the references to 'housewife radio' that it is tempting to see it as a kind of entity or object-in-the-world. Indeed, this is how it seems to be treated by most research on radio (Karpf, 1980 & 1987; Baehr & Ryan, 1984). What discourse analysis suggests, however, is that it is best viewed not as a kind of 'thing' existing independently in the world, but rather as an interpretative resource which is selectively deployed by broadcasters in

making sense of and justifying what they do. That is, 'housewife radio' should not be seen as a neutral description of some actually existing state of affairs but as a construction or way of talking which is available to broadcasters, albeit one which is recurrently drawn upon in these interviews.

There are a number of good theoretical reasons for rejecting realist views of language which would suggest that 'housewife radio' is a mere description of a real state of affairs. The existence of variability, however, is of particular heuristic value for graphically demonstrating its problems. We have already seen several examples of variability with regard to this topic in the extracts and noted that broadcasters had available to them a number of different ways of distancing themselves from particular versions of 'housewife radio', and indeed of undermining the notion altogether - in Billig's (1987) terms that they possessed contrary themes for talking about the subject. In addition to these there are two passages from the interviews in which broadcasters explicitly challenge 'housewife radio'. It is worth examining these.

Extract Seven (Dale)

Int: Do you think you reinforce the idea that it's natural for the wife to stay at home and the husband go out to work?

DJ: No. No I don't no I don't. Housewife radio does not exist anymore as such. No I don't particularly say "if you're a female and you're standing at home washing the dishes" you know. I'll say "if you're washing the pots" (.) you can be male or female you know. (my emphasis)

In this extract, then, Dale asserts 'Housewife radio does not exist anymore'. Although the words 'as such' which follow this claim serve to soften or qualify it, it does stand as a categorical denial of the existence of 'housewife radio' which contrasts starkly with claims made elsewhere in the interview (see extract three). One of the things which is interesting about Dale's response to the question is what it tells us about how Dale understands or uses the notion of 'housewife radio'. He is asked whether he reinforces the idea that 'it is natural for the wife to stay at home and the husband go out to work'. He answers

No. No I don't no I don't. Housewife radio does not exist anymore as such.'

The implication is that reinforcement of these traditional sex role stereotypes is constitutive of 'housewife radio'. The denial of the existence of 'housewife radio' is made part of the denial of reinforcing these ideas about gender roles. What Dale seems to be doing is attempting to disclaim the sexist identity which could be implied by an affirmative answer to the interviewer's question (that is, that he reinforces the idea that it's natural for the wife to stay at home and the husband go out to work). It is in this context that the function of his denial of the existence of 'housewife radio' can be understood. The presence of the 'as such' supports this analysis referring to the particular aspects of 'housewife radio' from which Dale wants to distance himself; perhaps distancing his earlier embrace of 'housewife radio' from this type of 'housewife radio'.

Dale goes on to argue that he does not address his remarks about housework to women, but to the audience in general. He constructs the idea of specifically addressing women in such a way as to make it appear ridiculous:

I don't particularly say 'if you're female and you're standing at home washing the dishes'

The impression of ridiculousness is generated by the laboured , unnatural-soundingness of the mock example and is reinforced by the contrast which is drawn with what he claims he does say:

I'll say 'if you're washing the pots' (.) you know you can be male or female.

This emphasises his argument that he does not reinforce the notion that it is natural for 'the wife to stay at home and the husband go to work'. One of the things which is interesting about his defence, however, is that 'evidence' that he does not address women explicitly or directly when talking about housework should be seen as sufficient to refute the notion that he reinforces a particular type of sex-role stereotype. I noted earlier that references to housework and to 'everybody' having 'gone off to school or work' seemed to be used by broadcasters as subtle ways of indexing a 'housewife' audience without doing so explicitly. Moreover, Dale himself elsewhere in the interview (see extract three) claims that he 'goes for' a female audience- presumably making redundant any need to signal directly the sex of listeners when addressing them. Neither of these issues is oriented to in this extract.

The second extract is not as straightforward an example of the kind of variability I am interested in, but it does represent a clear distancing from the notion that there is a 'housewife' audience. Chapman is talking about the format of the mid-morning show:

Extract Eight (Chapman)

PC Er the morning show is obviously a very imp^ortant one (.) you've got an audience who are (.) like in all radio listening in all sorts of environments (.) it's not just housewives listening at home by any means (.) a lot of people listen in factories (.) in cars (.) and everywhere else so you want a bright happy personality music show that gives people information about the area they live in and that's basically what we do. (my emphasis)

One of the interesting things about this is that in making the claim 'it's not just housewives listening at home by any means' Chapman orients to the notion of a 'housewife' audience as a dominant way of thinking about the listeners. It should be noted that this extract is taken from the beginning of the interview and 'housewives' have not been mentioned in any shape or form by either the interviewer or by Chapman before this. The phrasing is characteristic of an argument 'it's not just...by any means', yet there is no prior assertion about the importance of the 'housewife' audience with which to argue. Chapman is orienting to the fact that this is a common way of characterising the audience and simultaneously refuting its validity.

Conceptualising 'housewife talk'

How would an approach with a simple realist model of language deal with the variability thrown up by these two extracts ? How would it deal with the presence of assertions that mid-morning radio is 'housewife radio' and with denials of the very existence of 'housewife radio' within the same interview? In Chapter Three we looked at several of the ways in which traditional approaches

suppress variability - through restriction, gross categorisation and selective reading. With material such as this, one of the main ways in which variability is dealt with (short of ignoring it altogether and only presenting data extracts which support the analytic 'line') is through selective reading - that is, some discourse is taken to be merely descriptive and is reified, whilst other discourse is ironised, treated in some way as not genuinely descriptive. For example a study by Marsh, Rosser and Harre (1978) on soccer fans and violence at matches found two types of accounts of violence in their interview data. One type of account presented violence as senseless and dangerous, whilst the other presented it as ritualistic and rule-governed, more an expressive than a practical activity. Marsh et al dealt with these contrasting accounts by selective reading - by treating accounts which portray the activity as ordered and rule-governed as genuine and those which described it as senseless and dangerous as rhetorical - more important for what they do than for what they say. As Potter and Wetherell (1987) argue Marsh et al offer no criteria for making this division into genuine and rhetorical.

It is not difficult to see how a similar style of selective reading could be applied to the material examined here - with accounts which claim the existence of 'housewife radio' and a listenership of women in the home taken as real or genuine descriptions, and the examples of denials of its existence treated as aberrations, important only for what they do in a rhetorical sense. Clearly then this kind of variability would be a problem for traditional forms of analysis which would seem to be unable to offer any principled way of distinguishing between genuine and rhetorical accounts. As Potter and Wetherell have argued

'the data can be used simply to buttress the favoured analytic story rather than being used to critically evaluate it' (1987,p.42)

In the case of research on radio the favoured analytic story seems to be that 'housewife radio' exists as an entity-out-there (Baehr & Ryan, 1984).

Rather than treating some discourse as genuine and other as rhetorical, discourse analysis sees all discourse as constructed and constructive, and it sees variability in constructions as being related to the functions being performed by particular stretches of discourse. It is not sufficient, however, simply to say (in a postmodern kind of way) that there is variability or that people have different ways of talking about any given topic available to them, rather it is necessary to examine how these 'different ways' relate to different functions being achieved by the discourse. In this way we can go beyond ascribing a kind of equivalence to the various ways of constructing a topic. In the present case we have discussed some of the possible functions achieved in these interviews by denials of the existence of 'housewife radio' and of the predominance of a 'housewife' audience - rebutting potential charges of sexism and disclaiming a sexist identity, and distancing oneself from old-fashioned conceptions of radio. But what about the examples which assert the existence of 'housewife radio' (albeit with qualifications) and which construct the audience as largely made up of 'housewives' or at least women ?

Not only do examples like this predominate numerically, but there is a sense in which they seem constitutive of many of the arguments made in the interviews. It is difficult to imagine what would be left of the DJs and PCs arguments if the notion of 'housewife radio' and of the audience being

mainly 'housewives' were in some way removed. It is as if these notions were edifices upon which many of the arguments are built. Whilst the denials of 'housewife radio's' existence are few, isolated and relatively 'free-standing' within the interviews, and their functions seem relatively clear cut, the notions of 'housewife radio' and a female audience seem to be implicated in a whole range of arguments about who they address, the whole rationale of their programme and presentation style, choice of music, features, phone-in topics, and the lack of female DJs. Without them it is hard to see what would remain. This is not to assert, 'through the backdoor' as it were, the idea that the constructions of 'housewife radio' are in some way more real or genuine than the denials, but simply to argue that the notion plays a central role in the DJs and PCs accounts of what they do.

Interpretative repertoires: some criticisms

One way of thinking about the idea of 'housewife radio' is through the notion of 'interpretative repertoire'. As we saw in Chapter Three the interpretative repertoire is an analytic tool which highlights regularities in discourse, whilst avoiding the implication that these regularities necessarily occur at the level of the individual speaker or writer. Wetherell and Potter argue

'In dealing with lay explanations the analyst often wishes to describe the explanatory resources speakers have access to and wishes to make interpretations about the patterns in the content of the material. The interpretative repertoire is a summary unit at this level.'
(1988,p.172)

Interpretative repertoires act as the 'building blocks' from which particular accounts are constructed. They are constituted by a restricted range of terms, metaphors and

figures of speech which are used in a specific stylistic fashion (Potter and Wetherell, 1987).

There seem to be several aspects of DJs and PCs talk about their audience (and their role) which could be described with the notion of interpretative repertoire - in particular the similarities between the broadcasters' formulations. Not only were the same set of stereotypical terms repeatedly drawn upon, but also the very structure of the arguments constructed by each broadcaster bore a marked resemblance to the others. When we considered the extract from Toller (extract six) it seemed almost formulaic, so similar was it in form and content to previous extracts. Is there a case then for arguing that the DJs and PCs all drew on a 'housewife repertoire'? Whilst such a claim would seem to neatly highlight some of the similarities between broadcasters' accounts, there are a number of questions which need to be raised about the identification and analytic status of interpretative repertoires.

The process of identifying interpretative repertoires is not easy or straightforward. As Wetherell and Potter (1988) acknowledge, it is possible to spend several days working with a particular analytic scheme only to find that it is impossible to validate with the materials available. How are interpretative repertoires to be identified? McKinlay, Potter and Wetherell (1989) argue that any particular repertoire

'is constituted by a restricted range of terms used in a specific stylistic and grammatical fashion. Commonly these terms are derived from one or more key metaphors and the presence of the repertoire is often signalled by particular tropes or figures of speech. (1989, ms. p.26)

The celebrated example of a repertoire is the community repertoire which has been identified in talk about

uprisings, policing and care of mentally handicapped people (see Chapter Three).

Part of the difficulty of working with the notion of interpretative repertoire is that while the 'definitions' of interpretative repertoires provided by Potter and Wetherell stress style, grammar and the recurrent use of particular terms and metaphors, their actual identification in many studies seems to be based largely on their propositional content. For example, the following are descriptions of two repertoires (culture fostering and pragmatic realism) taken from a paper helpfully entitled 'Discourse analysis and the identification of interpretative repertoires'

'Let us now look in a bit more detail at the make up of these repertoires. *Culture fostering* presents arguments for the development of Maori culture. It appears to advocate multi-culturalist social policy and the importance of Maori culture for New Zealand society...*Pragmatic realism*, used by roughly half the sample at some point in the interview, and thus including many of those who also draw on the culture fostering repertoire, stresses the promotion of those things which are useful, modern and relevant today. It combines this with an emphasis and appreciation of the practical constraints on action' (Wetherell & Potter, 1988 p.178-180).

Both of these repertoires, then, seem to be defined by the nature of their arguments, by what they advocate, not by the presence of particular terms, metaphors and grammatical constructions. This is not to say that these are not also present (nor to reassert a problematic form/content distinction), but merely to argue that these repertoires do not appear to have been identified by close attention to grammar, style and specific terms. This is also true of studies on gender and employment (Wetherell et al, 1987), body size and eating disorders (White & Wetherell, 1988),

racism and positive discrimination (Potter & Wetherell, 1989).

A further problem concerns the precise status of the notion of interpretative repertoire. In particular what is unclear is whether it is to be seen as an analytic category or as, in some sense, a description of something existing in the world. On the one hand the repertoire is described as an analytic tool which can be used to describe patterns and regularities in speakers' discourse. On the other, repertoires are described as patterned ways of constructing phenomena which are available to speakers and are selectively drawn upon. In one formulation, then, the interpretative repertoire is seen as a tool to be used in analysis, whilst in the other repertoires are given a real, ontological status as 'relatively internally consistent, bounded language units' (Wetherell & Potter, 1988 p.172) which are empiricist-style 'identified' by the analyst. It is the way in which Wetherell and Potter move between these different versions of interpretative repertoires that causes most problems for the analyst attempting to utilise the notion. There is, as they would say, considerable variability in their constructions of the interpretative repertoire. In a recent paper, designed partly to clarify the notion of the interpretative repertoire, Potter et al explicitly reject the 'reified' view that of interpretative repertoires as independently existing entities. Instead, it is argued, 'interpretative repertoires are abstractions from practices in context' (1990 p.209). However, only three pages further on they are described thus:

'The idea of a repertoire, analogous to the repertoire of moves of a ballet dancer, say, encompasses the way that different moves (terms, tropes, metaphors) from the metaphor may be invoked according to their suitability to an immediate context' (Potter et al, 1990 p.212)

Here, then, the repertoire far from being an abstraction, is claimed to exist prior to any particular stretch of discourse and is 'invoked' to do particular discursive work. This formulation raises a whole set of issues about the realm in which repertoires are said to 'exist', the dynamics of repertoires and the problems for the analyst in identifying the availability of repertoires independent of their use.

It would be wrong to suggest, however, that discourse analysts have ever been content to simply identify repertoires. The point is to see how they are being used to do particular discursive work in any given context. As Potter et al argue

'the way the object is constructed is dependent upon the discursive practice within which the repertoire is invoked' (1990, p.212)

Whilst there have been analyses which have examined the use of a particular repertoire (eg the community repertoire) in specific contexts, much of the work which uses the notion of the interpretative repertoire has been concerned to show how repertoires work together. A good example is Wetherell et al's (1987) analysis of discourses concerning gender and employment opportunities. In their interviews with undergraduate students about these topics Wetherell et al identified two repertoires or broad kinds of talk for which people used to discuss women working outside the home, careers and children. They called these the 'equal opportunities' and 'practical considerations' themes. Equal opportunities talk endorsed egalitarianism, individual freedom of choice and shared responsibility. In contrast, practical considerations talk appealed to 'the nature of things', biological necessity, women's 'natural abilities' for childrearing, and presented women as 'a risk not worth taking' for employers. The crucial point is that these

repertoires co-occurred in the students talk, allowing them to buy into a kind of liberal egalitarianism which was then undercut by 'practical talk'. The impetus towards egalitarian change is thus effectively neutralised by appeals to 'practical considerations'. Wetherell et al named this pattern of accounting 'unequal egalitarianism'.

One of the questions this kind of analysis raises is how it is possible to identify such kinds of talk or repertoires as separate when they routinely co-occur. That is, what is the rationale for identifying two repertoires which work together, rather than simply one, comprising themes from both?

Wetherell and Potter (1988) provide one way of answering this question in one of their analyses of white New Zealanders' talk. Justifying their 'identification' of three different repertoires, they put forward three arguments:

'Firstly, as we will show, there are inconsistencies - noticeable to both analysts and participants between the different forms of account. Secondly, these forms of account are generally separated into different passages of talk so that inconsistencies do not become a problem for the participants to deal with. Thirdly, on those occasions when the repertoires are deployed together, participants display in their talk an orientation to the potential inconsistencies, or the variation is organised for different functions, one repertoire presented for disclaiming, for example.' (Wetherell & Potter, 1988, p.178)

It is worth noting that these criteria reinforce the notion discussed earlier that repertoires are identified or defined by propositional content not style, metaphors, tropes, and also that with their stress on participants orientation Wetherell and Potter (1988) challenge the idea

that interpretative repertoires are purely analytic categories. There are a number of problems with trying to apply these three criteria to other studies - although, to be fair, they are not claimed as universally valid but relate to a specific example. In the work on unequal egalitarianism, for example, far from the forms of accounting being separated into different passages of talk, they seemed inextricably bound-up - indeed, it is hard to imagine the practical considerations talk being used without the equal opportunities talk.

'On many occasions a belief in equal opportunities, often strongly phrased by respondents, was contradicted by later or sometimes almost simultaneous reference to practical criteria which restored inequality.' (Wetherell et al, 1987 p.63).

Nor did participants seem to orientate to or indeed even notice inconsistencies or contradictions on their talk. On the contrary 'the contradiction is rarely noted by respondents' (Wetherell et al, 1987 p.65).

A 'housewife repertoire'?

Bearing this in mind it is worth trying to take these three broad criteria as guidelines for the identification of interpretative repertoires in the extracts discussed earlier from DJs and PCs. The criteria are, briefly, that both the broadcasters and analyst will notice inconsistencies, that inconsistent passages will be kept separate or, if they are not, that the potential inconsistencies will be orientated to by the broadcaster - or will clearly be organised for a different function.

My analysis of the material suggests that there might be two repertoires being used by broadcasters. First the 'housewife radio/female audience' repertoire which is

organised around the claims that daytime ILR is for 'housewives' at home and that it is appropriate for broadcasters to 'go for' a female audience. Second, there is a repertoire which could be called the 'varied or heterogeneous audience' repertoire. This, in contrast, has as its central argument the idea that radio has as its listeners a whole range of different people ('from six to a hundred and six', as Dale put it) all of whom are served equally by the presenter.

If we look again at the extracts (one, two and three) from the DJ and PC Dale, there does seem to be some support for arguing that these two repertoires are present. Dale starts by drawing on the 'housewife repertoire', claiming to talk to a thirty-five year old woman with a son like him. He then seems to deploy the 'heterogeneous audience' repertoire, arguing that the audience is made up of 'so many different kinds of people' and that it is important to 'balance it out'. Dale does appear to note the inconsistency between these claims, and orientates to it with the phrase 'having said that' which separates the two passages. Also the variation in his arguments does seem to be organised for different functions - with the 'heterogeneous audience' repertoire being used to credential awareness of the wider audience and place the argument that he 'talks to' a thirty-five year old woman in a context where it is less likely to be heard as outright prejudice (or indeed eccentricity) but rather as the informed decision of somebody who is perfectly aware of the social composition of the audience.

As I noted earlier in the chapter, almost immediately Dale has pointed out the heterogeneity of his audience and the need to 'balance it out', he offers a new justification for addressing a thirty-five year old listener - based on the notion that the responsibility to cater for all listeners

is that of the radio station as a whole - not individual programmes - and that this is best dispatched by each broadcaster having a different person 'in mind' - his own, ofcourse, being a thirty-five year old housewife. Again the potential disjuncture between the arguments is orientated to, this time simply with a 'but'.

However, having said this, it is not clear what the notion of interpretative repertoire actually adds to this analysis. What seems most interesting about the way this extract 'works' are the subtle shifts in the arguments which mean that 'talk to' becomes have 'in mind' and a personal preference is transformed into a professional imperative when the broader argument shifts. Moreover, much of the force of Dale's argument seems to derive from the way it is structured. This is particularly clear in the next section in which Dale attempts to justify his choice of listener.

As I argued earlier, some of the persuasiveness of this argument comes from the way it is organised to 'do reasonableness' - almost in spite of the substantive justification offered by Dale. This is reinforced by the collapsing of the category 'housewife audience' into that of 'female audience'. The strategic use of the terms 'housewives' and 'females' (or 'ladies' or 'women') throughout the interviews is fascinating - particularly the way they are constructed as separate and distinct categories at some points, whilst at other being blurred and collapsed into one category. The way Dale distances himself from an old-fashioned version of 'housewife radio' only to claim that he still 'goes for' a 'female audience' raises the question of whether the 'housewife radio/female audience' repertoire could in fact be better conceptualised as two repertoires which are selectively combined to do particular discursive work.

The other extracts considered earlier in the chapter seem, if anything, even less likely to meet the three criteria for the identification of repertoires. Overall the notion of the 'housewife radio/female audience' repertoire and the 'heterogeneous audience' repertoire seem to have some purchase on the material. Each repertoire seems to be used by the DJs and PCs to particular discursive ends - the 'housewife radio/female audience' repertoire being constitutive of a number of arguments about the DJs role (see next section), and the 'heterogeneous audience' repertoire being used to credential awareness of the audience as a whole, to disclaim prejudice and to argue that the station is involved in serving the entire listening public.

However, there seem to be three problems with the identification of the two repertoires in this material. First the notion added little to the analysis of the extracts, in particular to the examination of the ways in which the very structure of the argument was significant. Second, it did not sensitise us to subtle shifts in the argument - such as the shift between arguing that listeners should be served by each DJ to arguing that their interests will be met by the station as a whole. And finally it was not clear whether the 'housewife radio/female audience' repertoire would in fact be better thought of as two repertoires, because of the discursive work being done by the selective use of the terms 'housewives' and 'women'.

Part of these problems lies, inevitably, with the limited attempt I have made here to apply the notion of interpretative repertoire. In particular my third point does not invalidate the notion of interpretative repertoire but simply the particular analytic schema 'tried out' here. However, I have indicated several areas of weakness both with the notion of the interpretative repertoire as a

theoretical construct and with its application in specific cases. This is not to suggest that there is little of value in the research which uses this concept. On the contrary, its use has been immensely valuable both in generating specific analyses and in starting to construct a non-individualistic, non-reductionist way of thinking about discursive resources. It is, as Potter et al (1990) point out, a notion as yet in its infancy, with no grandiose claims attached and in need of clarification and refinement. What I have attempted to do here is to provide some directions for that refinement.

Giving the listeners what they want? An analysis of DJs' claims

What I have done so far in this chapter is to examine how the DJs and PCs interviewed construct their audience as predominantly female and indeed as substantially composed of 'housewives' listening in the home. The chapter has been concerned with how the broadcasters accomplish it as legitimate to 'go for' a female audience, and I have looked at the way the notion of 'housewife radio' was drawn on to do this.

In the rest of the chapter I want to discuss several extracts from the interviews, in which the broadcasters argue that males and females have different wants of radio, which presenters serve, and show how this idea, combined with the construction of the audience as largely female, is used to justify a presentation style and way of relating to listeners which is patronising and oppressive.

The first extract to be considered comes from the PC Chapman, and is drawn from the opening sequence of the interview in which he is talking about the role of the presenter.

PC: The personality of the presenter of the presenter doing the show is the key thing.

Int: Mm well what kind of personality do you go for? You said bright and cheerful is there// anything else?

PC: I mean the public build up an image in their own minds of what presenters are like on the radio. Different sorts of people build up a different image. Men have a different view younger men to older men that varies (.) women (.) different again younger women have a different view (.)um different social classes have a different view (.) you've got to try and be all things to all people. Older women like to think of the presenter as somebody they can mother (.) men would like to think of the presenter as someone they could go and have a chat with down the pub (.) younger women like to fantasise about the presenter (.) um younger men like to think of him as one of their mates who they might go to a football match with so everybody builds up an image in their own mind and you've got to try and fulfil that by having a real human being with a real personality who responds to them and is aware of the area that they're broadcasting in.

'Different sorts of people', Chapman claims, build up different images of 'what presenters are like on the radio'. The nature of these images, it is claimed, depends upon the gender, age and class of the listeners. One of the things which is interesting to note about this is that it is one of the only occasions on which class is explicitly mentioned in the interviews (although, class is alluded to and used in arguments, in many and various ways in the interviews through , for example, the use of different accents/dialects to signal class position and coded references to particular parts of the city or types of housing .) It is not simply that people of different ages,

classes and genders produce different versions of actually existing presenters - that is, Chapman is not simply arguing that people 'see' presenters differently and that these readings vary according to age, class and gender. rather he is according those images some sense of being ideals for the groups that hold them. They are how people 'like to think' about the presenter. This becomes clear when Chapman says 'you've got to try and be all things to all people'. If he were merely claiming that listeners see the presenter differently then it would imply no agency on the part of the presenter; it would simply be an inevitability. But what Chapman is arguing is that presenters have got to try and 'fulfil' what the various sorts of listeners want of them.

In the next part of the extract Chapman goes on to produce a series of constructions of what the various sorts of listeners 'want' of the presenter.

Older women like to think of the presenter as somebody they can mother (.) men would like to think of the presenter as someone they could go and have a chat with down the pub (.) younger women like to fantasise about the presenter (.) um younger men like to think of him as one of their mates who they might go to a football match with

These, then, are highly stereotypical and ideological psychological 'sketches' - in which women's wants of the presenter are described as being either maternal or sexual, depending upon their age, and men are constructed as wanting the presenter to be a 'mate' - with whom they could go to the pub or watch the football. Whilst the notion of drinking companion and 'mate' seems to fit fairly readily with the recurrent claims of the broadcasters (discussed elsewhere [Gill,1989]) that the listeners want the

presenter to be a 'friend', the idea that female listeners want to 'mother' or 'fantasise about' the presenter seems to stretch this pervasive categorisation beyond its limits. It is not that I am arguing (as an analyst) that the notion of friendship has one fixed and unitary meaning, inside which mothering and romantic/sexual fantasies do not fit, but rather that Chapman himself seems to be constructing women's wants as something other than friendship from the presenter. Again this highlights the variability - constructing the listeners as wanting the presenter to be a friend is not the same as constructing them as wanting someone to 'mother' or 'fantasise about'. The idea of 'friend' seems to be refracted through notions of romance, sexuality and motherhood when talking about what women want from the presenter. Chapman does not seem able to 'think' about women's relationships outside the sexual or maternal. Nor indeed does he talk about men's relationships outside very stereotypical notions of 'mate'.

The idea that young women want to 'fantasise about' the presenter has two important implications. First it implies (given the assumptions about heterosexuality made by the broadcasters throughout the interviews) that presenters should be male. Second and even more insidiously it suggests that this is what listeners want. Men, too, are deemed by implication to want a male presenter, since they are said to want a 'mate' with whom to drink and watch football.

One of the things which is interesting about this extract is the way that Chapman attempts to accomplish highly contentious ^uclims about what men and women want from a radio presenter as unproblematically ^ufactuál. His claims are presented not as beliefs or opinions but as features of the world. He appears to be merely describing things as they are. His remarks are characterised by an impression of

certainty. The impression of 'otherness' is reinforced by the lay sociological (Potter & Wetherell, 1988) groundwork he has done with his claims that how people see a presenter depends upon factors such as age, gender and class. This 'lay sociology' puts his subsequent claims that people want different things from a presenter in a context where they are likely to be heard as authoritative and factual.

The apparent factualness is further emphasised by Chapman's eschewal of any discussion of the DJs role or subject position. This is referred to only in terms of how the listeners 'like to think of the presenter'. In this way DJs are presented as responding to these wants which implicitly pre-exist them. That these wants are in some sense real/factual is underlined by the idea that responding to them is difficult. 'you've got to try and be all things to all people' and 'you've got to try and fulfil that' when, really, it is implied, it would be much easier not to take all these different desires into account. The implication is that it is what people want and the radio station has to try to serve them.

What is fascinating is how, according to Chapman, all listeners needs are served:

so everybody builds up an image in their own mind and you've got to try and fulfil that by having a real human being with a real personality who responds to them and is aware of the area that they're broadcasting in'

The listeners various desires - to have someone to mother, fantasise about, think of as a mate - are met, then, by 'having a real human being with a real personality'. It is difficult to see how the radio station could employ a presenter who was not 'a real human being with a real personality' (although there would be some critics who

would dispute this!). What is interesting about the way the word 'real' is used here is that it seems to mean more than its common senses of 'existing' or 'genuine'. Elsewhere I have argued that the DJs move between two broadly different accounts of what they do - one stressing they are simply 'being themselves' on-air; the other highlighting the fact that they are performing and constructing a persona (Gill, 1989). The way 'real human being' and 'real personality' are used here seems to reflect that tension between realness as something straightforward and obvious and realness as something constructed (around notions such as authenticity and credibility). In its latter sense being real is something which is accomplished by DJs. Dale, for example, talking about the need to be cheerful on-air added

but you've also got to be real and believable (.) so
I think you (.) you've got to not be over the moon
all the time.

Even, presumably, if one 'really' felt permanently happy, because this would stretch the bounds of listeners' credibility too far. There are many other examples like this, but the one above illustrates very clearly the way in which seeing 'realness' as constructed, as an accomplishment, can actually result in a more narrow, more stereotypical kind of pattern than seeing 'realness' as simply 'being oneself'. It means, to use problematic realist discourse myself for a moment, that whole series' of things which do and have happened, whole ranges of beliefs and opinions and huge varieties of emotions get excluded from on-air mention on the basis that they are not 'real' enough - that is they are not deemed authentic or credible-seeming. The political implications are deeply conservative.'

Chapman was not alone in constructing how listeners 'like to think of the presenter'. The DJ and PC Dale had similar comments:

Extract Ten (Dale)

What you've got to be is a brother to the men listening (.) you've got to be a son to the mothers listening (.) a potential boyfriend to the girls listening (.) you've got to be a big brother to the little kids listening (.) You've got to be (.) All listeners are part of your family and you've got to find your role and associate with them.

The subject-position constructed here for the presenter is almost identical to that implicit in Chapman's description of what listeners want. Again, the presenter is to be a son to older women, a potential boyfriend to younger women, and, this time, a brother to the men listening. This, it is implied, is what the listeners want of the presenter.

However, the extract quoted above is only part of the story. Dale has more to say about relating to listeners. The following extract includes the passage discussed above and comes from Dale's discussion of 'housewife radio' (see extract three) examined earlier. (I have included the last sentence from extract to give a sense of where this material fits in - see also appendix 4).

Extract Eleven (Dale)

DJ: So your ideas of 1977 midmorning radio and Glen Campbell records (.) you can't really apply them to 1987 but I think to a certain extent (.) I think I still go for a female audience. I mean you flirt with them (.) that's exactly what you do for three

hours. But what you've not got to do is to do is to the extent that it annoys the men listening. What you've got to be is a brother to the men listening (.) you've got to be a son to the mothers listening (.) a potential boyfriend to the girls listening (.) you've got to be a big brother to the little kids listening (.) You've got to be (2.0) All listeners are part of your family and you've got to find your role and associate with them.

Int: Do you think you put more weight on one of these aspects or one of these roles?

DJ I suppose I'm more of a son than anything else.

Int: Do you think you flirt with the audience then=

DJ: =Oh yeah

Int: How do you do this?

DJ: I don't think I could even try to explain. It's just how you would flirt with a person (.) It's it's (.) TVAM called it sexual chemistry (.) and I suppose that's exactly what I'm doing now. It's the same thing.

Dale starts off by claiming to 'go for' a female audience. He continues

I mean you flirt with them (.) that's exactly what you do for three hours'

The point, however, is not to do it 'to the extent that it annoys the men listening'. The implications of this are two-fold. First it displays a concern with the entire audience, not simply women. Second it suggests that being 'flirted' with for the entire duration of the programme would not annoy women! Both these points are further strengthened by the next passage which suggests that 'flirting' for three hours is part of a much more general

pattern of serving listeners. What is implied is that female listeners want the presenter to 'flirt' with them.

Despite Dale's claim that 'All listeners are part of your family and you've got to find your role and associate with them', there seems to be little that is familial in the way he characterises his relationship with female listeners. He may be 'a brother to the men listening', but he is 'a potential boyfriend to the girls listening', and his claim to be 'a son to the mothers listening' has a distinctly oedipal feel when combined with the assertion that he flirts with them for the whole of his show.

When asked about how he 'flirts' on air, Dale's response is revealing:

It's just how you would flirt with a person. It's it's (.) TVAM called it sexual chemistry (.) and I suppose that's exactly what I'mdoing now. It's the same thing.

Dale likens 'flirting' on air to the way he is relating to the interviewer. This is interesting both as a reading of and an intervention into the interview and it is worth taking some 'time out' from the central focus of this chapter to examine it. It is interesting as a reflexive move on Dale's part - it is a comment on the process of the interview which is unique in the materials being analysed. But it is not in some sense a neutral reflexive remark (whatever that would be), it is an intervention into the interview which raises important questions about the practice of power in research and more generally.

Many critiques of social scientific methods have drawn attention to the powerful role of the interviewer conducting research. He or she is said to play an important

role in defining the topics for discussion, influencing how they are discussed and what is and is not relevant, ignoring the needs of the participants and generally controlling the whole pattern of interaction. Feminist researchers in particular have been critical of the way women are subjected in the research process. They have argued that there should be co-operation between the researcher and researched and calls for research for women and not on women have been influential throughout the last decade (eg Bowles & Duelli Klein, 1983; Stanley & Wise, 1983;).

One of the problems with these arguments, however, is that the notion of doing research 'for' women has been defined very narrowly to mean research with women's experience as its subject. Whilst this may be appropriate for some topics of interest, it effectively writes out the possibility of doing research on 'powerful' groups. Research which in a more general sense could be seen as quite clearly 'for' women - such as research on discriminatory policies - is excluded by the exclusive focus on women's experience.

A second problem is that it rests upon what is essentially an assumption about the power of the interviewer. Carol Smart (1984) has questioned this and described the problems she experienced trying to adapt these principles of feminist research to her study of magistrates:

'In both Oakley's discussion on doing feminist research and in Stanley and Wise's book on the problems of research for feminists there is an assumption that the power imbalance between the people 'being researched' and the researcher is basically in favour of the latter... But my experience of researching the 'locally powerful' does not fit with this model at all... I find this assertion remarkable and only explicable if we ignore all the social class divisions and the structures of dominance outside the academic world of research. (Smart, 1984 p.157)

Dale's remark that he was 'flirting' with the interviewer highlights similar problems. His intervention seems to be a clear example of what could be called 'doing power'. Whilst at the level of intention Dale may have seen his comment as a way of 'complimenting' the interviewer and not as an exercise of power, its function was to undermine the interviewer. Her role as interviewer is effectively negated as the interaction is recast as a sexual/romantic one - with the interviewee in control. It is significant that she did not reply to or acknowledge his remark, but simply moved on to the next question in the interview schedule. This subtle practice of power/gender has parallels in many other situations (eg comments about women's appearance, 'jokes' about the 'real reason' colleagues are meeting, etc.). In some ways it is particularly insidious in the context of an interview precisely because this is a forum where the interviewer is 'supposed' to be the powerful party. It raises many important questions about the nature and practice of power - in particular whether power can be said to reside in particular structural or institutional positions or whether it is best seen as a practice, something that is done or accomplished on a moment by moment basis in specific contexts.

In a fascinating and important article Caroline Ramazanoglu (1989) has reflected upon the problems she encountered several years earlier when conducting her MA research on female shift workers. She argues that not only were there theoretical and methodological difficulties in her attempt to take a feminist standpoint, but there were many other problems for which nothing in her sociological education had prepared her:

'These were all problems which were rooted in various ways in unacknowledged power relations... I had the persistent but never mentioned problem of being female in a male world... The first request at a formal meeting with union

representatives was for my home telephone number, followed by hearty laughter. I was so intimidated that I could not present my research proposal and had to be spoken for by a male manager. I had to run the gauntlet of entering male-dominated workplaces amid outbreaks of whistles, cat-calls and comments. On one occasion the disruption was so bad that the manager asked me to hide in the women's toilet until my interviewee arrived' (Ramazanoglu, 1989 p.430)

Whilst Dale's comment in no way compares with the sexual harassment routinely suffered by Ramazanoglu during her research, both suggest the need for caution in making assertions about the interviewer's power, particularly, but not only, when the interviewees are male and the interviewer female. Class, 'race', age, sexuality and many other factors influence the practice of power in interviews whether the parties are the same gender or not. We need to go beyond simplistic statements which suggest that the interviewer is powerful because they are the interviewer, and to explore the practice of power, how it is brought off and maintained in particular situations, and, crucially, how it is resisted. But in doing so it is equally important to avoid the suggestion that power is somehow reducible to individual interactions, and that everything relevant to an analysis of power will be manifested in discourse in such situations. Power is structurally located in particular social and historical relations - something which the little ethnomethodological research which does consider power (Cameron, 1989) fails to address (Zimmerman & West, 1987).

Returning to the extract from Dale and in particular to his response to the question about how he flirts on-air.

I don't think I could even try to explain. It's just how you would flirt with a person (.) It's it's (.) TVAM called it sexual chemistry (.) and I suppose

that's exactly what I'm doing now. It's the same thing.

It is interesting that Dale uses the notion of 'sexual chemistry' to describe how he flirts. This is an 'experiential' notion, yet what he is talking about is a sustained presentation style - a way of addressing listeners which he claims to keep up for the entire three hours of his show. That is, he is using a notion which implies attraction, indeed physiological arousal, to describe his job - talking into a microphone. In a sense he is a professional 'flirt', but he explains it in terms which suggest spontaneity and one-to-one rapport. The very description he gives of 'flirting' as sexual chemistry serves to emphasise the idea that he is giving the audience what they want, suggesting as it does a shared and mutual sexual excitement.

The first few times I read through this interview with Dale my reaction was one of shocked and amazed delight. I thought: 'he's admitted it! he has admitted his sexism, he has admitted that he flirts on air'. I found it difficult to believe that he would actually volunteer this (for me) damning indictment of himself so readily. Reading it now, though, it seems to me that back then I had lost my 'critical distance' from the material, so entranced was I that his 'admission' fitted with my reading of his broadcasts. I had slipped into treating his responses as a neutral description of what he does, because they happened to fit with my own working definition of his actions. However, as I argued earlier, there are many good theoretical reasons for not treating his accounts as straightforward mirrors of his actions or of the world. Moreover just as he repeatedly stressed the importance of 'housewife radio' and then went on to deny its very existence, so in a different interpretative context Dale

could easily flatly refute the suggestion that he 'flirts' on air. The point is not how much his description of his presentation concurs with my analysis of his broadcasts, but rather to see his account of what he does as interesting in its own right, and as having its own effects. (see Discussion and Chapter Seven for a longer discussion of the relationship between the interviews and the 'reality' of the radio station.)

There is a second reason for not taking Dale's claim to 'flirt with them for three hours' as a straightforward and unproblematic description. This relates to the use of the word 'flirt'. The notion of 'flirting' is not a neutral way of describing a particular way of addressing listeners (of course no neutral term exists). It is a particular characterisation, one which connotes fun, harmlessness and even a certain amount of innocence. Above all, it suggests a certain triviality or lack of significance which other characterisations of the 'same' activity might not share. What Dale calls 'flirting', for example, might easily be identified by others as 'sexual harrassment'. (Think of how the men harrassing Caroline Ramazanoglu might have characterised their behaviour!) The point is that Dale's claim to 'flirt' is a particular construction suggesting 'good harmless fun'. It is not a construction that the analyst should unproblematically accept, nor is it for Dale the 'admission' which I once took it to be.

Looking more generally at the extracts from Dale discussed in this chapter, a particular pattern of argument and justification emerges very clearly. The following is a gloss of that argument, which misses out the subtle shifts and disclaiming work which were discussed earlier. Dale argues that his audience is primarily made up of housewives, or at least women, and that he therefore 'talks to' a female or females. He goes on to claim that men and

women want different things from the radio presenter. finally he states that he 'flirts' with his audience because this is what they (at least the females) want. What he does, then, is construct his audience as predominantly female, claims to 'flirt' with them for his entire show and justifies this by saying it is what they want. I will discuss this argument in more detail in the 'discussion' section of this chapter, but first I want to consider an extract from the DJ Toller whose argument is very similar in many respects.

Extract Twelve (Toller)

Int: Mm hmmm. When you're on air do you think you flirt?

DJ: (2.0) Mmmmer yes er yes. Yes I'd say I try to flirt
(.) mind you it's hard when you can't see the person

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: I suppose yes I like to be (.) if I can a little bit
on the cheeky side a little bit sort of sexy cos er
I think most people like that (.) I think (.) deep
down er so yes I would say I do flirt yes

Int: So you put put across a (.) quite a sexy image on
air?

DJ: Well I don't know I don't know how it comes out the
other end but yes occasionally (.) I mean sometimes
and sometimes not. Sometimes I'll go on and do a
very matter of fact programme and then other times
I'll come on and er (.) try and try and get across
to my audience. I mean I suppose so yes (.) I like
to flirt a little bit.

Int: So how do you flirt on air? As you would//

DJ: Aaah (.) it's difficult really to desc (.) You
imagine your imaginary lady who's obviously very
attractive and (.) I suppose if you're playing
romantic records (.) the way to do it is to (.) you
don't shout for a start off you talk very close to

the microphone and you talk quite low because apparently low voices are supposed to be more effective than high voices you know and er (.) you just say cheeky things you can have a (.) you gotta be careful I mean you can't go too far but but you (2.0) you can have a little flirt and say one or two cheeky things a bit you know (.) a bit on the sexy side but (.) I think that gets the message across.

Int: So are you conscious of the fact that when you're say talking to a female you change your voice?

DJ: Mmm yeah I'll be I'll be be softer (.) gentler whereas if I'm talking to a man it's more matter of fact.

Although in the interview with Toller it was the interviewer and not the DJ who introduced the notion of flirting, Toller's response is similar to Dale's. 'yes' he agrees, 'I try to flirt... cos er I think most people like that'. He justifies 'flirting', then, like Dale, in terms of what his audience wants. The use of the word 'people' is significant. Whilst it is clear he is talking about women (and he makes this explicit further on in the extract), he justifies 'flirting' by reference to what 'most people like' (my emphasis), rather than what most women like. This is a much more general appeal, and is, I would argue, much less likely to be heard as sexist or blameworthy than the suggestion that women want to be flirted with. I am not suggesting that Toller in some sense deliberately tried to mislead - it seems likely that he was producing an argument that simply felt or sounded right - but its function is to downplay the hearability of sexism.

Toller's elaboration of what it means to flirt makes explicit the connotations of fun and triviality that were only implicit in Dale's argument. For Toller flirting is

being ' a bit on the cheeky side' and 'a little bit sort of sexy'.

Toller draws a contrast between doing 'a very matter of fact programme' - something he associates with talking to males - and 'flirting' which he sees as trying to 'get across to my audience' or to get 'the message across'. Interestingly, then, Toller seems to see the very idea of reaching and communicating with his audience as bound up with a kind of 'cheeky' sexual banter. Like Dale he does not display an ability to 'think' about communicating with his female audience outside of the notion of 'flirtation'.

Unlike Dale, however, he describes his attempts to 'flirt' on air in terms which suggest active construction, if not calculation. For Toller flirting is 'hard when you can't see the person'. But he has evolved a strategy for dealing with this difficulty:

you imagine your imaginary lady who's obviously very attractive and (.) I suppose if you're playing romantic records (.) the way to do it is to (.) you don't shout for a start off you talk very close to the microphone and you talk quite low because apparently low voices are supposed to be more effective than high voices you know and er (.) you just say cheeky things'.

Far from the female listeners wanting to 'fantasise about the presenter' (cf Dale extract eleven), here it is the presenter who fantasises about his female listeners. This established Toller offers a lesson in on-air flirting: you play 'romantic records', 'you talk very close to the microphone' and 'you talk quite low because apparently low voices are supposed to be more effective than high voices' and then 'you just say cheeky things...have a little

flirt'. No chemistry here, then. The flirting is engineered because it is what people want. Or at least what they want within limits because Toller, like Dale, cautions carefulness - 'you can't go too far' 'you've got to be careful'. Whilst for Dale the caution was necessary so that he did not annoy the men listening, for Toller it is a more general normative imperative: for 'too far' is of course by definition 'too far'.

Later in the interview, talking about whether he addresses listeners in terms of their roles, Toller produces an example of his 'flirting technique' as he might do it live, on-air:

Extract Thirteen (Toller)

I might say uh this is one for the ladies (.) if I play Tom Jones or something (.) this is one for all you ladies (.) just behave yourselves girls you know (.) don't throw anything intimate at the radio set (.) it makes me sound muffled (1.0) yeah um yeah I suppose you do categorise a little bit.

Discussion

Although I chose to focus on just two extracts in the second part of this chapter, the other DJs and PCs also talked about 'flirting' with listeners. For the DJ Goodman, the term 'flirt' was not quite right - he preferred the term 'tease' (see appendix 4), a term which emphasises the connotations of fun and unimportance, whilst playing down the sexual or romantic meanings associated with 'flirting'. The PC Lightfoot, not a presenter himself, had a 'theory' about how presenters appealed to their listeners which rested upon the assumption that listeners were female. Some

presenters, he claimed, have a 'kind of flirty image', whilst others

'basically kind of of appeal to women ... it's not motherly (.) I think basically they they understand women very well therefore they communicate better to women'

Toler had a similar theory. For him, some presenters appealed to women by 'bringing out the mothering instinct not the sexy instinct'. Others got across by being 'this sort of macho (1.0) man appealing to the women'. And others still, in which he would include himself, appeal by 'flirting on the air':

Int: And you think you're more a sort of boyfriend attractive figure?

DJ: I would hope so yeah hopefully that comes out in the voice.

I briefly mention these examples not to provide an analysis of them, but simply to give a sense of how pervasive the notions of 'appealing to women' and 'flirting' are in these interviews.

What I have tried to show in this chapter is how the DJs and PCs attempted to construct their audience as female, and indeed as being largely constituted of housewives in the home, even as they produced arguments which challenged this version of their audience. I examined the way the notion of 'housewife radio' was an important discursive resource in accomplishing it as 'legitimate' to 'go for' a female audience. And I showed that this claim, combined with a construction of the listeners wants as gendered, was used to justify a particular style of presentation and

address to the audience which was characterised as 'flirting' by several of the broadcasters.

In presenting the analysis in this chapter for reasons of clarity I chose to draw attention to three stages or 'moments' in the broadcasters arguments. First the argument that the audience is largely female. Second the notion that males and females have different wants of the radio presenter. And finally the claim that the DJs 'flirt' with their listeners. However, these arguments are inextricably bound up together. This can be seen most clearly in the interview with Dale where there was no separation between the arguments about the make-up of the audience, the gendered wants of listeners and the claim to 'flirt with them for three hours'. In a sense the idea of 'housewife radio' is actually partly constituted by the notion that men and women (or men, women and 'housewives') want different things from the presenter (see especially extract eight from Chapman). The assumptions that women want to 'fantasise about' or 'mother' the presenter or like to think of him as a 'potential boyfriend' are part of a whole pattern of assumptions which make up the notion of 'housewife radio'. It rests upon the construction of a particular subject position or positions for female listeners. These are then used to justify the whole style of presentation used by the DJs and centred around 'flirting'.

What the broadcasters have produced are justifications for a presentation style which is sexist and patronising. More than this, they have suggested that women actually want to be addressed in this way, and have presented themselves as merely responding to their listeners wants. For the DJs and PCs 'flirting with them for three hours' or saying 'cheeky' or 'sexy' things is 'giving listners what they want'. Their implied defence is one of consumer sovereignty.

Not only is the suggestion that women want radio to address them in this way insidious in its own right, but the focus on consumer sovereignty also obscures all other potential reasons or motivations for the presentation style and address to female listeners. In particular, there is complete silence from the DJs and PCs on the role played by advertisers in determining both who is targeted by the station (or by particular programmes) and the nature of that targetting - including, for example, how the targetted audience are addressed.

I have argued elsewhere (Gill, 1989) that one of the most pervasive arguments of these interviews was that the DJ should be 'a friend' to listeners (all the DJs and PCs interviewed drew repeatedly on this idea). This was justified in terms of the listeners' needs and wants of radio: the idea was that the listeners want (and in some cases need) the presenter to be a friend to them. The DJs were presented as providing a valuable social service. However, an examination of the radio station's information for advertisers highlighted another contrasting explanation for the pervasive focus on the 'friendly role' of the presenter. The material encouraged companies to advertise on Radio Matchdale because:

'The warm one-to-one relationship between the presenter and the listener makes your potential customer more receptive to your message.'

Here, then, was an argument which explained the emphasis on 'friendliness' in quite different (and for me far more convincing) terms. Far from being part of a concern with listeners' well-being, the friendliness of the DJ was part of a strategy to create an ambience in which advertisements would be particularly effective.

As I argued, the presence of these two types of justification of the need for presenters to be 'friends' to listeners posed problems for discourse analysis, which has no principled way of distinguishing between them. Whilst it could highlight the variability of these two arguments it could not defend the idea that one was privileged over the other - they were simply two 'different' arguments. As an analyst I wanted to go beyond this idea that the arguments were 'equal but different', and argue that one was more powerful, dominant and structuring than the other. But there was no principled way I could do this within a discourse analytic perspective.

There is a similar analytic problem with the material discussed in this chapter. The DJs and PCs claim that it is legitimate to 'go for' a female audience can be reinterpreted, after examination of the radio station's package for advertisers, as an attempt to deliver targetted audiences to advertisers. Moreover whilst there is nothing in the radio station's preparation for advertisers which draws attention to the 'flirtatious' banter of the presenters, it is not difficult to imagine how this is both part of targetting a particular audience and simultaneously creating an atmosphere that is 'sympathetic' to advertisements.

Discourse analysis, I am suggesting, does not have any principled way with which to distinguish between accounts of DJs' presentation style which stress consumer sovereignty ('giving listeners what they want') and other accounts which allude to advertisers interests. This is because of the refusal of discourse analysts to make any explicit ontological commitments: they refuse precisely the desire (which I find so attractive) to say 'the real reason' - to argue that the broadcasters stress on what ^olisteners want serves to obscure the 'real reason' for

their presentation style. In refusing this, discourse analysis avoids the traps of traditional ideological analysis in which ideology is contrasted with an unproblematised 'truth' (which it is seen as concealing). As such it has many strengths - not least of which is its capacity to offer much more useful and sensitive analyses of the operation of ideology, which focus not on the concealment of truth but on the ideological effects of particular discourses or accounts.

However, I want to argue that in doing this discourse analysts do not avoid ontological commitment; what they avoid is simply making their ontological commitments explicit. It seems to me that there are a number of points in discursive analyses at which covert or implicit ontological statements are made. First there is the statement-about-the world implied by the decision of what to study and what questions to ask. When we ask about how women would deal with combining career commitments with childcare responsibilities (Wetherell et al, 1987) or when we look at accounts of police violence (Wetherell & Potter, 1988) we imply that there is an issue, something real to be accounted for. Similarly, in my own work, when I choose to analyse broadcasters accounts of the lack of women DJs I work with an implicit assumption about there being too few women DJs (see Chapter Seven). These are implicit ontological claims. Similarly, when, in analysing texts, discourse analysts make claims about the function or effects of a particular construction, or about what a stretch of discourse serves to do, they are making ontological claims. They may be eschewing judgements about the truth or otherwise of particular versions, but discourse analysts are themselves making truth claims about the world when they make assertions about discursive effects.

Indeed I would go further: I want to suggest that when discourse analysts point to, for example, the silences or absences in particular texts, their words are heavy with an implied significance. If we accept that any event or phenomenon can be described (constructed) in a number of different ways, then to point to the absence of one particular version is to accord a special importance to that version. It is, I want to argue, to imply something about one's own view of the world. Thus, when I argued that there was complete silence in the broadcasters accounts about the role of advertisers my words were pregnant with significance. They suggested that this absence was important (in contrast, for example, to the absence of any mention of how the DJ's family had told him that he sounds best when doing 'flirty' banter - to which I accorded no significance). Analytic decisions about what is important are based upon implicit beliefs about what the world is like, about ontology.

My argument is not that of the purist discourse analyst or deconstructionist suggesting that we should evacuate ontological claims completely from our analyses (see Eagleton, 1983 on Paul de Man), but rather that discourse analysis should be more intellectually honest, more 'up-front' about its interpretative resources. It is not that we can ever spell out in some final way the nature of those resources (attempts to do so are themselves simply versions), but simply that we can abandon the disingenuous claim that we do not make ontological statements. This in turn will mean that claims about the significance of particular discourses and their absence will enter the realm of argument. It will not be sufficient to simply note the absence of a particular construction and leave it at that - full stop brimming with meaning. We will have to argue for the significance of silences and in doing so will make explicit our beliefs about social relations.

To do so is to adopt what I have characterised as a position of political relativism (see Chapter Three). For the current analysis it means that we can avoid the notion that we can unproblematically 'read off' the 'real reason' for DJs' presentation style from the commercial imperatives of an ILR station. This position negates the purpose and value of empirical research altogether (since every aspect of radio station operation can be assumed to function directly to serve the interests of the shareholders) and leaves all the key questions unanswered: DJs become either victims of 'false consciousness' or deliberate collaborators with the station's owners/management. This position equally avoids the tendency of discourse analysis to a kind of pluralistic relativism, and its failure to deal adequately with questions about power. It puts the issue of power and politics at its centre.

Footnote

1 I would argue that many attempts to intervene in media representations on the basis of 'positive images' (of women, black people, gay people, etc) are problematic for precisely this reason.

CHAPTER 7

GENDER INEQUALITY WITHIN A RADIO STATION: AN ANALYSIS OF BROADCASTERS' ACCOUNTS

There are reasons why you can't use certain women who do send tapes in (.) they don't have the right voice or (.) the right way to communicate (.) the way you want them to (.) or they won't handle the situation er (.) so (.) er a woman woman broadcaster is a rare animal. There are certain (.) I suppose because men are not so good at doing the things that women maybe can do (.) I'm not being sexist but it's true that maybe certain women er could not do what the men do (.) so they are very few and far between.

(Disc Jockey, Radio Matchdale)

Introduction

The last chapter was concerned with the broadcasters constructions of their audience as gendered and with the way in which they used the notion of 'giving listeners what they want' in order to justify a particular presentation style - which they characterised as 'flirting', but which I argued was patronising and sexist. This chapter continues the interest in gender. Here, though, the focus is not on DJs accounts of their audience or their role, but rather on how they explained the lack of women DJs both at Radio Matchdale and more generally.

At the beginning of the 1990s a striking feature of almost all popular radio stations' is their complete lack of female presenters - at least during the day. When radio stations do employ women as presenters they tend to be on

in the evening when audiences have historically and consistently been at their lowest. BBC Radio One is a good example of this : during week day daytime programming women are conspicuous by their absence², whilst a small handful have been allocated nighttime or weekend time-slots. The most significant recent incursion into the male-dominated world of daytime Radio One has been that of Jackie Brambles whose programme, 'Drivetime' straddles the traditional daytime-evening divide beginning at 6 o'clock³. Such inequalities in the number and status of female DJs have been well-documented (Baehr & Ryan, 1984; Karpf, 1980; 1987).

Radio Matchdale (which is, as I noted in chapter six, a composite of two ILR stations) is no exception to this pattern of gender inequality. One of the stations which makes up Radio Matchdale has no female presenters at all, whilst the other employs one woman whose phone-in show is broadcast twice a week between 11.0 pm and 1.0 am - not exactly peak times!

The claim (above) that Radio Matchdale has only one woman DJ raises an issue which was partly discussed in the last chapter - namely the way in which particular versions of the world are sometimes privileged by discourse analysts over others, or the way on which discourse analysts make covert ontological commitments. In asserting that there is only one woman DJ I am, in fact, producing one version of a situation and attempting to pass this off as unproblematically factual - as a mere description of the world, a reality for which broadcasters are asked to account.

Such is the force of this claim that it may be difficult to see it as a version or construction: surely, a reader might argue, there either is only one woman DJ or there is not.

Certainly this claim plays into the 'strong' camp of those with a realist view of language: numbers and statistics are hard to dispute. It is difficult to claim that they are constructions; nothing the discourse analyst might say has the persuasive force of, say, a head count within a radio station. It is far easier to argue that claims about radio stations' sexism or coverage of the Gulf war are constructions - this is the strong territory for discourse analysts and few people would dispute it - but bring in numbers and supposedly 'concrete' phenomena and the ground seems far more shaky. Nevertheless, such claims, like all language, are constructions. This has been highlighted in a recent paper by Potter, Wetherell and Chitty (1990) in which they compare different versions of a charity's success, the 'same' results being variously characterised as 'a 19% reduction', 'a 1.7% absolute difference' or '23 million dollars in drugs may have prevented 36 heart attacks'. As Potter et al (1990) argue what is interesting is precisely the way in which quantification discourse is used to make discourse appear factual.

Returning to the question of women DJs the point is that like much discourse analytic work I am privileging a particular version. The issue at stake is whether it is ever possible (or indeed desirable) in research to avoid presenting at least some state of affairs as objective, and how discourse analytic researchers ought to deal with this. This tendency to present certain things as objective whilst examining accounts of them is something that has been discussed by Woolgar and Pawluch (1985). They suggest that even when this is disavowed by researchers, it is often done in subtle ways in their research - through, for example, the selective use of inverted commas to distinguish what researchers see as constructions from what they hold as real.

It seems to me that discourse analysts have at least four broad ways of dealing with this issue. Firstly they do as I seemed to do above and assert quite baldly the state of affairs for which the 'participants' are being asked to account. In this way they try covertly to establish one version as unproblematically factual - as in my claim that there is just one female DJ at Radio Matchdale. Several papers by Potter and Wetherell, for example, have started with objective-seeming histories and descriptions of New Zealand society (eg Wetherell & Potter, 1986).

A second strategy is to avoid offering any characterisation of events/phenomena which their respondents are discussing, but instead turn to another source for a warrant of their significance. This is most often used in analyses of political discourse in which newspaper reports are drawn on to suggest the importance and general content of a particular speech or event (eg. Potter & Edwards, 1991; Gill et al forthcoming).

Thirdly and relatedly discourse analysts may attempt to avoid formulating the state of affairs to-be-accounted-for focussing instead solely on the participants orientations. As I argued in chapter six this is rarely completely succesful because discourse analysts inevitably (when reading through transcripts) have some notion of questions and topics in which they are interested - racism, police violence, positive discrimination - which implicitly structure their analyses.

Finally discourse analysts ⁰ sometimes adopt some kind of reflexive strategy designed to draw attention to the status of their own claims as constructions. This is most frequently used in discourse work within the sociology of science.

It seems to me that none of these strategies constitutes a principled basis for research. The first is a travesty of discourse analysis' entire theoretical basis, and works only as long as one can 'get away with it', get away, that is, without anyone pointing out that what you are passing off as factual is itself a construction. The second and third strategies are flawed because they are disingenuous: they pretend a lack of commitment to any version of events or phenomena. Finally the reflexive strategy, whilst sometimes questioning - serving to jolt one out of habitual ways of seeing things - tends both to an infinite regress of 'floating' signifiers (a kind of complete idealism and eschewal of all material questions) and to a corresponding elitism, where ironic wordplays become the province of the initiated. It also, crucially, leads to a politics of complete inaction.

In place of these strategies I want to argue for a position of political relativism, which acknowledges the inevitability of commitments (however transitory these may be [Hall,1990]) to particular versions of events or phenomena, and neither tries to hide this nor to draw attention to it simply for the sake of 'liv[ing] up to a programmatic relativism' (Woolgar & Pawluch 198 p.225) Such a position is similar to some reflexive strategies in that it highlights the fact that analysts' claims are themselves constructions, but instead of simply stopping there it places the claims in an arena in which they can be argued about, struggled over. Crucially, then, it is a position which allows a politics. It seems to me that this approach sits more comfortably with feminist research than a discourse analysis which either tries to claim objectivity for one version or enters the perpetually self-referential world of reflexivity.

In the current analysis, then, the construction of the situation with which I am working is that there is inequality in the gender make-up of radio stations, which at Radio Matchdale is manifested in the fact that there is only one female DJ. This version informs both the questions asked in the interviews and my analysis - and it is one I would defend and argue for if challenged. However, it is worth pointing out that this premise was not challenged by any of the broadcasters interviewed for this research: whilst they offered various accounts for the lack of women DJs, none of them sought to deny that there was a lack. There was, then, a degree of consensus among participants.

What I am concerned with in this chapter is how the absence of female DJs is understood and accounted for by broadcasters, how they discursively made sense of this situation.

A traditional social psychological approach to this question might take one of two forms. One approach might be for the researcher to investigate the reason for the lack of female DJs by attempting to locate the explanation in women themselves. This make take the form of some kind of trait or personality assessment and the positing of an explanation such as 'fear of success' (Horner, 1972). The problems with this sort of approach are well-known and will not be rehearsed here. A second more common approach in contemporary social psychology might be for the researcher to attempt to measure the 'attitude' of those responsible for recruitment within radio stations towards women in general and potential recruits in particular, with attitude understood as a unitary, coherent and relatively stable mental predisposition. Researchers taking this approach might expect their subjects to score towards the negative pole of the Attitudes Towards Women scale.

There are a number of problems with such an approach. The concept of attitude has come under attack from a wide variety of perspectives, and criticisms of it are well-documented (see for example Henriques et al, 1984; Billig, 1987; Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Chapter 3). Here I will simply highlight two problems.

The first concerns variability and consistency. The notion that attitudes are coherent and enduring mental states which individuals 'hold' on each of a variety of issues has been challenged by both rhetoricians and discourse analysts within social psychology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Potter & Wetherell, 1988; Billig, 1987; 1989c). As Potter & Wetherell (1988) have pointed out, variability

'presents a major headache for attitude theorists, since one underlying consistent mental state is generally assumed for each topic or issue' (1988 p.54-5)

The second problem with approaches which rely on measuring the attitudes held by members of a dominant group to a subordinate group is that they are premised upon the idea that the attitudinal object is straightforwardly distinguishable from the attitude itself. Thus for traditional attitude theory, there are attitudes to feminism and there is feminism itself. This assumption has been challenged by several authors (eg Moscovici, 1984; Potter & Wetherell, 1988) who have pointed out that in everyday argumentation people constitute the attitudinal object at the same time as evaluating it. That is, particular versions of groups, events, ideas are constructed which contain evaluations. Clearly this is problematic for attitude theorists who assume that their subjects completing attitude scales are responding to the same object.

This chapter avoids the problems with research which tries to understand inequalities in employment by reference to the traits of individuals or the attitudes of employers and looks instead at what Wetherell et al (1987) have called the 'practical ideologies' through which gender inequalities in the employment of DJs are understood. By practical ideologies is meant

'the often contradictory and fragmentary complexes of notions, norms and models which guide conduct and allow for its justification and rationalisation' (1987 p.60)

By analysing extended stretches of discourse from DJs and PCs I hope to show something of the way in which inequalities within radio stations are justified and maintained and thus of the links between discourse and social structure.

The transcripts were analysed to find the broad types of accounts which were being offered by broadcasters for the absence of female DJs. Five different types of account were identified, each organised around a particular claim such as 'women don't apply' or 'the audience prefers male disc jockeys'. What I want to stress is that these were not alternative or mutually exclusive accounts which were espoused by individual broadcasters. Rather the DJs and PCs all drew on and combined different and contradictory accounts for the lack of women DJs. The aim of this chapter is both to highlight the pervasive variability of the broadcasters accounts and to look in detail at how they attempted to discursively accomplish them as factual.

The chapter is divided into six sections. The first five deal with each of the accounts put forward by broadcasters for the lack of women DJs. In addition to these broad explanations DJs and PCs frequently offered further

accounts to support their claims - for example, the assertion that women do not apply to become DJs is warranted by a number of other claims such as the idea that women are not interested in broadcasting or the notion that their backgrounds have not prepared them for it. Such claims serve to support the account being offered. Because of this, each of the first five sections of the chapter has a number of sub-sections which analyse these constructions. The sixth section of the chapter examines the accounts of change which were spontaneously put forward by three of the five broadcasters.

Accounting for inequality: (1) 'Women just don't apply'

The first and most prevalent type of account offered for the lack of female DJs was organised around the claim that women do not 'apply' to become radio presenters. Four out of the five broadcasters drew on this idea.

Extract One (Goodman)

Int: Why do you think there are so few female DJs?

DJ: ((laughs)) probably because they don't apply. It's it's that literally is it.

Extract Two (Dale)

DJ: It's a more popular sort of occupation to men. We get a lot of tapes from people who want to be DJs and they're all from men.

Extract Three (Chapman)

PC: It's a question that I get tapes from hopefuls on my desk everyday of the week and none of them are ever women.

Extract Four (Lightfoot)

PC: I get all the applications to come in here (.) we

get about 400 a year (.) we've had none from women in the last year. Not one to be a presenter.

It is worth looking at one extract in more detail.

Extract Five (Chapman)

Int: Why do you feel there are so few female DJs?

PC: A common question. I think there are a (.) I think the reason is that um (2.0) one's got to look at where they come from. Radio Matchdale is one of the biggest stations in the country it's certainly within the top ten of over ninety local radio stations and we tend to get our staff from other radio stations or we bring them on ourselves in terms of training people from new (.) and it's (.) where people come from (.) so in hospital radio there aren't many women DJs (.) there aren't many women DJs in pubs (.) there aren't many female DJs (.) especially teenage age which is when we're looking to bring people like (.) who are interested in doing it. It's not something that is a natural progression and because of that um we have to look hard and when we get them (.) we have over the past three years had three women DJs (.) we've lost two of them. We've lost one of them almost immediately to Radio Four who I'd spent two years training and we had someone else who I had spent a year training who was taken off us and who has become a star (.) at another radio station. We have one at the moment who is (.) good and is is a female DJ and will go a long way. It's a question that I get tapes from hopefuls on my desk everyday and none of them are ever women. And it's where the sources are coming from. And for us to go out is very hard for us to go out and put an advert out do you want to be a DJ (.) we'd get thousands of replies.

What Chapman seems to be doing in this extract is arguing that Radio Matchdale recruits its staff from smaller stations, hospital radio and pubs/clubs, and that these traditional sources are not supplying the station with potential female DJs. As with the analyses in the previous chapter my concern is not to attempt to assess the truth or falsity of such claims but rather to examine the way the arguments are designed in accordance with particular accounting considerations, and to discuss the ideological effects and implications of particular constructions. Thus rather than seeing Chapman's assertion as an unproblematic expression of fact, it can be read as a way of deflecting the possible or implied charge against him of prejudice or discrimination : it's not me ,it's these other stations which don't employ women, and I'm merely a victim of their decisions.

There are a number of good theoretical reasons for not treating accounts such as this one by Chapman as factual. Of particular heuristic value, however, are clues within the rest of the text. Chapman who here says that he never receives letters or tapes of application from women subsequently discusses some of the women who he says have applied - in order to show that they were not suitable. Indeed even within this extract Chapman seems to be sowing the seeds of an alternative explanation for the lack of female DJs. His resentful tone and his emphasis on the time he has spent training female DJs only to 'lose' them to other stations points to another argumentative possibility - that it is not worth his while employing women if they move on or are 'poached' as soon as they are trained - which although not fully developed in the extract is available as a reading.

One of the most interesting features of these interviews is that the DJs and PCs spontaneously offered explanations for

many of their claims. These can be understood as ways of warranting their explanations, suggesting reasons or constructing little narratives, which make them sound more plausible. In the case of the claim that no women apply to become radio presenters three different types of explanation can be identified: that women are not 'interested' in becoming DJs, that 'education and social process' do not prepare them for it, and that they are put off because DJing is 'a man's world'

Accounting for women's non-application : 'there aren't many...who are interested in doing it'

If we look back at extract five we can see that the first explanation which Chapman puts forward to explain women's non-application is 'there aren't many female DJs (...) who are interested in doing it'. In making this psychologistic claim Chapman does two things. Firstly, and most straightforwardly, he denies that there is any real or genuine motivation on women's part to become DJs. It would be interesting to discover just how common is this pattern of accounting. I want to suggest that the idea that oppressed groups do not 'really' want to change their position is one frequently drawn on by members of dominant groups in order to justify their actions or inaction.

Secondly this assertion serves to deflect criticism or charges of sexism from radio stations in general and from Radio Matchdale in particular. It gives the impression that radio stations would be happy to take on women as DJs but that they are faced with a wall of disinterest from women. The idea that radio stations are battling against women's lack of interest in DJ-ing, and are even putting in extra effort to find female presenters is reinforced by Chapman's comment : 'so we have to look hard'. That Chapman is looking hard for female DJs establishes his 'good faith', his lack

of prejudice, and responsibility for the lack of female DJs is placed firmly on women's shoulders.

The idea that women are not interested in becoming DJs is also drawn on by Goodman.

Extract Six (Goodman)

DJ: I'm sure there's a helluva lot of them out there that would be really er good communicators but have never even given a thought of doing it(.) maybe they're doing a job that either pays more money or is more interesting to them.

This is an explanation which rests upon an implicit view of society as characterised by social mobility. It suggests that women could become DJs but have chosen to do other work. The salary and satisfaction of a radio presenter is downgraded. In fact, women's putative non-application is made to appear eminently sensible and rational when contrasted with the likelihood that they are doing better paid or more interesting jobs. Again, the picture presented of women doing other highly paid and satisfying work serves to undermine the notion that women really wish to become radio presenters. It hardly needs pointing out that this picture is far removed from that painted by most evidence: women continue to earn less than 2/3 of men's earnings (EOC,1987), and there is little evidence to suggest that women find their jobs any more satisfying than men.

Goodman's argument is similar in FORM to a type of discourse highlighted by feminist sociologists in which women's role as a childcarer is made to appear so fulfilling and so satisfying that their exclusion from paid employment appears positively benign. However just as this argument tends to function to exclude women from paid

employment, rather than to demand equal access by men to the fulfilling role of childcarer, so it is significant that Goodman does not claim that women are doing jobs which are in some way inherently more interesting than being a radio presenter, but rather that they are doing jobs which are more interesting to them. The argument rests upon the implicit idea that there are important gender differences in employment choices and satisfaction (see the third section of this chapter in which this form of accounting is discussed in more detail.)

Accounting for women's non-application: 'It's not a natural progression'

If we look back at extract five once more we find a second explanation being posited for women's non-application: 'it's not a natural progression'. The language is inexplicit, but here rather than talking about women's psychological motivation Chapman seems to be drawing on what could be called 'lay sociological notions' (Potter & Wetherell, 1988) of women's 'progression' through education to particular types of work. One of the functions of this type of discourse is to give the impression that he is merely describing the world 'as it is' 'out there' rather than talking about his own beliefs.

An even vaguer explanation is put forward by Lightfoot to support his claim that women do not apply to become radio presenters.

Extract Seven (Lightfoot)

PC: ... I get all the applications to come in here (.)
we get about 400 a year (.) we've had none from
women in the last year. Not one to be a presenter.

Int: Mm hmm

PC: And you can only use the clay you're given you

can't invent a broadcaster out of somebody unless they've got a natural spark a natural personality (.) and they want to do it. Being a radio presenter is you've got to really want to do it because you'll be unemployed for years to start with because you've got to train hospital radio train university radio and you've either got the job or you haven't and before you start working you can't do much else you can go and do a temporary job ofcourse so

Int: Mmm

PC: So I think women tend to go into journalism or television for that very reason.

In this extract Lightfoot's claim that he has had 'not one' application from a woman (out of 400) is underlined by the phrase 'you can only use the clay you're given'. This metaphor does considerable work in emphasising the speakers lack of control over the incontrovertible 'fact' of women's non-application, reinforcing the impression that his account is a factual one, not biased and hence easily dismissable. In the remainder of the extract Lightfoot constructs an account for why women do not apply which meshes both the idea that women do not want to become DJs, and the notion that the career progression involved in becoming a DJ deters female applicants. What Lightfoot seems to be claiming is that people who want to be radio presenters have to be highly motivated because of the difficulties they will experience in trying to achieve this - unemployment, years of training at (low status) hospital and university radio stations, and no guarantee of a job at the end of it. This stops women from applying, it is argued, and leads them to opt instead for jobs in journalism or television.

What is interesting about this is that whilst it appears to be a causal narrative which explains the absence of female

applicants, the impression of logic breaks down on closer inspection. The entire impression of causal linkages is a discursive accomplishment of the text. The passage uses the rhetoric of causal explanation; it uses logical connectives and inferential chains which give the impression that a causal process is being described. But on detailed examination the surface sense of logic gives way - the links are insubstantial or not fully articulated. For example, the word 'so' and the phrase 'for that very reason' in the final sentence give the impression that a causal process has been laid out for the interviewer but the explanation is not at all clear. To what does 'for that very reason' refer ? To the idea that women do not really want to become DJs or to the notion that the difficulty of doing so puts them off ?

There is a second important way in which the impression of a tight causal argument is accomplished in the extract - through 'ontological gerrymandering' (Woolgar & Pawluch, 1985; Potter & Wetherell, 1988). Ontological gerrymandering is the process by which 'the argument invokes a particular realm of relevant events, processes and ideas, an ontology, to make the argument work while excluding other ontologies, threatening complexities and problematic issues' (Potter & Wetherell 1988 p.83). For example Lightfoot foregrounds the difficulties faced by would-be DJs - unemployment, long training, job insecurity - to explain women's non-application, but he omits to mention any similar difficulties in becoming a journalist or working in television, which are implicitly presented as easier options. There is also a selective use of sociology in this account: only a particular style of sociological explanation is invoked: conspicuous by their absence are sociological accounts of institutionalised sexism.

Accounting for women's non-application: 'It's a man's world'

A third explanation for women's claimed non-application is put forward by Lightfoot. The next extract follows directly from the passage which has just been discussed, in which Lightfoot claims that women tend to go into television and journalism rather than radio.

Extract Eight Lightfoot)

PC: So I think women tend to go into journalism and television rather than radio for that very reason.

Int: Mmm hmmm

PC: It's also very much a man's world so they're picked on if they are here (.) you know a woman has got to assert herself pretty definately if she's working in radio.

In the discussion of extract seven it was noted that Lightfoot denied having any control over the lack of women DJs at the radio station. It is therefore ironic that a few moments later Lightfoot accounts for women's putative non-application in terms of sexism at the radio station. he argues that it is 'very much a man's world so they're picked on if they are here.' It is clear that the phrase 'it's a man's world ' is being used to refer to much more than the simple numerical superiority of males at the radio station, since it is used to explain the 'fact' that women are 'picked on'. What is interesting, however, is the fact that it is not formulated as sexism. Just as I highlighted in the last chapter the contrast between broadcasters' characterisation of a behaviour as 'flirting' and other formulations of the 'same' behaviour as 'sexual harrassment', so the fact that the notion of sexism is not drawn on is significant. To be 'picked on' is to be subjected to nasty and unjust behaviour, but it is the behaviour of individuals - something that can be

highlighted by trying to imagine a formulation in which a radio station was deemed to 'pick on' women. The choice of this construction then serves further to play down any notion of structural inequality or institutional practices.

It is significant that for the first time a feature ^{of} life within the radio station is introduced to account for women's non-application. But finally the problem is not one for the men at the radio station, nor for the radio station as a whole to deal with, but rather it is up to each individual woman to 'assert herself pretty definitely if she's working on radio'.

Accounting for Inequality: (2) Audience Objections: 'It's a bit strange to have a woman talking to you'

A second type of explanation for the lack of female DJs focussed on the audience's expected or apparently 'proven' negative reaction to female presenters.

Extract Nine (Dale)

DJ: Research has proven (.) and this is not mine but it's echoed by many surveys throughout the years (.) that people prefer to listen to a man's voice on the radio rather than a woman's voice. Women like to hear men on the radio because they're used to it (.) and it's a bit strange to have a woman talking to you. And men like hearing men on the radio (.)perhaps because they're just chauvinistic. Whatever the reasons, research has borne out this fact you know that people like to have men on the radio (.) and we just go along with the consensus of opinion. We do have women - Marie does an admirable job on the phone-in. We've got a lot of women newscasters so you know there's certainly no prejudice.

The first thing to note about this extract is that it came from Dale who we met in the last section arguing that the lack of female DJs can be explained by the fact that no women apply. Here he constructs a different explanation for the small number of female DJs. Suddenly the lack of female presenters looks less like the result of a lack of applications from women, and more like a deliberate policy not to employ women because of audiences' alleged preference for men. In both formulations, it should be noted, the radio station is depicted as blameless - in the first because it is women themselves who are choosing not to apply and in the second because the radio station is merely serving it's audience by giving it the presenters it wants.

Several authors have pointed out that accounts which merely appear to be describing the world are more persuasive than accounts which seem to be motivated by particular interests or psychological dispositions of the speaker (Smith,1978; Potter & Wetherell,1988; Potter & Edwards,1990; 1991)). Thus one of the problems for a speaker is to accomplish the 'out-thereness' (Potter & Wetherell,1988) of their claims. One way this is achieved by Dale in this extract is through the discursive work being done by 'research' and 'surveys'.

Audience objections': Research, surveys and more research

These terms give authority to Dale's claims. In the first sentence alone Dale talks about 'research' and 'surveys' implying that these are separate rather than different words for the same thing: not only has research shown it, Dale argues, but it has also been echoed by 'many surveys'. The use of these terms and their associated vocabularies such as 'proven' lend credence and a sense of objectivity to Dale's claims.

The terms also serve to distance Dale personally from the claim that listeners would prefer to listen to a man. It becomes not an aspect of his own beliefs, not an opinion, but rather something 'out there' which 'research' and 'surveys' have 'proven'. Dale's own role, as someone involved in the recruitment and appointment of staff, in mediating between research findings and appointment policy, is completely glossed over in his talk. The research findings which 'prove' that listeners prefer male presenters and the lack of female DJs are presented as related together in a way which is totally independent of human action.

'Audience objections': a 'new sexism'?

One of the most interesting features of this extract is the striking parrallel with what has become known as 'new racist' discourse (Barker,1981). This type of discourse is characterised by the tendency to justify racist acts or legislation in non-racial terms, often drawing on other values such as equality and fairness (Billig,1988). It is also marked by denials of prejudice, frequently accompanied by the claim that it is the liberal anti-racists who are the real racists (Barker,1981; Billig,1988). Discussing contemporary British political discourse Reeves (1983) has used the term 'discursive deracialisation' to describe the strategies by which politicians avoid using racial categories, and similar patterns have been identified in ordinary people's discourse (Van Dijk,1983; 1984; 1985a; Potter & Wetherell,1988). Above all much modern public discourse about race and prejudice seems to be characterised by a denial of prejudice. Perhaps the most straightforward type of denial takes the form of the 'disclaimer' (Hewitt & Stokes 1985). Typically a statement such as 'I'm not being racist' is followed by a 'but' which

precedes the expression of something which could easily be heard as racist.

The widespread existence of denials of prejudice has lead to some discussion of the possibility that there exists a 'cultural norm against prejudice' (Barker,1981; Van Dijk, 1984; Reeves,1983; Billig,1988). Billig (1988) has argued that this norm is so general that it is even shared by the National Front, who are keen to deny that they are prejudiced.

Whilst the notion of a cultural norm against prejudice seems to have intuitive descriptive currency, it is not without problems when it is used as an explanatory concept. Its primary weakness lies in its failure to adequately theorise either the operation of norms in general or the operation of the norm against prejudice in particular. Too often the concept rests upon an understanding of norms which is unexplicated or simplistic - both in terms of what it means to posit a cultural norm (the definition and boundaries of a culture, what can be understood by apparent failures to recognise a norm, etc) and in terms of the way in which that norm is supposed to 'work' to influence people's discourse and behaviour.

A further significant problem concerns the 'level' at which the norm is supposed to operate. As Potter & Wetherell (1988) have pointed out, many people who avow non-prejudiced and indeed anti-racist views recurrently offer claims about particular social groups which are extremely negative. If there is a cultural norm against prejudice why are its effects limited to only some parts of a respondent's discourse , for example disclaimers? Why do they not extend to all negative expressions about black people ?

In a recent paper Billig (1988) has discussed some of the ways in which disclaimers have been understood by researchers interested in prejudice. He notes that writers frequently treat disclaimers and other denials of prejudice as superficial and lacking in psychological significance. In Adorno's (ref) work this lead to the suggestion that denials of prejudice constituted mere 'lip service' to norms of tolerance, whilst expressions of prejudice were held to exist at a psychologically deeper level. For Van Dijk (1983) there is a similar contrast between (real) personal inclinations and social norms which force the individual to be concerned with the impression which they project. Billig (1988) suggests that this contrast is not a helpful one. He points out that if denials of prejudice could be reduced to 'impression management' one would not expect members of a fascist organisation to disclaim prejudiced identities in contexts in which the expression of racist views is not discouraged. Yet members of the National Front seem to have precisely bought into the concern to present themselves as unprejudiced. Billig argues that what is needed is an ideological and rhetorical analysis of the notion of 'prejudice' itself. He suggests that the heritage of the Enlightenment means that in ordinary discourse prejudice refers to

'psychologically irrational beliefs and speakers attempt to justify, and particularly to self justify, their own rationality : therefore speakers try to make their discourse 'reasonable' by finding external reasons for discrimination' (1988,p.91)

The point is not that there is a cultural norm against prejudice which leads people to present themselves as unprejudiced (while really being so) but that the very notion of prejudice is associated with irrationality. In modern racist discourse calls to limit the immigration of non-white people, or negative evaluations of black people,

are presented as reasonable and are justified by abstract reasoning and traditional values (Billig, 1988) or by reference to features of the group itself (Potter & Wetherell, 1988; see also Gilroy, 1987)'. Perhaps this is to say that there is a 'cultural norm' (which extends beyond mere presentations of self to others) against irrationality.

Racism is generally taken to be the prototypical example of prejudice, and indeed 'prejudice' is often used as if it were synonymous with racism. Yet if we look back at extract nine we see that there are significant similarities with the 'new racist' discourse. The most obvious of these is the disclaimer - 'We've got a lot of women newscasters so you know (.) there's certainly no prejudice'. It does not take the classic form discussed by Hewitt and Stokes (1975) - it is retrospective rather than prospective - but the work it is doing in the extract in attempting to disclaim a prejudiced identity is the same as that identified by researchers studying racist talk. In the extract here the disclaimer is reinforced by the contrasts which are established between men who demand male presenters because they are prejudiced, and women who do so from force of habit and the radio station where 'there's certainly no prejudice'. It is worth noting Dale's use of the notion of 'chauvinism' and contrasting it with the term 'picked on' discussed in the consideration of extract eight. It is an interesting indication of the fact that broadcasters do have access to the more politicised notion of chauvinism², but only use it to do particular work: not as a charactersisation of the radio station's behaviour, but rather an attitude with which Radio Matchdale can be favourably contrasted.

A further notable similarity with 'new racist' discourse is to be found in Dale's claim that 'we just go along with the

consensus', where Dale presents himself as a mere victim of other people's prejudice. This 'I'm not prejudiced myself but the audience wouldn't like it' type of accounting bears such a similarity to new racist talk that it suggests that the existence of a 'new sexism' might be worth investigating.²

Accounting for Inequality (3) Sex Differences: 'Certain women can't do what the men do'

A third type of explanation for the small number of female DJs focussed on women's putative lack of the qualities and skills necessary to be a DJ. The following extract from Chapman is an example of this kind of account. We will examine it in some detail.

The interviewer's question is a response to Chapman's claim (see the first section of this chapter) that none of the tapes he receives from applicants are from women.

Extract Ten (Chapman)

Int: Do you think there are a set of reasons why women are put off from entering the DJ world ?

PC: (...)Presenters have to have a number of skills.They've got to have a a a they've got to be very very dextrous (.) they've got to be very familiar with technical equipment (.) they've got to have a personality they are used to expressing and they've got to have a good knowledge of music as well as having a good personality (.) and those things are not as advanced in my view as far as women are concerned as with men. Um um I've got to be able to sit somebody in a radio studio and they've got to understand what they're doing kind of thing as well as be a good broadcaster and women (.) in their whole background are not brought up in that kind of environment.

Two aspects of this extract are immediately striking. First that Chapman does not appear to be answering the question he was asked. Instead of explaining why he thinks women are put off from applying for DJ jobs he appears to be providing a justification for not employing women: 'I've got to be able to sit somebody in a radio studio...' In this respect his answer is defensive. The second is that his opening words are extremely formal. One important effect of Chapman's use of the passive form and of his use of a list construction (however stumbled over) of attributes needed for radio presentation is to give the impression that certain impersonal, objective and, crucially, non-gendered criteria are applied to the selection and appointment of DJs. What Chapman is suggesting is that women simply fail to meet the necessary standards.

This passage is very similar in form to a statement made by the Director of Army Recruiting, concerning the recruitment of black and Asian people to the Household Division, which is discussed by Billig (1988). In the statement the Director argues that there was no colour bar because normal rules are applied for the selection of recruits and it 'just happens' that black and Asian people fail the tests. Billig comments

Here is an example of the de-racialisation of discourse. The rules are de-racialised 'for they do not forbid black and Asian success. Those who operate the rules are not racist for they merely follow procedures in a colour blind way. In fact it is something of a mystery how Black and Asian people fail the test. The unstated implication is that there is something about the aptitude of potential recruits themselves which leads to their failure. (1988 p106)

Like the Director of Army Recruitment, Chapman gives the impression that the criteria for the selection of DJs are objective. This functions to protect him from the charge of

discrimination, for how can he be sexist if he is merely applying the objective, non-gendered criteria for selection.

It is worth looking at this point at the nature of the skills and qualities which are formulated by Chapman as necessary for DJs. What is striking about the list is both its inexplicitness and the fact that the skills mentioned do not seem to be tied to stereotypes about gender. DJs have got to be 'very very dextrous', 'very familiar with technical equipment' , have ' a personality they are used to expressing' and 'a good knowledge of music'. With the possible exception of familiarity with 'technical equipment', none of these qualities seems to fit more readily with stereotypes of masculinity than femininity. Indeed, if anything, the qualities appear to match more closely stereotypes of women: it is women, who according to stereotype, are dextrous and good at expressing themselves. The significance of this can be highlighted by rewriting the extract, substituting 'men' for 'women'.

Extract Ten (Chapman)

Int: Do you think there are a set of reasons why men are put off from entering the DJ world ?

PC: (...)Presenters have to have a number of skills.They've got to have a a a they've got to be very very dextrous (.) they've got to be very familiar with technical equipment (.) they've got to have a personality they are used to expressing and they've got to have a good knowledge of music as well as having a good personality (.) and those things are not as advanced in my view as far as men are concerned as with women. Um um I've got to be able to sit somebody in a radio studio and they've got to understand what they're doing kind of thing as well as be a good broadcaster and men (.) in

their whole background are not brought up in that kind of environment.

The point is, then, that the force of the passage derives from the list itself rather than from the specific items which comprise it. The only arguably stereotypical item is 'familiar with technical equipment' which is interesting both for its vagueness and for the fact that it suggests that potential DJs should already be working technical equipment. In order for the argument around technical equipment to be heard as implying male DJs it needs to be read in particular way, signalling stereotypical male concerns and not, for example, familiarity with dishwashers or sewing machines. Moreover the formulation of being 'familiar' with technical equipment precludes potential DJs who may be 'willing' to work it, making it stronger and reinforcing the impression that Chapman was accounting for not employing women rather than discussing why they do not apply.

As with other explanations Chapman spontaneously offered reasons to account for why women lacked the skills and qualities necessary to be DJs. In the next three subsections I will examine these reasons.

Explaining gender difference: 'Education and social process'

For Chapman there seems to be nothing mysterious about why women fail to live up to the selection criteria for DJs. He accounts for it with reference to 'lay sociological explanations' (Potter & Wetherell, 1988).

Extract Eleven (Chapman)

PC: those things in education and social process are not as advanced in my view as far as women are

concerned as with men[...] and women (.) in their whole background are not brought up in that kind of environment.

Although the language is vague, it is clear that an explanation is being constructed around notions of the contrasting socialisation and education of women and men. I am not here concerned with the 'truth' or adequacy of such an explanation but rather with what its articulation achieves for Chapman.

One of the functions of the use of this lay sociological theory for Chapman is to provide a mitigation for women's failure to meet the appointment standards for DJs. In a society where at least one strong ideological current emphasises meritocracy and individual success, failure can easily appear as blameworthy. In this extract the lay sociological theory provides a mitigation by offering reasons or causes for women's putative failure - 'education and social process' - which make it understandable and thus less potentially blameworthy. The notions of 'education' and 'social process' are ideal for doing this kind of work since they are both extremely vague and suggest no particular agency on women's parts. Yet it should be remembered that women's 'failure' is as much Chapman's construction as the mitigation for this failure. If he characterises women as lacking the skills and qualities to become DJs why should he also provide a mitigation for them?

Potter and Wetherell (1988) discovered similar simultaneous constructions of blame and mitigations in Pakeha (White New Zealanders') discourse about people from the Pacific Islands living in New Zealand, and have suggested why this pattern should occur. They argue that one of the problems for speakers of producing negative claims about a group of

people is that it can easily be heard as prejudice, something (as discussed in the second section of this chapter) the speaker may be anxious to avoid. One of the ways in which the hearability of this can be reduced is 'to reduce the force of the blamings being made' (Potter & Wetherell, 1988 p.64) And in turn one of the ways that this can be accomplished is by the use of a mitigation. In the current example Chapman could easily be heard as an out and out sexist, arguing quite simply that women are not as good as men. By providing a mitigation Chapman reduces the availability of this charge.

A second related function of Chapman's use of lay sociological theory is to emphasise the 'out-there-ness' of his characterisation of women. That is, his spontaneous production of an account for women's 'failure' actually reinforces the idea that it is because women fail to meet the selection standards that there are so few women DJs. Just as the terms 'research' and 'surveys' give the impression of facticity to claims, so the sociological notions suggest that Chapman is merely describing the world as it is. Chapman's independence from the object of discussion is reinforced by the regretful tone of his next remark:

Extract Twelve (Chapman)

Int Well I think that in the last say ten twenty years things have changed//have

PC: Yes they've changed. But they haven't changed enough.

The implication is that the world is not the way he would like it to be, but that is the way it is - regardless of his motivation.

Explaining gender difference: 'women could not do what the men do'

A contrasting explanation for why women who apply to become DJs are not taken on is offered by Goodman. It is worth pointing out that this extract directly follows Goodman's assertion that women do not apply to become DJs.

Extract Thirteen (Goodman)

DJ: There are reasons why you can't use certain women who do send tapes in (.) they don't have the right voice or (.) the right way to communicate (.) the way you want them to (.) or they won't handle the situation er (.) so (.) er a woman woman broadcaster is a rare animal. There are certain (.) I suppose because men are not so good at doing the things that women maybe can do (.) I'm not being sexist but it's true that maybe certain women er could not do what the men do (.) so they are few and far between.

If Chapman was vague about the qualities and skills which women lack and which leave them unsuitable to become DJs, Goodman is even vaguer. Aside from not having 'the right voice' (which will consider in section 4 of this chapter), women's non-employment is claimed to be due to their inability to 'handle the situation' and their failure to 'communicate the way you want them to'. There is no sense that 'the situation' or 'the way you want them to' may be gendered constructs - constructed in such a way as to exclude women. Goodman presents these things as straightforward and gender-neutral aspects of the job at which women, quite simply, are not competent.

For Goodman the explanation for this is constructed around ideas about sex differences. Let us look more closely at the passage in which Goodman makes his claims about sex

differences. It starts off 'I suppose because men are not so good at doing things that maybe women can do'. I want to argue that this claim is not equivalent to the subsequent assertion that 'certain women can't do what men do'.

On one level my argument is straightforward : after all Goodman is responding to a question about female DJs; he is not being asked to account for why there are so many male presenters but for why there are so few female presenters. All the resources of Goodman's argument are therefore being marshalled to explain the lack of female presenters, or more specifically why women who apply are not employed. In that sense Goodman's claim about men is being used as part of the explanation for why women are not appointed. This is evidenced by the explanatory connective 'because'.

But there is a second related sense in which the two claims are not equivalent. This can best be illustrated by temporarily bracketing out for analytic purposes the first phrase from the sentence. We are left with

'I'm not being sexist but it's true that maybe certain women could not do what the men do' .

Here we have a very clear example of a disclaimer at work on a statement which could easily be heard as a display of outright sexism. The disclaimer is followed by the claim 'it is true that'. In one sense the use of this phrase is evidence of Goodman's awareness of what Billig (1987) would call the argumentative or rhetorical context, an awareness that the claim he is making is part of a wider argument about what 'is true' about men and women. In another sense it serves to assert the impersonal nature of his claim, the facticity of his account, making it appear not as an aspect of his beliefs but as a feature of the world. However, the force of his statement 'certain women could not do what the men do' is such that even with the

disclaimer, the work being done by 'it's true' and the qualifier 'maybe', it could still be heard as blatantly sexist. For without the assertion about men there is no 'reasonable' explanation there is just the claim that 'certain women can't do what the men do'.

What the initial

'I suppose because men are not so good at doing the things that maybe women can do'

does is to put the claim into a context where it is less likely to be heard as outright ('unreasonable') sexism and more likely to be heard as of the 'equal but different' variety: that is, it works as a warrant of the speakers non-sexism - he seems to be saying, men are good at some things, women are good at other - different - things and it just happens that being a disc jockey is not one of them.

Explaining gender difference: 'women go into journalism'

One of the ways in which this 'equal but different' accounting is reinforced by Goodman is through a contrast with a broadcasting occupation in which there are, according to the DJs and PCs interviewed here 'a lot' of women - journalism. It is interesting to note that three of the five spontaneously drew contrasts between the lack of female DJs and the apparent plethora of female journalists. From listening to these interviews one could easily get the impression that journalism was a completely 'female-dominated' profession in which only a few men, struggling to do so, ever 'make it'. Not a view which finds much support elsewhere!

The following extract is an example of the way in which claims about the numbers of female journalists, and their

competence at their jobs, have the effect of sanctioning the non-employment of female DJs.

Extract Fourteen (Chapman)

DJ: [...] now if you look at journalism for instance (.) the past (.) five journalists we've appointed have all been women. We have a woman news editor (.) we have a more women in the newsroom. Oh all the sales staff are radio station are predominantly women um and those areas great strides have been made. Women are better than men at a (inaud) journalists job.

The tone of this extract is overwhelmingly positive - 'the past (.) five journalists we've appointed have all been women' 'great strides have been made' 'women are better than men at a (inaud) journalist's job'. Yet it should be remembered that the wider interpretative context of this extract concerns the radio station's non-employment of women as DJs. What Chapman is doing is providing a justification for this. As such his claims about the numbers of female journalists, newsroom staff, and sales personnel ³ he has employed are part of his defence against the charge of sex discrimination. By emphasising the station's positive attitude towards the employment of women, and its progressive stance in taking 'great strides' forward, the extract makes available the idea that if the radio station is not employing women as DJs it must be because women themselves are not up to it. But it does so without making this claim explicit. When Chapman argues a few lines later in the transcript that the qualities and skills needed to be a DJ 'are not as advanced in my view as far as women are concerned as with men', the list construction and mitigation (discussed earlier) mean that it is precisely not heard as baldly saying that women could not do the job.

Ironically, then, Chapman's positive sounding assertion that women are better than men at journalism actually contributes to the justification for not employing women as DJs.

This illustrates a very important point about the operation of ideology and discourse. It highlights the fact that ideology is not simply a set of propositions but can be understood primarily as a form or method of accounting. That is, it is not possible to distinguish a priori between sets of statements which are ideological and others which are non-ideological, because ideology (like all discourse) always operates in particular contexts, and derives its force and meaning from those contexts. It is perfectly possible to imagine claims about women's strengths as journalist being used to challenge the status quo of male dominance and to promote greater equality within the profession, but, as we have seen, it is also possible for the 'same' claims to be used to justify the exclusion of women from particular employment opportunities. The point is that the ideological force (if any) of the propositions does not inhere in the statement but derives from the way it is used in a specific interpretative context.

This view of ideology is significant because it challenges the notion that ideological statements are a fixed subset of all statements, which work in standard or recurrent ways and which are defined by their content or style eg. statements which present existing social relations as natural, statements which legitimate particular power structures (Thompson, 1988; McLennan, 198). What I am arguing is that ideology works far more flexibly than other writers have suggested. Propositions do not come with their ideological significance 'inscribed on their backs' (to use a famous formulation) and nor is the operation of ideology limited to discourse which naturalises, reifies or

legitimises - or any of the other familiar modes (Thompson, 1988). The ideological function of any stretch of discourse cannot be assumed. What is ideological in any given context is an analytic question.

Chapman's argument in extract fourteen is based on an implicit notion of a kind of unity, if not interchangeability, in broadcasting occupations. It is as if people decide that they want to be a sort of generic 'broadcaster' rather than a journalist, DJ, newsreader or whatever. This idea of course performs the function of making it seem unproblematic that women and men are concentrated in different sectors of broadcasting (note how Chapman pointed out that all the sales staff at the station are women) and obscures very important differences in power and status. The following extract is particularly interesting in this respect.

Extract Fifteen (Goodman)

DJ: A lot of women do actually go into journalism. They don't see themselves (.) maybe the (.) men sell themselves down the river somewhat because they see (.) they don't see (1.0) well some guys do journalism (.) but they don't quite see it as being (1.0) the kind of job it is. Women (.) think it is not serious enough for them so they become a journalist. The trouble is most of the women who become journalists are very hard bitten women (.) very masculine women (.) you don't see many feminine journalists. I've never worked with any feminine journalists. They've all been very hard bitten left wing women which doesn't make for being a good disc jockey particularly (.) whereas men are probably a bit softer and don't take such a hard line that's why we make good disc jockeys

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: Well we're more into communication than politics and the women who get interested in broadcasting tend to be more interested in politics. Any any woman who I've ever met who's been into journalism has been a hard left person with very hard views. Any woman that I've ever met on the disc jockey side has been very mild-mannered as a woman and not very politically motivated.

This is an extremely complicated extract which presents severe difficulties for analysis. It is, however, worth examining quite closely. I will consider it in three different sections.

One of the most immediately striking features of the early part of this extract is the extent to which Goodman is pausing and stumbling over what he is saying:

A lot of women do actually go into journalism. They don't see themselves (.) maybe the (.) men sell themselves down the river somewhat because they see (.) they don't see (1.0) well some guys do journalism (.) but they don't quite see it as being (1.0) the kind of job it is. Women (.) think it is not serious enough for them so they become a journalist.

What Goodman seems to be arguing is that women become journalists because they do not consider being a DJ as a sufficiently serious occupation. As I noted earlier implicit in this argument is the notion that there is some sort of unity in broadcasting: women decide that they want to be 'broadcasters' and then having discounted a DJ's job as a possibility opt for journalism. One gets the impression that most journalists are women, that it is an occupation in which few males are to be found. This, Goodman suggests, is because 'men sell themselves down the river somewhat' and they 'don't quite see it as being

(1.0) the kind of job it is'. Significantly, then, Goodman seems to be valuing journalism more highly than being a DJ. This makes the lack of women DJs seem less blameworthy. Journalism is presented as something that men could aspire to if only they did not underestimate their own abilities or if only they recognised the true nature of the job and thus realised that they were capable of it. It is an interesting reversal of the common characterisations of men and women that men are presented as lacking the confidence and knowledge about the job to become journalist, whilst women are presented as confident, serious and implicitly knowledgeable about what journalism entails. Indeed, DJing is not serious enough for women. It is interesting to note, in passing, that one of the very reasons which was used in the 1960s and 1970s to prevent women from being newsreaders - that they were not serious enough and were lacking in authority - is here reversed. But it is still used with the effect of justifying women's exclusion from broadcasting.

Thus far the broad parameters of Goodman's argument seem similar to that advanced by Chapman - that is, women do not become DJs because they opt instead for journalism. In the next passage, however, the argument departs radically from Chapman's claims. Where Chapman claimed that women make good journalists rather than DJs, Goodman implies that women make neither good journalists nor good DJs.

The trouble is most of the women who become journalists are very hard bitten women (.) very masculine women (.) you don't see many feminine journalists. I've never worked with any feminine journalists. They've all been very hard bitten left wing women which doesn't make for being a good disc jockey particularly (.) whereas men are probably a bit softer and don't take such a hard line that's why we make good disc jockeys

There are two particular aspects of this passage that I want to consider. First, the structure of Goodman's argument and second his characterisations of female journalists.

What is fascinating about this passage is the way that it is constructed around four ideas.

1. Women become journalists instead of DJs
2. Women who become journalists are 'hard bitten' 'masculine' and 'left wing'.
3. These 'qualities' are not good for DJs
4. Therefore women do not make good DJs.

The argument may appear to be logical (indeed it should be noted that it seems much more structured and logical in this distillation than in its actual messy formulation by Goodman) but the surface impression of logic breaks down on closer inspection. Goodman is arguing that the qualities he attributes to female journalists are not appropriate for DJs, but this does not account for why women do not make 'good' DJs, but only, in his terms, for why the women who become journalists would not be good DJs. The argument only becomes clear if we assume that Goodman is talking about all women or about women who go into broadcasting generally (rather than simply journalism). That Goodman is referring to more than simply female journalists is reinforced by the contrast he draws with men as a whole (rather than male DJs or journalists): 'whereas men are probably a bit softer and don't take such a hard line that's why we make good disc jockeys'.

The extract is interesting because in attempting to explain why women do not make good DJs Goodman characterises their skill as journalists extremely negatively. And in turn the

negative qualities he attributes to female journalists are then used to justify women's non-employment as DJs.

The words and phrases Goodman chooses to characterise female journalists are fascinating : 'very hard bitten', 'very masculine women' , 'left wing', 'hard line'. What is interesting about these characterisations, and particularly the contrasts between 'hard' women and 'softer' men, and women 'into politics' and men 'into communication' is that they reverse what are seen as the stereotypical ways of describing men and women, reflected in the contents of the standard lists used in social psychological research on sex categories - where maleness/femaleness is mapped onto agency/communion or instrumentality/expressivity.

Just as I argued that the operation of ideology is far more flexible than has been assumed, so I want to suggest that constructions of gender work in similar fragmentary, contradictory and flexible ways. As Susan Condor (1987) has argued, in naturally occurring discourse people tend not to assign particular characteristics exclusively to one sex or other. A rigid approach which assumes that they do may paradoxically lead us to underestimate the pervasiveness of gender as a symbolic system in everyday life, for it assumes that when a man is not described in terms of competence or a woman not described in terms of warmth and expressiveness, gender is not salient. This passage from Goodman illustrates very clearly that this is not the case - gender could hardly be more salient !

Condor (1987) has also argued that adjectives do not have a fixed meaning independent of their gender ascription. She illustrates this with the example of the word 'aggressive' showing that it has a rather different meaning when applied to women than when it is applied to men. This point is extremely pertinent here when we think about Goodman's use

of the words 'hard' and 'soft' and particularly 'masculine' and 'feminine' which are being used as adjectives. Their meaning could hardly be more different when applied to men and to women ! However I would go further than Condor and suggest that it is not simply the gender ascription of a word which gives it its meaning and force, but also its use in a specific context. It is not difficult, for example, to imagine an interpretative context in which the assertion 'he's soft' is used to dismiss or derogate a male. And similarly 'she's hard' (or more likely 'she's tough') could easily be part of the discursive work of praising a woman. The point is that in this context the words are being used to diminish and insult women in order to justify not employing them. The words and phrases used are particularly well-suited to this purpose since they are at once extremely graphic and very vague - 'hard bitten', 'masculine', 'into communication', 'very hard views' - and thus resistant to challenge.

The final section of extract fifteen (which follows the interviewers laughter) makes explicit what had hitherto been implicit - that Goodman is talking about 'women who get interested in broadcasting' rather than simply female journalists. Once again Goodman draws a contrast between women who are 'interested in politics' and men who are 'into communication'. Finally he claims

'Any any woman who I've ever met who's been into journalism has been a hard left person with very hard views. Any women that I've ever met on the DJ side has been very mild-mannered as a woman and not very politically motivated'

This serves to reinforce two ideas. First that 'softness', 'mild-manneredness' and lack of political interests really are the qualities needed to be a DJ. And second, and most importantly, to support his account that this is no discrimination against women, but simply that most of the women interested in broadcasting tend to be the wrong sort of women for DJing. After all, he seems to be saying, when they are mild-mannered and non-political they do make it.

Accounting for Inequality (4): Women's Voices: too 'shrill' too 'dusky' and just plain 'wrong'

In the previous section we saw that one of the reasons Goodman gave for not being able to 'use certain women who do send tapes in' was that they 'don't have the right voice'. It is this type of explanation for the non-employment of female DJs that we will consider in this section. In making this claim Goodman placed himself within a long tradition in British broadcasting. Women's exclusion from particular types of employment within the media on the basis that their voices are 'unsuitable' is now well-documented (Ross, 1977; Karpf, 1980; Kramarae, 1989).

In a recent article Cheris Kramarae (1989) has detailed the long history of women's exclusion from presentation jobs on radio, and argued that the most frequently cited reason for this is the 'unsuitability' of their voices. Early on, managers within the BBC made the decision that women were not to be employed as announcers. Indeed only 'men of culture and knowledge with good articulation and accurate pronunciation' (Kramarae, 1989 p.247) were to be presenters. They were ruling class 'gentlemen' who actually wore morning or dinner jackets whilst they broadcast (Briggs, 1965) and were to be identified not as individuals but as the corporate image of the BBC.

The BBC employed no females as announcers during the 1920s and 1930s and the situation was similar in the United States (Kramarae, 1989). The outbreak of war led to some women being taken on for the first time as announcers, though, significantly, not as newsreaders. In 1942 the *Evening News* reported :

'The old prejudice against women announcers has disappeared since the war, and listeners, as well as the BBC, have decided that announcing - as distinct from newsreading - is a job that women can handle with ability and charm'. (quoted in Kramarae, 1989 p.247)

However, within a few years of the end of the war job advertisements for BBC announcers indicated that only men were wanted.

Kramarae studied thousands of internal memos from within the BBC and shows that in addition to assertions about women's 'frailty', 'self consciousness' and lack of appeal to other women, the idea that women's voices were unsuitable was recurrently drawn upon to legitimate women's exclusion. Justifications for this centred on their 'lack of authority' and the idea that the technical equipment of radio carried men's voices better than women's. The arguments also had a class inflection:

'The higher pitched female voices could not hold the listeners attention for any length of time, while the lower pitched voices were frequently vehicles for an overly polished, ultra-sophisticated delivery that sounded phoney'. (from The Announcers Handbook quoted in Kramarae, 1989 p.248)

Women, it seems, could not win. Mileva Ross (1977) found similar reasons being offered by the BBC as recently as the mid-1970s for their refusal to employ women as newsreaders. She showed how the most pervasive arguments were that

women's voices were 'too high' or 'lacked authority'. In the words of Jim Black, then editor of Radio Four:

'If a woman could read the news as well as a man then she could do it. But a newsreader needs to have reliability, consistency and authority. A woman may have one or two of these things but not all three. If a woman were to read the news no one would take it seriously' (quoted in Ross, 1977)

As Ross wryly comments, did he expect us to fall about laughing or just to disbelieve it? His colleague Robin Scott was of a similar opinion. He said it was 'unnatural' for women to read the news:

'There's always bad news about and it's much easier for a man to deal with that kind of material' (quoted in Ross, 1977).

The concerted efforts of the feminist campaigning group Women In Media lead to a small handful of women being appointed as newsreaders by 1975. Jim Black spoke of 'an awful lot of special training' which had 'come to fruition' leaving two female newsreaders to ~~take~~^{fill} their place alongside their fifteen male colleagues. Black commented:

'I think we have got the right mix now. I don't want Radio Four to sound all-female...If you have two on it sounds a lot' (quoted in Ross, 1977)

All the DJs and PCs interviewed in this research found women's voices worthy of comment. Although one remark by Toller seems to be a positive one - he says that he does not think the Radio Two presenter Gloria Hunneyford has a shrill voice - the mere fact that he felt it worthy of comment is significant. There were no comparable remarks about men's voices. Below, we examine the rather more lengthy comments of Goodman when asked to elaborate upon his claim that women's voices are 'not right'.

Extract Sixteen (Goodman)

DJ: As I said to you before (.) people are sensitive to voice (.) they pick up a lot in a voice. They can see it as exuding friendliness sarcasm angriness or whatever and if it happens to be (.) and if a woman's voice sounds grating or high (.) shrill then that will switch them off. if it sounds dusky and sexy (1.0) unfortunately that switches them on (.) now Marie has got a dusky sexy deep voice perfect for it (.) she's actually nothing like that when you meet her (.) she's a very sweet lady but she's not like that but people are conned totally by the voice.

The extract is similar to that discussed in section two of this chapter in that Goodman is involved in justifying not employing women as DJs by reference to what listeners like or dislike. However whereas in section two the listeners' resistance to female DJs was characterised as 'chauvinist' or 'stick in the mud', and the DJ presented himself as regretfully just 'going along with the consensus', here listeners' putative reservations about (some) female voices are characterised as perfectly reasonable. What could be heard as prejudice is recast as 'sensitivity'. Listeners' sensitivity, unlike their chauvinism, is not to be regretted. The radio station merely translates this sensitivity into appointment decisions.

One of the ways in which listeners' sensitivity to women's voices is brought off as reasonable by Goodman is through the subtle linking of notions of sensitivity to particular emotional or motivational states (angriness, friendliness, sarcasm) and sensitivity to particular vocal pitches. Goodman starts by asserting that people see voices as 'exuding friendliness sarcasm angriness or whatever' and goes on 'and if a woman's voice sounds grating or high (.)

shrill then that will switch them off' The 'reasonableness' of this second phrase is effectively achieved by its ostensible connection to the first. For whilst sensitivity to friendliness or sarcasm seems admirable, 'sensitivity' to pitch may betoken prejudice.

It is worth briefly considering the way that pairs of words are used to characterise women's voices. The first thing to note is that the notion of what is 'shrill' or 'dusky' is not unproblematic: these are not neutral words to describe pitch - whatever a neutral word may be. Indeed Goodman starts by characterising some women's voices as 'high' but then substitutes a word which has far more richly negative connotations - shrill. To object to (or be 'sensitive' to) 'high' voices could be heard as ~~blameworthy~~, but to object to 'shrill' voices seems perfectly reasonable - this is a word which contains an evaluation (cf. Wowk, 1984).

Second we should note the way the second word in each pair is used to add to and to describe the first - giving the impression that, for example, dusky is sexy. I want to argue that it is not insignificant that the two examples used seem to fit almost perfectly with two commonly used stereotypes of women - the 'nag' and the 'femme fatale'. This is not to imply, however, that these stereotypes are somehow static and non-changing.

What Goodman seems to be doing is presenting a 'no-win' situation for women. If they sound 'grating and shrill', he argues, then that 'switches listeners off'. This phrase has a fascinating double meaning. Goodman may mean simply that 'shrill' or 'grating' female voices displease people, turn them off. But his phrase also serves to remove all agency and responsibility for switching the radio off from listeners, and places it instead on women's voices. In this way people's sensitivity comes to seem perfectly

reasonable; it is women's voices in themselves that do the switching off, and are therefore blameworthy.

If a woman sounds 'dusky and sexy' 'that switches them on'. One might imagine that this is exactly what the radio station would want but Goodman treats it ambivalently describing it as 'unfortunate', but also describing Marie's 'dusky sexy deep' voice as 'perfect for it'. This becomes explicable if we understand the 'it' for which Marie is apparently 'perfect' as her own show (which is broadcast between 11pm and 1am) rather than more primetime radio presentation. It also illuminates a further nuance of meaning for the word 'dusky' - suggesting appropriateness for nighttime broadcasting. More generally, it seems that Goodman's ambivalence about 'switching them on' is due to its sexual connotations. This will be discussed in more detail in the next section of the chapter.

Goodman's remarks about Marie are also interesting for three other reasons. At one level they serve simply as a reminder in a critical interpretative context that the radio station does have a female presenter (albeit only one who is relegated to the wee small hours). By explicitly praising Marie's presentation style, Goodman reduces the hearability of prejudice. This also accounts for his ambivalence: for he is both justifying the non-employment of women as DJs and attending to the possibility that he may be heard as sexist.

Secondly the passage is interesting because it supports the idea raised earlier that 'dusky' and 'sexy' are tied to the notion of the 'femme fatale'. What Goodman seems to be saying is that she sounds dusky and sexy, but actually she is not - she is no 'femme fatale'.

Finally the passage is significant because it reasserts the importance of voice - 'people are conned by the voice totally'. However it does so in such a way as to completely undermine Goodman's earlier claim that people are 'sensitive to voices' and can 'pick up a lot in a voice'. For listeners so easily 'conned', the notion of 'sensitivity' as a justification for not employing women who apply begins to look ^omore than a little thin.

It is tempting to suggest that the only way a woman can succeed is by sounding like a man. And indeed, this is what Goodman seems to have concluded.

Extract Seventeen (Goodman)

DJ: they they build a mental picture so it's really your voice (.) if your voice is right. For some women that can be hard because their voice is naturally higher.

If we leave aside the considerable debate over the supposed differences in the pitch of male and female voices (see for example Spender 1980) what is clear from this short extract is that the male voice is being used as the norm against which other voices are judged for their appropriateness. Implicit in the extract is the idea that a low, male voice is somehow naturally right for DJs. It is presented not as a mere opinion held by Goodman but as a fact, and it is against this norm that becoming a DJ can be judged 'hard' for 'some women'. This extract is a very good example of what has been called the 'male as norm' phenomenon (Spender, 1985; Griffin, 1985). Significantly, although the male voice is presented as the 'natural' or 'right' voice for a DJ it is presented as non-gendered.

A similar comment about the right pitch and tone of a DJs voice was made by Lightfoot. The following extract is a

response to a question about the characteristics a PC looks for in a DJ. It is worth noting that when Lightfoot was asked about the small number of female DJs, discussions of voice did not feature at all in his replies, yet it figured prominently in his discussions of the qualities needed by DJs.

Extract Eighteen Lightfoot)

Int: Can (.) you give me a list of the characteristics that make a good DJ (.) that you look out for in a DJ

PC: Um the voice is the most important thing (.) obviously their speech has got to be very clear (.) you've also got to have a certain tone in your voice a mid to bass range in your voice to be very warm or (...) have a boyish sound to your voice that women like anyway and that men don't find challenging because it's boyish.

Here a 'mid to bass range' and a 'boyish voice' are presented as equally fundamental characteristics for being a DJ as clear speech. Yet Lightfoot did not even mention the issue of voice when trying to account for the lack of female DJs. This illustrates very clearly that discourse is used actively and constructively to achieve various interactional and ideological functions. But Lightfoot did more than assert that DJs should be 'boyish' ; he also explained why. It is, he argues, because women like boyish voices and men do not find them challenging. In order to understand his explanation we need to examine how he and the others interviewed characterised the role of the DJ in relation to their audience. This was discussed in the last chapter and is considered further in the next section.

Accounting for Inequality (5) : 'It's always been considered housewife radio'

Thus far in the chapter the analysis has been focused on responses to direct questions from the interviewer about the lack of female DJs (with the exception of the last extract discussed in section 4). In this section I want to look at three extracts in which the broadcasters are discussing a range of other issues - the role of the DJ, the nature of the audience, and listener research. I will argue that in the DJs and PCs responses to questions about these issues we find another type of explanation for the small number of female presenters - an explanation which is centred around the very nature and style of ILR presentation itself.

The first extract comes from the DJ and PC Dale. Dale is describing his image of 'his' listener; the person to whom, he says, he talks when broadcasting.

Extract Nineteen (Dale)

DJ: She's female (.) she's 35 um (2.0) she's probably got a son like me. Um//

Int: A bit like you ((laughs))

DJ: Yeah ((laughs))

Int: Can you enlarge on that.

DJ: No ((laughs)) I'd rather not.

(...)

Int: Why do you see her as a woman 35 with a son like you ? There must be//

DJ: Well I think ((laughs)) mid-morning radio mid-morning radio has always been considered housewife radio. It isn't to the same extent now (.) um actually in some periods of the morning you have more men listening than women. It was considered housewife radio because the man went out to work and the woman stayed at home but now a lot of women work and men are at home because of unemployment and whatever (.) or listening at work. So your ideas of

1977 mid-morning radio and Glen Campbell records (.) you can't really apply them to 1987 but I think to a certain extent (.) I think I still go for a female audience. I mean you flirt with them (.) that's exactly what you do for three hours. But what you've not got to do is to do it to the extent that it annoys the m,en listening. What you've got to be is a brother to the men listening 9.) you've got to be a son to the mother's listening (.) a potential boyfriend to the girls listening (.) you've got to be a big brother to the little kids listening (.) you've got to be (2.0). All listeners are part of your family and you've got to find your role and associate with them.

In this extract Dale is not talking about the absence of female DJs, nor even apparently orienting to this issue, but it seems to me that his construction of mid-morning radio as 'housewife radio' suggests another type of account for the small number of female presenters - namely that a woman would be unable to play the 'appropriate' role in relation to an audience made up predominantly of 'housewives'.

The construction of Dale's argument is fascinating. When asked to justify seeing 'his' listener as a thirty-five year old woman with a son like him he starts by explaining it in terms of what he claims is a tradition for mid-morning radio: 'Well I think (.) mid-morning radio mid-morning radio has always been considered housewife radio'. Immediately, however, he qualifies this: 'It isn't to the same extent now'. He then goes on to offer evidence in support of his justification.

'um actually in some periods of the morning you have more men listening than women. It was considerec

housewife radio because the man went out to work and the woman stayed at home but now a lot of women work and men are at home because of unemployment and whatever (.) or listening at work'.

What is interesting about this passage is that it threatens to completely undermine his initial assertion - if 'housewife radio' is characterised by a largely female audience listening in the home, then a state of affairs where large numbers of women are employed outside the home, and male listeners routinely outnumber female listeners would seem to stretch, to say the least, the boundaries of this categorisation.

However, for Dale, what is undermined is not the notion of 'housewife radio' per se but a particular conception of 'housewife radio'.

'So your ideas of 1977 mid-morning radio and Glen Campbell records (.) you can't really apply them to 1987 (.) but I think to a certain extent (.) I think I still go for a female audience'

What Dale seems to be doing then is distancing himself from a risible, negative and much-parodied image of 'housewife radio', summed up in caricature by the idea of endless Glen Campbell records, whilst simultaneously buying into the idea that it is legitimate to 'go for' a female audience. In this context his displays of 'knowledge' or awareness concerning both the stations audience research and more general social trends serve to reinforce the idea that he does not see his show as being part of the old-fashioned and unsophisticated tradition of housewife radio. I am aware that things have changed, he seems to be saying, and my show is nothing like 1977 mid-morning radio with its Glen Campbell records. However, an interpretative problem

remains for Dale for he still has to explain why he addresses a thirty-five year old woman when he broadcasts. Having argued that notions of 1977 mid-morning radio are not applicable to the late 1980s he comments 'but I think to a certain extent (.) I think I still go for a female audience'. Using vague and tentative language Dale is claiming that it is reasonable to address a female audience.

In the interview Dale attempts to accomplish the establishment of a critical distance from the negative parodied elements of 'housewife radio', whilst simultaneously claiming that 'to a certain extent' mid-morning radio can still be considered 'housewife radio' and that it is legitimate to assume (and to address) a female audience. But on closer examination the passage becomes problematic seeming both to contradict Dale's claim that audiences are no longer predominantly female and also to simply be a reassertion of the very issue for which he has been asked to account - namely why he addresses a female/females. It would have been interesting if the interviewer had challenged him on this issue (but it is worth noting that her initial question in this extract was itself such a challenge to a spontaneously offered weak justification for 'talking to' a thirty-five year old woman on-air).

Dale continued immediately

'I mean you flirt with them (.) that's exactly what you do for three hours. But what you've not got to do is to do it to the extent that it annoys the men listening'.

In this passage Dale tells us something about the concept of 'housewife radio' in the 1980s as he sees it - namely that it is characterised by a particular style of address

and a particular type of discourse - 'you flirt with them'. The change of pronoun from 'I' used throughout the extract to 'you' in this passage may be significant. Whereas previously Dale was trying to distinguish his own show from other types of radio presentation which could be viewed negatively (by a young almost-certainly-feminist interviewer) here he is orientating to possible criticism by implying that 'flirting' with the female audience is a general phenomenon, not something which is unique to him - that is not something for which he alone can be held accountable, but something which can be justified in terms of wider norms for radio presentation. (There are some parallels with his assertion in the passive form at the beginning of this extract 'it's always been considered housewife radio, where by adding qualifications to the way it 'is considered' generally, Dale can come to seem quite progressive.)

In this passage Dale also explains how he deals with the 'fact', which he highlighted earlier, that mid-morning radio is no longer the sole province of a listenership of women in the home: 'what you've not got to do is to do it to the extent that it annoys the men listening'. That is, you can talk mainly to women and indeed 'flirt with them for three hours' (the entire duration of the show) but 'not to the extent that it annoys the men listening'. One of the implications of this is to suggest that being the subject of three hours constant sexual innuendo and banter does not annoy women. Indeed, as I argued in Chapter Six, Dale gives the impression that this is actually what women want. This notion is reinforced by the final part of the extract:

'What you've got to be is a brother to the men listening (.) you've got to be a son to the mothers listening (.) a potential boyfriend to the girls listening (.) you've got to be a big brother to the

little kids listening (.) you've got to be (2.0) All listeners are part of your family and you've got to find your role and associate with them.'

Dale seems to be doing recuperative work on the impression he has given that he only addresses women - ignoring men except to make sure that he has not flirted to such an extent that it has annoyed them. What he seems to be saying is that flirting with female listeners is only part of a whole pattern of different ways of relating to listeners. 'All listeners are part of your family and you've got to find your role and associate with them'. It is striking, however, that whilst the terms used to describe relationships with male listeners are familial, those used to describe relationships with female listeners are romantic or sexual - 'a potential boyfriend to the girls listening'. Even Dale's claim that 'you've got to be a son to the mothers listening' has something oedipal about it when combined with the idea that 'you flirt with them for three hours'. Dale may conceive of women listeners in terms of family role - eg 'mothers' rather than 'women' , compared with 'men' - but certainly there is little that is familial about the way he claims to 'associate' with them.

It is this set of arguments about 'housewife radio' aimed at women and characterised by an exclusively romantic or sexual address which together seem to constitute at least the seeds of another possible explanation for why women are not employed as DJs at the station. Although Dale does not draw on these ideas to account for the lack of female DJs, the notion of 'housewife radio' is clearly one which is available to him to do this discursive work. Dale may use it in a different context - for example talking with colleagues, or perhaps with a male interviewer. It is significant that he does not use it to account for the lack

of women DJs, implying as it does a deliberate policy not to employ women.

The notion of 'housewife radio' as a style of radio presentation based on sexual banter and innuendo and making constant links between romance and domesticity has been discussed by several writers (Ross, 1977; Karpf, 1980; LRW, 1983; Coward, 1984; Baehr & Ryan, 1984; Barnard, 1989). From the perspective of this literature, Dale's description of the listener he imagines when he is talking on air emerges as being far from idiosyncratic, but rather represents a version of the composite 'housewife' listener known in the radio world as 'Doreen' (see Chapter 6).

The idea that discrimination against women in radio can be partly explained by the enduring tradition of 'housewife radio' has received some discussion (eg. Reynolds, 1979; Karpf, 1980; LRW, 1983; Barnard, 1989). Anne Karpf conducted several interviews with radio broadcasters. The Executive Director of BBC Radio One claimed:

'The audience does tend to accept men more readily. there are more women and girl listeners than men, and you cannot deny that a young girl (sic) with a couple of small children at home will more easily relate to a man. It's like having a male friend in the house while the husband's away, without the obvious repercussions' (quoted in Karpf, 1980 p.146).

Karpf argues:

This is the key to the sandwich of patter and music which fills daytime programmes: the risque innuendo fired by male DJs to a supposedly all-female public could not be replicated by a female DJ, even to a male audience, because it would denote a level of sexual aggression unacceptable in a woman.' (Karpf, 1980 p.146)

This point has been reinforced by Gillian Reynolds, a radio critic, who hypothetically reversed the gender roles to imagine a female DJ :

'If a man came on the phone to dedicate a record to his wife who was at work, could she say things like "All on your own then ? I pass your house on my way home ,I'll nip in for a cup of tea. Ho ho." She could not, she would not. Men can, men do, and women expect them to, even if it's all fantasy. Men in broadcasting are expected to be surrogate lovers, all bold flirtation and innuendo. Women are not. and that... is why you'll only ever find us in the earnest corners of radio' (Reynolds,1979)

Whilst Dale only spoke of 'housewife radio' in relation to the mid-morning show, a similar argument was put forward by the PC Chapman in relation to ILR more generally. This extract is part of a response given by Chapman to a question about what makes 'a good show'.

Extract Twenty (Chapman)

PC: The personality of the presenter of the presenter doing the show is the key thing

Int: Mm well what kind of personality do you go for? You said bright and cheerful is there// anything else?

PC: (...) You've got to try and be all things to all people. Older women like to think of the presenter as somebody they can mother (.) men would like to think of the presenter as someone they could go and have a chat with down the pub (.) younger women like to fantasise about the presenter (.) um younger men like to think of him as one of their mates who they might like to go to a football match with so everybody builds up an image in their own mind and you've got to try and fulfil that by having a real human being with a real personality who responds to them and is aware of the area that they're broadcasting in.

In this extract the notion that the DJ plays the role he does because this is what the listeners want (cf Chapter 6) is even more explicit than in the extract from Dale eg. 'older women like to think of the presenter as somebody they can mother' , 'younger women like to fantasise about the presenter'. The similarities with Dale's claims about what it is the listeners want or expect of the presenter are striking. Again the ways in which women are deemed to want to relate to the presenter are maternal and/or sexual, and again men are claimed to want a presenter who is a 'mate' - brother, drinking companion or someone they could go to a football match with.

As in extract nineteen, these assertions about what listeners want would seem to preclude the appointment of a female. But Chapman does not draw on this idea at all when asked about the absence of female DJs at the station. Indeed when the interviewer asks him a few minutes later whether he believes that a female DJ would be readily accepted by listeners he draws on an individualist repertoire (cf Billig et al, 1988 chp.8) to argue that it is not gender that is important but the particular personality of the individual presenter.

Extract Twenty-one (Chapman)

PC: My view would be that there's nothing that shows that it would make any difference at all it was purely on whether that woman like that man has got the right style personality for the programme and that that individual liked it.

Aside from the interest in this form of accounting in its own right (Billig et al, 1988), the contrast between this extract and extract twenty is fascinating. It demonstrates very clearly the situated, active and orientated nature of discourse and highlights the value of an approach which is

sensitive to variability and contradiction and takes these things seriously as interesting theoretical phenomena..

The final extract that I will consider in this section differs from the previous ones in that in it Lightfoot makes explicit the fact that the station's conception of 'housewife radio' is one of the reasons why there are no female DJs. Lightfoot has been talking about listener research:

Extract Twenty-two (Lightfoot)

PC: and we obviously want a housewife disc jockey on the mid-morning show (.) not as much as it used to be but the person on the mid-morning has got to appeal to the housewives who are at home plus the people in offices so he's again steering a careful line because what appeals to a woman at home isn't quite the same as what appeals to an office worker or somebody working in a factory. But you want somebody who (.) women like the voice of basically

Int: Mm hmmm

PC: I I a philosophy we've had here which is completely unwritten but (.) something which we'd probably all agree with is is that if a broadcaster appeals to women he'll appeal to men (.) but a broadcaster who appeals to men won't necessarily appeal to women

Int: Mmm

PC: which is one of the reasons why women aren't there aren't many women DJs on the radio. We haven't actually got any women DJs here as such now (.) we have Ann-Marie who does present programmes but not on a regular basis and this is why most stations haven't got a female presenter or they find one at night like Radio One.

Int: Do you think then that women wouldn't really want to listen to a female presenter ?

PC: Um (.) I don't think it's as definite as that (.) I think though that it's safer to put a man on and also I get all the applications to come in here (.) we get about four hundred a year we've had none from women in the last year.

This is a fascinating extract. The first thing worth noting is that Lightfoot presents the idea that the station would want a 'housewife DJ' on in the morning as 'obvious'. This is both an indication of the pervasiveness of the notion of 'housewife radio' as a way of talking about radio station decisions, and a way for Lightfoot to distance himself personally from what could be seen as a controversial and sexist assertion. The need for a 'housewife DJ' is depicted not as a decision by Lightfoot but as an obvious feature of the world. By asserting the obviousness of the need to have a 'housewife DJ' Lightfoot deflects any potential criticism or challenge.

Like Dale, Lightfoot argues that the need to appeal to 'housewives' is 'not as much as it used to be', but nevertheless it still exists. The similarity between the forms of Dale and Lightfoot's arguments is striking, as is clear from the three-part presentation of their arguments below

1. Dale: 'it's always been considered housewife radio'

Lightfoot: 'we obviously want a housewife disc jockey on the mrning show'

2. Dale: 'It isn't to the same extent now'

Lightfoot: 'not as much as it used to be'

3. Dale: ' but I think to a certain extent (.)I think I still go for a female audience'

Lightfoot: ' but the person has to appeal to housewives who are at home'

The second point of especial interest is Lightfoot's claim that the DJ has to steer 'a careful line' because he 'has to appeal to housewives who are at home plus the people in offices'. What is interesting is Lightfoot's assumption that housewives constitute a group set apart from the rest of society, with very different interests: 'what appeals to a woman at home isn't the same as what appeals to an office worker or somebody working in a factory'. This assumption is reflected in the station's audience research which breaks listeners down into men, women and housewives (and then further subdivides the 'housewife' category into 'housewives with children at home' 'housewives without children at home' -see Appendix). As well as suggesting that housewives constitute an entirely separate group, distinguishable from men and women working outside the home, the passage, like those discussed earlier in this section, reinforces the notion that the DJ is simply serving listeners, with all the complexities about attending to their different interests that this implies. It is notable that any discourse about the other group which the station serves, the advertisers, is conspicuous by its absence (cf Chapter 6).

Having differentiated 'housewives' from other women (and men), in the next passage the category 'housewife' begins to blur. In fact, it is collapsed into the category 'women' from which it was originally distinct; wanting someone who 'will appeal to housewives' becomes wanting a person 'who women will like the voice of'. Again there are parallels with Dale in extract nineteen, who shifted from arguing that mid-morning radio was 'housewife radio' to claiming to 'go for a female audience'.

In the next section of the extract Lightfoot talks about the 'unwritten philosophy' of the station

'if a broadcaster appeals to women he'll appeal to men (.) but a broadcaster who appeals to men won't necessarily appeal to women (...) which is one of the reasons why there aren't many women DJs on the radio'

This is an extremely interesting passage. What Lightfoot is arguing is that women listeners do not want to hear female DJs. But the passage is constructed in such a way as to avoid such a bald, unequivocal statement. Indeed the very assertion that is needed to complete the sense of the argument is left implicit. Lightfoot's argument makes three explicit propositions:

1. 'If a broadcaster appeals to women he'll appeal to men.
2. 'a broadcaster who appeals to men won't necessarily appeal to women'
3. 'which is one of the reasons why there aren't many women DJs'.

It is worth noting that even the use of pronouns is significant in this passage: 'If a broadcaster appeals to women he'll appeal to men', compared with 'a broadcaster who appeals to men won't necessarily appeal to women'. The broadcaster who appeals to women is , it seems, male. whilst the person who appeals to men has not had their gender specified in advance. The third proposition, however, only makes sense when we 'read in' the idea that the station therefore chooses presenters who will appeal to women - something which Lightfoot claimed earlier, but which is only implicit here. Thus between proposition number two and three we can insert another proposition 'so we take on presenters who will appeal to women'.

The type of accounting used in this extract is similar to that discussed in the second section of this chapter,

where DJs argued that listeners did not want to listen to female DJs and that the radio station (regretfully) simply went along with the consensus of opinion. Here, however, rather than simply claiming that listeners do not want to hear a female DJ the arguments are constructed around a notion of female 'consumer sovereignty' which is tied to a set of assumptions about 'housewife radio'. Finally it is women who are deemed not to want women DJs, in contrast to men who are presented as considerably more tolerant. This is a significant difference.

Lightfoot's phrasing in this passage is noteworthy. It is bereft of any agency: 'there aren't many women DJs on the radio'. The obviousness of the need for a male, 'housewife DJ' and the absence of any female DJs at the station are presented as related together in a way which is devoid of any human intervention whatsoever; Lightfoot has completely glossed over his own role as someone responsible for appointments at the station. Moreover, he argues that this 'unwritten philosophy' and reason for not employing women is not unique, but common to 'most stations':

'which is why most stations haven't got a female presenter or they find one at night like Radio One'

Again by indicating that Radio Matchdale is simply one of the majority of radio stations which do not employ women presenters (and which do not employ them for this reason) Lightfoot deflects criticism from Radio Matchdale, and from himself as the person at the station responsible for taking on staff. Don't take this as evidence of sexism, Lightfoot seems to be saying, it is a widespread and common practice. It is notable that this type of accounting/disclaiming is based on the assumption that prejudice of all kinds is an individual phenomenon. It is completely lacking in any notion of sexism or racism being structural or

institutionalised, so that evidence that a practice is widespread seems sufficient to deflect potential charges of prejudice.

I noted earlier that Lightfoot's argument that women DJs are not employed because of the need to have a 'housewife DJ' or a male who will 'appeal to women' is extremely complex. The final section of the extract is thus particularly interesting because the interviewer asks Lightfoot for an explicit confirmation of his claim that women would not want to listen to a female DJ.

Int: Do you think then that women wouldn't really want to listen to a female presenter?

PC: Um (.) I don't think it's as definite as that (.) I think though that it's safer to put a man on and also I get all the applications to come in here (.) we get about four hundred a year we've had none from women in the last year.

Lightfoot's reply is equivocal. It's not 'as definite as that', but 'it's safer to put a man on'. For the first time Lightfoot implicitly acknowledges the role of radio stations in actively choosing to employ male rather than female presenters. Indeed this is the only example in the entire data corpus in which any of the DJs or PCs suggests that radio stations have any direct control whatsoever over the absence of women DJs. However, Lightfoot quickly attends to the possible implications of this, and adds: 'I get all the applications to come in here (...) and we've had none from women in the last year.' In this way the plethora of male DJs and the absence of female DJs becomes not the result of a series of decisions to 'play safe' but an exigency of a situation in which, we are told once again, no women apply.

Explaining Change: 'it'll turn around' -

This chapter has been concerned with how DJs and PCs at Radio Matchdale account for the dramatic gender inequalities at their station and in radio more generally. In this final section I want to consider how the broadcasters interviewed saw change coming about in the gender make-up of radio. None of those interviewed were asked explicitly to talk about this, but three of them did so spontaneously. One of the most interesting aspects of these accounts for change is the way they tie-in with the types of accounts offered for the lack of female DJs. The broadcasters talk about social change is not separate from these accounts but is a constitutive part of the accounting work they are doing.

Extract Twenty-three (Toller)

Int: Why do you feel there are so few female DJs?

DJ: I don't know. I mean I really don't know. I mean I myself would love to hear more female voices (1.0) we had someone here until quite recently called Yvonne Hills who was (.) it's just such a lovely contrast to what is I suppose what is still a male dominated (.) um thing you know. I think it's getting better I mean there was a day when there wouldn't be any female broadcasters full stop but they're sort of coming (.) you've got Gloria Hunneyford (2.0) ofcourse and um (3.0) who else is there ?

Int: Anne Nightingale

DJ: Anne Nightingale yes. So it's getting better (.) but it's still very male-dominated and I don't know why (.) I don't know why.

This is a fascinating extract. Toller answers the interviewers question about why he feels there are so few

female DJs quite differently from his four colleagues. Rather than putting forward an explanation, Toller expresses complete mystification: 'I don't know . I mean I really don't know'. There are no less than four occasions in this short extract in which Toller claims to have no idea why radio presentation is, in his words, 'male-dominated'. This display of bewilderment is striking in contrast to the accounts offered by all the other broadcasters, for it suggests not only that there is no deliberate policy (or even 'unwritten philosophy' - cf section five) to exclude women, but also that it is in some way beyond explanation. The expressions of mystification serve to deflect any potential charges of sexism, and are reinforced by Toller's next statement : 'I mean I myself would love to hear more female voices'. This does two things - it supports the impression that the lack of women presenters is a bizarre and inexplicable phenomenon - since people at the radio station would love to have women presenters - and it deflects any potential criticism from Toller for how could someone so positive about female presenters be accused of sexism.

In the next passage Toller gives an example of one of the female presenters to whom he says he has enjoyed listening:

'we had someone here until quite recently called Yvonne who was (.) and it's just such a lovely contrast to what is I suppose what is still a male dominated (.) um thing you know'

One thing to note about this passage is that having curtailed a description of 'Yvonne Hills', Toller describes her as a 'lovely ^acontrast to what is (...) still a male dominated (.) um thing'. One possible inference from this is that her value as a presenter is claimed to reside in

her ability to offer a 'contrast' to all the other male presenters, rather than having anything to do with the merits of her presentation style itself. The logical consequence of this kind of argument would be to employ a handful of female presenters to provide a contrast to the vast majority of male presenters. For if there were more than a couple of female presenters at any station their value would be lost (cf section 4 and the fears of the BBC that if it had more than two female newsreaders, Radio Four would sound 'all female').

A more significant point about this passage is Toller's complete silence about what happened to this female presenter whom he claimed to value so much. In the context of a question about the lack of female presenters Toller's failure to say anything about the one female presenter 'we had (...) here until quite recently' must be seen as significant. Part of the answer to the question why are there no female DJs at the station³ must concern why the one female presenter who did work there no longer does so. However, instead of addressing this, Toller goes on:

'I think it's getting better I mean there was a day when there wouldn't be any female broadcasters full stop but they're sort of coming'

In this passage any notion of agency for social change is absent. Instead there is the familiar reference to historical progress : 'it's getting better'. It is as if time itself were the agent. This description of social change meshes perfectly with Toller's expressions of bewilderment about the reasons for the absence of female DJs. Just as no actors were identified as responsible for the continuing lack of female presenters, so none are deemed responsible for the alleged improvements in radio stations' gender constitution. Toller presents himself as a

powerless spectator in the inevitable tide of history. The only notion of agency suggested in Toller's explanation is that of women - 'they're sort of coming'. Perhaps this could be seen as suggesting that the increase in the number of female presenters is due to women's own efforts, and thus, crucially, that the present lack of female DJs results from women's failure to come forward, to assert themselves. However, the formulation is so weak and so vague that it gives the impression that 'sort of coming' is merely the result of the passage of time rather than the result of any action on women's part. More significantly, the whole extract serves to present as inevitable the present lack of female DJs and to suggest that an increase in the number of women employed will need no action by radio stations: it will simply occur when the time is right.

The passage is a good example of what Wetherell, Stiven and Potter (1987) have called reverse golden age accounting. That is, there is an appeal to a 'golden age' (Williams, 1975) but rather than being a mythologised past era it is identified as being in the future - a point at which present problems and imperfections no longer exist. Toller's discussion of change is very similar to those identified by Wetherell et al (1987) in their interviews with undergraduates about gender and employment opportunities. As Wetherell et al point out this notion of change occurring gradually and inevitably 'can serve to justify inaction and lack of personal responsibility' (1987, p.69).

The final part of the extract has a comical aspect.

DJ: 'they're sort of coming (..) you've got Gloria Hunneyford (2.0) of course and um (3.0) who else is there?

Int: Anne Nightingale.

DJ: Anne Nightingale yes. So it's getting better (..) but it's still very male-dominated and I don't know why.

Toller has asserted that 'it's getting better', that women are 'sort of coming'. He goes on to attempt to offer examples of contemporary women DJs - examples which will warrant his claim that the 'bad old days' are over. But the problem is that having suggested Gloria Hunneyford he seems unable to think of anymore female DJs :

'you've got Gloria Hunneyford (2.0) ofcourse and um (3.0) who else is there ?'

The timing here would be the envy of many a stand-up comedian : 'you've got Gloria Hunneyford', he pauses, 'ofcourse' 'and um'. He pauses again. Finally he appeals to the interviewer : 'who else is there?' 'Anne Nightingale' she volunteers. 'Anne Nightingale' he repeats, visibly relieved. 'So it's getting better'.

In total, then, he is only able to name two female DJs - one of whom was suggested by the interviewer - not even the three conventionally required for displays of normativity (Atkinson, 1984). After this, his assertion 'so it's getting better' might be heard as weak, unconvincing and indeed as sexist - for does the employment of two female DJs really constitute the noteworthy improvement he seems to be suggesting. Thus he concludes with a restatement of the problem and his previous response to it 'but it is still very male-dominated and I don't know why'. This serves to qualify his assertion that things are 'getting

better', indicating that what improvements there have been are not sufficient, and to reemphasise his dismay and lack of control over this.

A slightly different account of change is put forward by Dale. This extract directly follows his assertion (discussed in the first section of the chapter) that no women apply to become DJs.

Extract Twenty-four (Dale)

Int: That's suprising because there's supposed to be an increasing number of women entering media jobs.

DJ: I think I think I think it'll turn round a bit. I think there will be a cult (3.0) there'll be a cult woman on a national radio station perhaps when Independent National Radio starts a cult woman on a national radio station and as soon as this happens and people get used to having a woman every radio station will have a woman. There is there is there's a sort of female presentation style which is coming up. Um I suppose it's it's the Janice Long style from Radio One. There are a lot of pseudo Janice Longs around and but have you noticed all the women or a lot of the women (.) I've heard have got deep voices so they have the tonal quality of a man whilst having the fenminity of a woman. If women stopped dooing that and were just themselves I think it might (1.0) I don't know (.) I'm not averse to female presenters.

Clearly this passage shares some of the features of Toller's account of change - epitomised by the phrases 'it'll turn around' and a female presenation style 'which is coming up' which gives the impression that change will occur without anybody having to do anything. But it also departs from Toller's argument in significant ways. Dale's

argument is long and seemingly contradictory. It is constructed around two contradictory theories of change. Initially Dale seems to be arguing that one of the reasons local radio stations have few, if any, female presenters is that 'people' are not 'used to' having a woman on the radio. There are parallels here with the extract from Dale discussed in the second section of this chapter. It may seem like a self-fulfilling prophecy - no women presenters, so people are not used to female presenters, so no female presenters are taken on - but Dale identifies a key actor in the cycle who can break this dynamic - national radio stations. It is up to a national radio station he argues to take on a 'cult woman'.

The first thing to note about this argument is the way in which it deflects potential criticism from Dale, and defers Dale's personal responsibility as a PC to employ women presenters here and now. People are not yet 'used to' female presenters and it is up to a national radio station to take on a woman and acclimatise listeners to the idea of women DJs. Significantly Dale argues that this will occur 'perhaps when Independent National Radio starts'. This claim both defers the need for him to employ a female DJ for several years (the interviews were conducted in 1987/8 and INR will not be on-air until at least 1991/2) and, more importantly, is part of an implied criticism of existing national pop radio - that is BBC Radio One. Part of the culpability for the lack of female presenters becomes Radio One's. When national independent (commercial) radio starts, Dale seems to be saying, things will get better, a 'cult woman' will appear. To the problem of the lack of female DJs, then, comes the solution more commercial radio.

The second point of particular note is the way that Dale's use of the passive form masks the fact that the way the changes occur involves agency.

'as soon as this happens and people get used to having a woman every radio station will have a woman'

Things 'happen', people 'get used to having a woman' and then (as if by magic) 'every radio station will have a woman'. Although the onus seems to be placed on a national radio station to 'have' a woman, any mention of the sordid business of actually hiring staff is conspicuous by its absence. Simply 'there'll be a cult woman'. As well as reinforcing the lack of responsibility and control over women DJs by radio stations, this argument is constructed around the idea that it is up to women to 'prove themselves'. This is individualist 'superwoman' accounting - a woman DJ must become a 'cult woman' and then as a representative of her gender having proved herself and gained acceptance she will pave the way for other female presenters.

At this point the argument changes. One possible reason for this is that Dale becomes aware that there already exists at least one presenter on national radio who could be described as a 'cult woman'.

There is there is there's a sort of female presentation style which is coming up. Um I suppose it's it's the Janice Long style from Radio One. There are a lot of pseudo Janice Longs around'

Janice Long would seem to fit Dale's description of a cult woman on a national radio station - all the more so because other female presenters, he claims, imitate her presentation style. The implication of this, according to Dale's initial argument, is that other radio stations - including Radio Matchdale - should now be employing women DJs. Moreover there are, according to him, a number of

female DJs who sound like this cult woman, something, one would have thought, that would enhance their prospects of gaining employment. But Dale does not follow this line of reasoning. His argument has changed. Far from des^erving attention as serious candidates for DJs jobs 'these women these pseudo Janice Longs' become responsible for the continuing gender inequality within radio - because they are not 'themselves'.

'But have you noticed all the women or a lot of the women (.) I've heard have got deep voices so they have the tonal quality of a man whilst having the femininity of a woman. If women stopped doing that and were just themselves I think it might (1.0) I don't know (.) I'm not averse to female presenters.'

In the fourth section of the chapter we discussed an extract in which become a DJ was judged 'hard' for 'some women' because their voices are 'naturally higher'. The implication of this argument was that to become DJs women should have lower/deeper voices, something the broadcaster associated with being male. Here Dale asserts exactly the opposite - women are failing because they have 'deep voices', 'the tonal quality of a man, whilst having the femininity of a woman'.

'If women stopped doing that and were just themselves I think it might'

The sentence is not completed but the implication is clear - women themselves are to blame for not being employed because they are not being 'themselves', not being natural: 'if they were just themselves'... Again this argument is fascinating because it turns traditional assumptions about what is ideological on their head. Women are not, in this extract, deemed to fail because they do not rise above

their gender as conventional writing on ideology would assume, but precisely because they are not being true to their gender, not being themselves. The implication is that all they have to do to succeed is to 'be themselves'. Dale curtails this argument, letting his voice trail off and attending to the possible hearability of it with the safety of 'I don't know' and a final repudiation of sexism: 'I'm not averse to female presenters'.

Discussion

The aim of this chapter has been to examine the practical ideologies through which the lack of women DJs is justified. What I have tried to show is that far from the DJs and PCs each espousing a particular attitude or advancing a specific explanation to account for the lack of women DJs, each had available to them whole range of ways of accounting, which they drew on selectively in the interviews. I identified five broad types of account which were offered to explain and justify the lack of women DJs: the idea that women do not apply to become DJs, that the audience prefers male DJs, that women do not have the skills and qualities necessary to be a DJ, that women's voices are not appropriate for DJing and finally that the need for a 'housewife DJ' means that women could not do the job. I tried to show that these were not options put forward by individual DJs or PCs, but rather that all the broadcasters drew on and combined a number of different accounts.

Overall the chapter pointed to a pervasive variability in the broadcasters accounts, which would be either overlooked or suppressed by more traditional analyses. I hope to have demonstrated^a very clearly the variable, inconsistent and indeed contradictory accounts put forward by DJs and PCs. The prevalent claim (by four of the five) that no women

apply, within moments of explanations by those same broadcasters about why, for example, they 'cannot use' those women who do send tapes in, is simply the most dramatic example of this, and poses severe problems for attitude theorists and all other approaches which work with a 'realist' notion of language. Rather than seeing such assertions as unproblematic statements of fact, discourse analysis argues that they can be better understood in terms of their discursive functions.

The chapter also looked in detail at the construction of particular accounts, examining how broadcasters attempted to accomplish them as factual or 'out-there', and discussing the way the accounts offered seemed to make the lack of women DJs flow apparently self-evidently from the explanations. Specifically, all the accounts put forward by broadcasters to explain the lack of women DJs constructed the reasons as lying in women themselves or in the wants of the audience. The role of the radio station was made invisible in these accounts, and discussions of employment practices and institutional sexism were conspicuous by their absence. In this way broadcasters were able to present themselves as non-sexist, whilst they simultaneously justified the lack of women at the station.

None of the DJs or PCs said at any point that they did not think that women should be employed as DJs. On the contrary, they were keen to point out their lack of sexism ('there's certainly no prejudice', 'I would love to hear more women', 'I'm not averse to female presenters') and that they were 'looking hard' for female presenters. However, what they produced were accounts which justified the exclusion of women. In providing these accounts for why there are so few female DJs now, the broadcasters also provided justifications for the continued absence of women

in the future. The ideological effects of these discourses is to perpetuate inequality within radio stations.

Notes

- 1 Potter & Wetherell (1988) have pointed out that for researchers asking about a person's attitude to a particular social group the focus is entirely upon the respondent's psychology at the level of prejudiced or tolerant motivation. Yet for the participant the issue must appear to be the nature of the attitudinal object itself. Potter & Wetherell argue that this is the reason people do not want to identify themselves as prejudiced. where they have negative views about other groups these are presented as justifiable and accountable.

- 2 Although an investigation of 'new sexism' would not necessarily entail positing the existence of ' a cultural norm against sexism' , thinking about cultural norms in relation to sexism highlights many of the problems with the concept - the circularity of its definition and identification, problems with the notion of 'culture' and 'cultural' particularly relating to boundaries and definition (cf 'social representations'), the difficulties concerning how failures to observe the norm should be interpreted, etc. My own view is that it would be unhelpful to talk about the existence of a cultural norm against sexism, but that many of the features of new racist discourse would be found in contemporary discussions about gender.

An excellent example of this type of work is 'Unequal egalitarianism' (Wetherell, Stiven & Potter, 1987). Wetherell et al were interested in the 'practical ideologies' involved in the reproduction of gender inequalities in employment. whilst their respondents' unanimously endorsed equal opportunities

themes their simultaneous focus on 'practical considerations' which supposedly limited those opportunities effectively neutralised any impetus for change and reinforced the status quo. Wetherell et al showed very clearly the value of seeing ideology not as a set of propositions but as a form of accounting.

- 3 The station at which he worked employed no women DJs at all.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

This has been a long thesis. Anxious about word restrictions for PhD theses, I want to conclude very briefly, with a summary of the central arguments^M and some implications and directions for future research.

I see this thesis as both an empirical and theoretical contribution. It has been both an attempt to study popular radio and to try out and develop a new analytic approach. A central, almost implicit, theme has been an attempt to put radio (back) on the media studies map for the 1990s and beyond. Specifically, I have been concerned with popular radio and with whether and in what ways it can be understood as having ideological significance. This has led to two foci of interest: the ideological features of pop radio programming - which I examined in relation to DJs' talk on BBC Radio One - and the ideological features of DJs' understanding of their role and their view of their audience. To explore these issues I drew on the insights of discourse analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) and the rhetorical approach (Billig, 1987).

I argued that these approaches need a critical understanding of ideology, - as sustaining relations of domination. This does not mean that we can 'read off' ideology from certain forms of discourse, as Thompson (1984) seems to suggest, but rather that what is ideological in any given context is an analytic question - which cannot be answered in the abstract or in advance of analysis. Throughout this thesis I have tried to indicate what this position means in practice, arguing that ideology works not just through reification or dissimulation but in a whole range of ways. In chapter five I discussed some of

these ways in relation to DJs' on-air talk, raising the question of whether there may be a difference between the operation of 'modern' and 'postmodern' ideology. In chapters six and seven I tried to highlight a number of different ways in which ideology 'worked' in broadcasters' discussions of their role and relationship to their audience, and accounts of the lack of women working in popular radio. Far from ideology residing in particular predictable and easily recognisable forms, it seemed to 'work' in many different and flexible ways - another title for chapter seven, indeed, might have been 'flexible sexism', to draw attention to the flexibility of the broadcasters' accounts of and justifications for, the lack of women DJs. Above all, then, my argument has been that ideology is best understood in terms of what it does in particular contexts - serving to maintain inegalitarian relations - than by some a priori definition of what it is.

One important implication of this way of seeing ideology is that it refuses an absolute relativism (if such a thing is not a contradiction in terms). It implies certain ontological commitments about what exists extra discursively: if we say that ideology is a discursive practice which serves to maintain asymmetrical relations, by definition we are implying a social structure characterised by such inegalitarian relations.

It seems to me that discourse analysis' refusal, to date, to accept such a move is a consequence of the fact that it has developed, and been articulated in relation to, social psychology. In this disciplinary context, a rejection of notions like reality and underlying structure is progressive - challenging traditional cognitive and essentialist versions of the person. In relation to more sociological questions, however, - about power, inequality, and ideology - this position causes

considerable problems. The notion that all we have access to is the discourse, progressive in psychology, is reactionary in the context of media studies or sociology, denying us any principled way of saying anything about pervasive inequalities, oppression and injustice. The 'rhetoric-reality' construction may be a powerful rhetorical device, but it seems to me that there are occasions when we want to make such a distinction, when we want to look at practices as well as discourse. As I suggested with my scenario for a science fiction novel in chapter three, we cannot make judgements solely on the basis of discourse. In chapter three I put forward a defence of my position of political relativism, which suggests that ontological commitments and interpretations should become the subject of arguments. If discourse analysis is to become influential outside of social psychology, it will have to address these issues.

One focus of discussion in particular analyses will be the question of what is ideological. This will involve not just the study of media 'texts' but also analyses of how audiences interpret or use such texts. Whilst some work has taken this as a concern (Morley, 1980, 1986; Morley & Silverstone, 1990; Silverstone et al, 1989; Richardson & Corner 1986) much of the new audience research seems to prioritise questions of use over questions of interpretation (despite Morley's protestations to the contrary, and compare with Philo's work on readings of the miners' strike coverage, and the current Glasgow Media Group work on people's interpretations of AIDS advertising). Moreover, it has been overly pre-occupied with the use of information and communication technologies within the home. Radio, in contrast, is listened to in factories, shops, garages, cars, offices - as well as in the home - so analyses of people's use of and readings of programmes should reflect its unusually social features -

looking at the way it is used in workplaces and inserted into particular working practices, etc.

Considerably more research is also needed to examine pop radio programming. Not only do we need studies of commercial radio, but we also need analyses of weekend and evening programming on BBC stations and far more detailed examinations of specific programmes. Programmes on Radio One are not transitory and ephemeral: many contemporary DJs have been broadcasting since its inception, and people like Simon Bates and Steve Wright have become more than household names. Research should be concerned not just with the DJs' talk but also with all the other features which make up programming - news, quizzes and public information campaigns (on drugs, AIDS, unemployment, etc), and most importantly music. The concern with music and the influence of the record industry should lead to another focus for research: namely a concern with the nature of the determinations exerted by the structures of ownership and control at radio networks, and how these work in practice in specific situations.

Above all, we should start to take radio seriously. As it stands poised for its biggest ever expansion, there is no better time to do so.

APPENDIX 1

Sample Transcript

(taken from the morning of 11th December 1986)

It's eight forty. Quick quiz this morning (.) simple clue. This day a few years ago (.) bubyed ted (1.0) 01 637 4343. Hello to Gill and to Chris in Keighley West Yorkshire. Just been to see Top Gun and they just love Tom Cruise(.) they've gone just beserk about Tom Cruise. There's this album around (.) it's got all the tracks you know on it but it hasn't got the most played track of the film on where Tom Cruise and Kelly McGillis are about to get it together
Record: 'You've lost that lovin' feeling'

The girls in Keighley wanted to know where they could get that. It's eight forty five.

AIDS information advert on needle-use

Record: 'No more the fool'

Here's that clue again (.) this day a few years ago bubyed ted. It wasn't Andy Pandy it wasn't Ted Heath or the teddy on the test card (.) 01 637 4343. What in heck's name is Smithy talking about this morning.

Record: 'Born in the USA'

Five to nine - that was for all you Bruce Springsteen fans.

Record:

Two minutes to nine. And the winner of the quick quiz fifty years ago Edward the eighth abdicated as King. The weather's coming up and we'll do a ferry report for those of you doing the old Christmas shopping accross the channel. The good news is that they've managed to fire a tranquilizer dart at thge escaped sloane ranger (.) so Britain can breathe easy again this morning. In the news there's been a Commons sitting all night to debate the bill on education. And Scottish judges have announced an amnesty for all small criminals so the more important cases can be

heard more quickly. And the bishops have criticised Radio One's AIDS campaign no moral stance just good advice. It's exactly nine o'clock.

Record: 'War - what is it good for'

Record: 'Girls just wanna have fun'

Six minutes past nine.

Promotional jingle for series 'You'll never be 16 again'

Record: 'Loving you is everything'

Eleven after nine. Rolf Bushy ha ha the Norwegian Ambassador is switching on the Christmas tree lights in Trafalgar Square today. I know we mentioned it a month ago but it's worth saying his name again isn't it. International dirt bike show at Bristol exhibition centre today and varsity football match at Oxford (imitating 'plummy' voice) Oh I don't know whether Rodney's wearing his shin pads or not. The Queen attends a reception to mark the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Newspaper Society tonight. Cos she gets on so well with the newspapers doesn't she ! Ha ha. Aha in Sheffield at the City Hall. Billy Connolly is doing a gig in London tonight but that's sold out completely

Record:

Record:

Coming up to nine twenty one. Well the flak6s flying around Broadcasting House again this morning. This time it's the Roman Cathholic church criticising our AIDS campaign. Now I think the more publicity the campaign gets the better (.) but we are talking realistics here aren't we. I mean we are talking about a situation where neither you nor I nor the Roman Catholic church have any control over what people do with bits of their bodies so isn't it better that they just face the facts.

AIDS information advert.

Record:

Well the breakfast party is finished here but the rock n roll goes on. I'll leave you with a record with Royal

approval after last night at the Princes Trust. And I know the Royal couple felt particularly grateful this morning because if it wasn't for the Eurythmics the Royal couple would not have bumped into Radio One's Dave Price and Prince Charles wouldn't have got his Radio One cufflinks given to him.

Record: 'There must be an angel playing with my heart'

It's exactly nine thirty.

News (90 seconds)

Jingle for Simon Bates show

OK I haven't been to bed so I'm feeling all cheerful. Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips agreed to let five hundred families hold a rally in the summer in the grounds of their home. The romance between Cliff Richard and Sue Barker was finally over. They said two years ago we talked very deeply about the possibility of getting married but now we've decided against it. Radio one's Golden Hour. Twenty two minutes to ten. Good morning.

Record:

So Mick Jagger cut his first solo album. George Michael said he wanted to be a father but he didn't want to be married. And Coronation Street casanova Chris Quinton was told by Granada TV to (.) erm cool down his hectic love life as it was tiring him out.

APPENDIX 2

Radio Matchdale: Shareholdings and Profits

Principal Shareholders (types)

Holding Company	13%
Broadcasting Corporation	11%
Co-operative Society	9%
Managing Directors (2)	8%
Bank	6%
Trades Union	4%
Television Company	4%

Subsidiary investors

Local Newspapers (2)
Holding Company
Brewery

Net Advertising Revenues

1987	£1,757,200
1988	£1,854,000
1989	£1,973,000

Profits

Year ending 30th September 1989 £195,830

SUMMARY OF AUDIENCE FIGURESFROM JICRAR SURVEY, JANUARY - DECEMBER 1987RADIO MATCHPALEAdult population of Total Survey Area = 1,070,000ILR WEEKLY AUDIENCE

	Weekly Reach	Number of Listeners	(Profile)	Ave. hours of listening
ALL adults	41	442,000		12.0
Sex:				
Men	45	235,000	53%	10.7
Women	38	206,000	47%	13.4
Age-group				
15-24	57	126,000	29%	13.0
25-34	50	94,000	21%	11.7
35-54	47	154,000	35%	10.9
55+	20	68,000	15%	13.0
Socio-economic class ABC1	38	141,000	32%	12.0
C2DE	43	301,000	68%	12.0
Children (aged 5 - 14)	39	73,000		7.0

Source: JICRAR audience survey January - December 1987

RADIO MATCHDALE AND ALL STATIONS

JANUARY-DECEMBER 1987 Radio Network Survey - RADIO MATCHDALE
CUMULATIVE WEEKLY AUDIENCE (REACH). TOTAL AND AVERAGE HOURS

ALL ADULTS 15+	ADULTS IN HOME	MEN			WOMEN			AGE					HOUSEWIVES WITH CHILD		SOCIAL CLASS		CHILD -REN 5-14
		ALL	15-34	35+	ALL	15-34	35+	15-24	25-34	35-64	65+	ALL	CHILD	ABC1	C2DE		
SAMPLE	514	514	245	97	148	269	101	168	74	124	190	126	259	114	186	328	109
EST. POP'N.	1070	1070	520	206	314	550	201	348	219	189	328	334	510	195	369	701	188
RADIO MATCHDALE																	
MONDAY-SUNDAY WEEKLY REACH	442	350	235	123	112	206	97	110	126	94	154	68	169	70	141	301	73
	41%	33%	45%	60%	36%	38%	48%	32%	57%	50%	47%	20%	33%	36%	38%	43%	39%
TOTAL HOURS	5293	3369	2519	1311	1208	2775	1424	1351	1637	1097	1673	885	2157	1052	1685	3609	511
AVE. HOURS	12.0	9.6	10.7	10.7	10.8	13.4	14.7	12.3	13.0	11.7	10.9	13.0	12.8	15.0	12.0	12.0	7.0
ALL STATIONS																	
MONDAY - SUNDAY WEEKLY REACH	957	888	476	198	277	481	181	301	206	173	296	282	440	167	338	619	130
	89%	83%	91%	96%	88%	88%	90%	86%	94%	91%	90%	84%	86%	85%	92%	88%	69%
TOTAL HOURS	20853	14120	10721	4359	6362	10132	3626	6506	4510	3475	6206	6662	9661	3699	6357	14486	1007
AVE. HOURS	21.8	15.9	22.5	22.0	22.9	21.0	20.1	21.6	21.8	20.1	21.0	23.6	22.0	22.2	18.8	23.4	7.7

** POPULATIONS AND AUDIENCES ARE IN '000S **

Source: JICRAR audience survey January - December 1987

Source: JICRAR audience survey January - December 1987

JANUARY-DECEMBER 1987 Radio Network Survey - RADIO MATCHDALE

AVERAGE AUDIENCE BY RATE CARD SEGMENT'S

EST. SAMPLE POP'N.	ALL ADULTS 15+		ADULTS IN HOME		MEN		WOMEN		AGE					HOUSEWIVES WITH CHILD		SOCIAL CLASS		CHILD -REN 5-14		
	514 1070	%	514 1070	%	ALL	15-34	35+	ALL	15-34	35+	15-24	25-34	35-54	55+	ALL	CHILD	ABC1		C2DE	
MONDAY-FRIDAY																				
06.00-07.00	31	3%	29		19	8	11	11	4	7	5	7	11	7	11	5	8	22	1	
07.00-08.00	65	6%	50		29	11	18	17	17	20	12	16	24	13	30	16	23	42	1	
08.00-09.00	79	7%	41		33	16	12	12	26	18	26	15	28	10	35	18	20	59	4	
09.00-11.00	69	6%	35		28	16	12	12	23	11	21	14	22	7	30	15	23	46	2	
11.00-13.00	51	5%	20		24	13	8	8	14	10	15	7	14	3	17	8	14	37	1	
13.00-15.00	39	4%	17		15	7	5	5	14	7	4	6	6	4	16	4	15	24	4	
15.00-17.00	22	2%	15		10	5	5	5	11	4	5	2	4	2	10	4	8	13	5	
17.00-19.00	14	1%	8		7	2	3	3	6	2	3	3	4	1	3	1	5	9	2	
19.00-21.00	14	1%	8		7	4	3	3	7	3	5	3	4	1	4	1	5	9	2	
21.00-23.00	32	3%	25		15	6	9	9	17	12	7	3	7	16	9	1	11	21	1	
23.00-24.00	22	2%	20		14	6	8	8	12	9	7	3	6	10	9	1	9	17	4	
07.00-10.00	28	6%	46		30	13	18	18	19	20	15	16	25	12	31	17	22	47	3	
10.00-19.00	49	5%	24		21	11	10	10	16	12	18	9	17	6	20	10	16	33	2	
09.00-19.00	52	5%	25		22	11	11	11	17	13	18	10	18	5	22	11	16	36	2	
19.00-24.00	17	2%	12		9	4	5	5	9	4	5	3	5	5	5	1	6	11	2	
SATURDAY																				
06.00-08.00	31	3%	28		16	8	7	7	7	8	10	6	6	10	15	8	10	21	4	
08.00-10.00	58	5%	45		37	22	15	11	9	12	16	14	15	13	19	10	15	42	8	
10.00-12.00	65	6%	50		31	21	11	3	15	19	25	11	19	10	27	13	16	49	6	
12.00-14.00	37	3%	33		18	15	3	3	6	5	10	11	11	5	22	7	9	28	4	
14.00-16.00	23	2%	17		12	9	3	3	8	6	5	10	6	2	11	6	9	14	4	
16.00-18.00	19	2%	10		8	4	1	1	5	3	3	2	5	1	9	2	8	10	2	
19.00-21.00	6	1%	4		4	3	1	1	3	-	3	2	-	1	2	-	3	3	2	
21.00-23.00	4		3		3	3	3	3	3	-	3	-	1	1	1	-	5	5	1	
23.00-01.00	13	1%	11		37	4	3	3	12	8	21	12	17	11	23	12	16	46	8	
08.00-12.00	62	6%	48		34	21	13	13	25	15	37	12	17	11	33	13	16	46	1	
12.00-19.00	25	2%	18		12	9	3	3	13	1	7	7	7	1	17	4	3	16	4	
19.00-24.00	7	1%	5		4	3	1	1	3	1	4	1	1	1	4	1	3	4	1	
SUNDAY																				
06.00-08.00	11	1%	10		6	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	5	4	7	4	15	
08.00-10.00	48	4%	44		24	11	13	17	11	14	10	12	21	11	23	15	20	28	8	
10.00-13.00	87	8%	76		42	25	17	5	21	24	22	24	8	19	43	24	24	63	3	
13.00-15.00	39	4%	31		21	16	4	4	13	5	18	13	3	2	14	9	14	25	8	
15.00-17.00	24	2%	16		17	13	4	4	5	2	15	10	3	2	16	6	11	19	4	
17.00-19.00	39	4%	34		19	15	4	4	11	9	16	4	3	4	15	3	5	28	4	
19.00-21.00	12	1%	9		8	5	6	6	2	1	2	2	3	1	3	1	1	7	4	
21.00-23.00	5	1%	4		5	3	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	1	4	4	1	
23.00-01.00	6	1%	6		3	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	19	2	22	2	11	
08.00-13.00	71	7%	63		35	19	15	4	17	20	17	19	7	16	35	21	49	49	6	
13.00-19.00	34	3%	27		19	15	3	3	10	5	16	8	2	3	12	8	10	24	4	
19.00-24.00	8	1%	7		6	3	3	3	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	1	3	5	5	4
MONDAY - SUNDAY																				
07.00-19.00	51	5%	31		23	12	11	9	15	13	16	11	17	7	22	11	16	35	5	
07.00-24.00	40	4%	25		19	10	7	10	11	10	13	8	13	10	17	8	13	27	4	
07.00-07.00	32	3%	20		15	8	7	7	8	8	10	7	10	6	13	6	10	21	3	

... POPULATIONS AND AUDIENCES ARE IN '000S ..

JANUARY-DECEMBER 1987 Radio Network Survey - RADIO MATCHDALE

INDIVIDUAL STATIONS

CUMULATIVE WEEKLY AUDIENCE (REACH), TOTAL AND AVERAGE HOURS

	RADIO MATCHDALE	BBC RADIO 1	BBC RADIO 2	BBC RADIO 3	BBC RADIO 4	BBC LOCAL RADIO	RADIO LUXEM BOURG STATION	ANY OTHER STATION
EST. SAMPLE POP. N.	514 1070	514 1070	514 1070	514 1070	514 1070	514 1070	514 1070	514 1070
MONDAY-SUNDAY WEEKLY REACH	442 41%	444 42%	317 30%	59 6%	210 20%	274 26%	33 3%	130 12%
TOTAL HOURS	5293	5593	3142	182	2037	3500	67	1040
AVE. HOURS	12.0	12.6	8.8	3.1	9.7	12.8	2.0	8.0

.. POPULATIONS AND AUDIENCES ARE IN '000S ..

Source: JICRAR audience survey January - December 1987

APPENDIX 4

Approximate Interview Schedule

(Disc Jockey Interviews)

Biographical questions

- How long have you been a DJ
- What made you want to be a DJ?
- How did you first start out in radio/ get into becoming a DJ?
- Do you see it as your end career? Do you have any plans to change jobs, say, go into television?

About the job

- What do you think makes a good DJ?
- How do you create the atmosphere you want on your show?
- What makes a good show?
- What do you talk about on air?
- Is a show a balance between entertainment and information?

About the audience

- How do you see your audience?
- Why do you have someone in mind?
- What do you think they want from the radio?
- How do you think your listeners see you?
- Do you have any information about what your listeners might be doing? And do you try to associate with that?
- Do you get much feedback from your audience?

About the radio station

- What's the function of an ILR station?
- Why do you think there are so few female DJs?
- How important is music to your show?
- Who chooses the music on your show?

What about adverts? How do you feel about them?
Do the adverts ever annoy you?

About autonomy, politics, changes

If you want to change something within the show who
do you have to ask?

Do you feel you can express your own opinions when
you're on air?

Do you ever talk about politics or political issues?

Do you think listeners could tell where you stand
politically?

Do you think you've ever let anything 'slip out' say
when you feel strongly about something - like drunk
driving for example?

Do you think you have a responsibility to the
community?

Do you think its part of your role to challenge
things like sexism and racism?

Do you feel a representation of the family is
important to your show?

General questions

Is there anything you dislike about being a DJ?

The above is only approximate. In practice many
supplementary questions were asked, and the interviews were
very informal, not adhering to either the letter or the
order of the schedule. Nevertheless, in the interviews as a
whole the topics covered were similar and comparable.

Transcription Notation

1. Overlapping Utterances

When utterances do not start simultaneously, the point at which an ongoing utterance is joined by another is marked in the following way

We went to Sue's last night and// then all went
I saw Sue earlier

2. Contiguous Utterances

When there is no noticeable interval between utterances, they are linked together with an equal sign

Shall we go then=
Yeah let's go right now

3. Intervals within and between Utterances

(timed in tenths of seconds, in parenthesis).

Should we get a takeaway (1.0) or we could just have toast?

Those used in this thesis are approximate. Pauses of less than 1 second's duration are marked as follows
(.)

4. Characteristics of speech delivery

A colon indicates an extension of the sound or syllable it follows

I don't re::ally know

An utterance underlined indicates emphasis.

That would be great.

Utterances in upper case were noticeably louder than the stretch of which they were a part.

You're JOKING!

The symbol (...) indicates that a portion of the original transcript has been omitted, whilst double brackets surround supplementary information about the speech:

Well you know ((adopting a mid-Atlantic accent)) people have compared me to Woody Allen.

**Interview with Mick Chapman
Programme Controller Radio
Dean and Radio Matchdale**

- Int: Right what does a programme controller do ?
- PC: Programme controller (.) right (.) my responsibility is for the output of the radio station (.) um twenty four hours a day on Radio Dean (.) Radio Matchdale and Radio Dean four five seven (inaud) constructing the format (.) constructing the music quality (inaud)
- Int: Uhuh (.) in constructing the mid-morning show (.) how do you construct it (.) you know (3.0) you know w.what what have you put in the mid morning show ? What time and why ?
- PC: Right most important thing is the sound of the radio station itself so so the whole radio station is formatted (inaud) Er the morning show is obviously a very important one (.) you've got an audience who are (.) like in all radio listening in all sorts of environments (.) it's not just housewives listening at home by any means (.) a lot of people listen in factories (.) in cars (.) and everywhere else so you want a bright happy personality music show that gives people information about the area they live in and that's basically what we do=
- Int: =mm hmm
- PC: The personality of the presenter of the presenter doing the show is the key thing.
- Int: Mmm well what kind of personality do you go for. You said bright and cheerful is there// anything else
- PC: You want someone bright and cheerful yeah. I mean the public build up an image in their own minds of what presenters are like on the radio. Different sorts of people build up a different image. Men have a different view younger men to older men that varies (.) women (.) different again younger women have a

different view. Um different social classes have a different view (.) you've got to try and be all things to all people. Older women like to think of the presenter as somebody they can mother (.) men would like to think of the presenter as someone they could go and have a chat with down the pub (.) younger women like to fantasise about the presenter (.) um younger men like to think of him as one of their mates who they might go to a football match with so everybody builds up an image in their own mind and you've got to try and fulfil that by having a a real human being with a real personality who responds to them and is aware of the area that they're broadcasting in.

Int: So you don't think the DJ appeals to one set ?

PC: No definitely not. No no. I mean we analyse the audience incredibly carefully and the research that we do (.) and we split it into all the demographic groups that you can think of in terms of ages sex social class (.) there is eight major ones and Radio Dean in this area is the brand leader in six of those eight . The only two that we're not brand leader in is over 55 year old women um (.) and BBC local radio is predominantly listened to by over 55 year old women and and in the very young end (.) particularly girls who tend to listen to Radio One.

Int: Mm hmm. How far are DJs allowed to express their own opinions about things they talk about say politics//
um

PC: No they're not they're not

Int: They're not it's an issues to be avoided ?

PC: Yeah well it's not just that it's against the law there's a there's a law under which the radio stations have it's the Broadcasting Act and we have to be seen at all times to be fair and balanced and nobody can have an opinion on politics but they can

they can express opinions obliquely or they can by being devil's advocates if they are interviewing people and obviously they can express opinions about more general things.

Int: Mm hmm so on the whole DJs try to avoid controversial issues ?

PC: Yes yes

Int: Mm hmm

PC: A uh in themselves but of course part of the programming would be to reflect those controversial issues by using um guests or (.) just just to reflect that particular concern in the community at the time.

Int: Mm hmm Why do you feel there are so few female DJs ?

PC: Why so few female DJs ? A common question I think there are a (.) I think the reason is that um (2.0) one's got to look at where they come from. Radio Dean is one of the biggest stations in the country it's certainly within the top ten of over ninety local radio stations and we tend to get our staff from other radio stations or we bring them on ourselves in terms of training people from new (.) and it's (.) where people come from (.) so in hospital radio there aren't many women DJs. There aren't many women DJs in pubs (.) there aren't many female DJs (.) especially teenage age which is when we're looking to bring people like who are interested in doing it . It's not something that is a natural progression and because of that um we have to look hard and and when we get them(.) we have over the past three years had three women DJs we've lost two of them. We've lost one of them almost immediately to Radio Four who I'd spent two years training and we had someone else who I had spent a year training who was taken off us and who has become a star (.) at another radio station. We have one at the moment who is (.) good and is is a female DJ and will go a long way . It's a question

that I get tapes from hopefuls on my desk everyday of the week and none of them are ever women. And it's where the sources are coming from. And for us to go out is very hard for us to go out and put an advert out do you want to be a DJ we'd get thousands of replies .

Int: Do you think there are a set of reasons why women are put off (.) becoming DJs ?

PC: Yuh its its its one more (.) its one more world in which the barriers are breaking down. I mean I've noticed I mean I've been I radio what sixteen years now if you look at journalism for instance (.) the past (.) five journalists we've appointed have all been women . We have a women news editor (.) we have a more women in the newsroom. Oh all the sales staff are radio station are predominantly women um and those areas great strides have been made . Women are better than men at a (inaud) journalists job. Presenters have got to have a number of skills. They've got to have a a a they've got to be very very dextrous (.) they've got to be familiar with technical equipment (.) they've got to have a personality they are used to expressing and they've got to have a good knowledge of music as well as having a good personality (.) and those things in education and social process are not as are not as advanced in my view as far as women are concerned as they are with men. Um um I've got to be able to sit somebody in a radio studio and they've got to understand what they're doing kind of thing as well as be a good broadcaster and women (.) in their whole background are not brought up in that sort of environment.

Int: Well I think that say in the last say ten twenty years things have changed// have

PC: They've changed but they haven't changed enough.

Int: I don't know but I think there's quite a massive increase in the fact that women are going into scientific careers=

PC: =Oh sure sure sure . But I mean I mean we're one of the last from I mean I mean I'm not saying I mean we would if a woman DJ sent me a tape (.) I mean they really do not I mean they don't(.) Um (2.0) I would try very hard I mean there's no question about it that (.) I would like to have more women DJs.

Int: Have you got any listener research as to how men and women would react to a female on air ?

PC: No.

Int: Any preferences anything like that ?

PC: No. No I mean there has there has been research er done but the thing is because there haven't been many women DJs (.) you can't say what you think because you don't know obviously. Research is only valid if people have heard and er they haven't done enough. But ob my view would be that there's nothing (.) that shows that it would make any difference at all it was purely on whether that woman like that man has got the right style personality for the programme and that that individual liked it.

Int: So with regard to the mid morning show you think a woman could do just as good a job as a male DJ.

PC: Oh yeah. Absolutely yeah. Yeah absolutely yeah.

Int: You don't feel that if you had a female DJ on at that time women wouldn't like it because//

PC: No

Int: She doesn't do the same things as men

PC: No no I don't no. I don't see I don't see any reason why that should be the case.

Int: Mm hmm. Er (2.0) um when you're choosing DJs what kind of things do you look out for? What characteristics ?

PC: Well they've got personality (.) originality (.)

manual dexterity skills um they've got to fit into the team and um they've got to have (1.0) good knowledge of music . They've got to be reasonably good looking if possible um

Int: Why ?

PC: Well they appear outside a lot (4.0) and there could be nothing worse (.) I mean we send out thousands of pictures of DJs and I don't particularly want (.) but I mean we do have some ugly DJs um but um it's it's a minor point on the list so we er er er and then we put them through a fairly rigorous test in terms of (.) you know how they handle situations (.) all sorts of different situations (.) interviewing (.) I mean can they read clearly have they got a nice voice do they fit in with other style of the station (.) what's their personality defect like (.)

Int: Yeah

PC: I mean because I mean DJs are basically schizophrenic

Int: ((laughs))

PC: No they are I mean because they are they have they have two they have two personalities (.) they have their personality (inaud) and then they have their personality on air. On air if you ask a DJ what he's doing he's performing like an actor (.) they have two personalities. And you gotta feed that that is important because they are performers (.) and they've also got to have the ability to develop a one to one relationship with the audience that they're broadcasting to. It's not like television which is a group activity radio is a single person activity.

Int: So when you're training a DJ do you tell them to address one person rather than the whole collectivity

PC: Oh yeah they have to have someone in mind.

Int: Yeah ye (.) do you want them to create a general impression of that person they're talking to ?

PC: Um everybody does (2.0) everybody does.

Int: You think so ?

PC: Yes I think so.

Int: Mmm

PC: Whether they admit it or not they do. That's the best example (.) the best example again not being sexist is to imagine you're broadcasting to your grandmother. Because for broadcasting speaking as we are now is speaking too quickly (.) for broadcasting. Um (2.0) automatically if you're speaking to older people your voice slows down so your voice slows down and you're more deliberate in what you're actually saying the clarity comes through (.) the quality of your voice comes through and your personality comes through strongly

Int: Yeah

PC: If you slow the voice down.

Int: Uh huh . Well with the mid morning show if you were doing it how do you think you'd address your listener? Who would be your listener ? How do you create that//

PC: Well I'll tell you I couldn't do do I couldn't do it here. I have done it on other radio stations but disc jockey on mid morning show here I couldn't do it just couldn't do it

Int: Why ?

PC: Well I I haven't got the main I haven't got the skills I haven't got that sort of personality and I haven't got that sort of feel for the music. No I'd tell them to do it.

Int: How ?

PC: Well I do I mean that's my job

Int: No but um what kind of image do you ask them to conjure up about that one listener ? You know when they are addressing that one listener rather than//

PC: Well you'd just say imagine you're broadcasting to one person (.) pick the person you want to broadcast

to in your own mind and broadcast to that person.

Int: Mm hmm. OK. Der der dede der . Do you feel that um the DJs have to (.) create a sense of familiarity a sense of friendliness ?

PC: Yes.

Int: They are a friend?

PC: Oh yes oh yes yes yes and particularly relevant on commercial radio and in local radio like us oh ye yeah yeah. And it is. I mean radio is a very powerful friend. People have incredible relationships with the radio. I mean you just have to listen to what people will talk about on phone-ins (.) which they wouldn't tell their nearest and dearest but they would tell the jock.

Int: Mm yeah

PC: You know they would they remember their birthdays and so on the relationship is very very strong very very strong indeed.

Int: Mmm (.) how do you want the listeners to see your DJs as sort of mini mega figures or um// down to earth

PC: No no. I mean I think the classic I mean if you like I mean the major difference between local radio and network radio (.) I've worked on Radio One and I've worked on Radio Two and and you wouldn't have never had a chance in hell of speaking to me. The walls of Broadcasting House are twenty feet thick I mean. Here (.) I (.) drink in my local pub and and our morning DJ comes to work on the bus which is great and that's how it should be. And he goes to his local pub and he gets a real feeling of the area he's broadcasting to (.) a lot of people feel they're in touch. They mustn't be the big (.) I mean that's the problem with Radio One (.) Radio One's audiences are dropping and Radio Two over the past three years the the presenter feel themselves bigger than the radio station. They're more interested in television or opening

supermarkets and they actually (inaud) and that comes accross.

Int: Mmm focusing on the mid-morning show em do you think that there should be an even balance between enetertainments and seriousness ?

PC: (1.0) No (.) not even. No (.) I mean if you're talking about even in terms of time (.) The difference between a a station like ours and a BBC local radio station although they're changing is that BBC local radio it has programmes (.) At nine o'clock it is the phone in (.) at nine thirty no ten o'clock it's the news and at half past ten we'll have our weekly gardening programme (.) at half past ten we'll join so and so and so and so for our weekly look at the shopping basket at quarter to eleven we have our morning story and then at eleven o'clock it's Fred Nerk's chat programme you see what I mean (.) We have programming blocks so in the morning it is the Mick Toller Morning show between ten and one which could have all those elements in it but the people listening to the radio station listen for entertainment first but then we can put in those programmes the um the short interviews or speeches or live (.) outside broadcasts (.) and drag people across the programme so they will have actually heard those bits and pieces (.) and that's the philosophy that's the philosophy we have in programming the Mick Toller show or (.) we shall all these things in it (.) which could have the Prime Minister in it or it could be an OB from a clothing factory or it could be (.) you know Tom Jones or something (2.0). All those things fit in

Int: Mmm

PC: And you can programme it. (inaud - end of tape)

Int: So once again mid morning show (.) what makes a good show ? What must be in there ? you've already

high//lighted

PC: What makes a good show ? A lot of listeners makes a good show (3.0) What must be in there ? Um (1.0) A far as I'm concerned what must be in there is we've got to have the weather (.) we've got to have the news . There's got to be time checks (.) there's got to be good music (.) the next record has always got to be the one you wanna hear the most (.) right ?

Int: Mmm

PC: There's gotta be a reflection in that programme of the local community that you're broadcasting to. You've got to seem concerned (.) it's got to seem friendly (.) it's got to seem aware. It's also got to entertain first and foremost there's no point in educating or informing unless you can actually do that in an entertaining way. It's also got to have a fair number of commercials to pay for it (2.0) Um (3.0)

Int: Do you think then the listeners like the commercials?

PC: The biggest complaint about commercial radio is the commercials but I mean they're an integral part of the programming and we have to make them work as best we can (.) and you know the better the quality in terms of production and ideas (2.0) er (.) but I think they're useful (.) I mean the point about commercials is they work.

Int: Mmm

PC: And that's fact as a criteria (2.0)

Int: Mmm so music-wise do do you did you say that you chose the play list ?

PC: No I don't choose it (.) it's it's my reseponsibility but the structure's all worked out

Int: Mmm so music-wise do you want the music to go up and down ? You don't want all of it to be really soppy you tend to go up and down (.) bouncy music and then

PC: No no I mean there's loads no no no there's loads of

rules (.) With all this (inaud) we'll always go up
to the news with an oldie . The music (.) I think in
the morning show the music has got to be familiar so
everybody knows what it is (.) there's no point for
us to put a brand new hip hop release in the morning
show she won't know what it is (2.0) (inaud)
Something fairly pacey and bright

Int: Mm hmm

END.

**Interview with Martin Dale
DJ and Deputy Programme
Controller Radio Matchdale**

Int: Why become a DJ?

DJ: Why (.) why did I become a radio presenter ? (.) Erm.
I think it's // because

Int: You prefer the term radio presenter ?

DJ: I think there are significant differences between
disc jockeys and radio presenters=

Int: yeah=

DJ: Er. I mean it's not that I despise the term disc
jockey but I think a disc jockey is a certain kind
of radio presenter=

Int: =mm=

DJ: =What you find in local radio is that you're called
on to do so many different things that aren't disc
jockeying (1.0) I mean being a disc jockey is is is
quite an art (.) um (.) but but when you do perhaps
like the morning show that I do I mean you're
interviewing (.) doing little bits of phone-ins and
goodness knows what else. Um (.) you know I'm called
upon to do outside broadcasts and goodness knows what
else which (.) um you know (.) that isn't disc
jockeying

Int: Yeah

DJ: It's like the difference between a bricklayer and a
builder. So (.) er (.) I've forgotten what the
question was (.) cause you gave me an additional
question.

Int: Well (.) to begin with (.) how long have you been a
DJ and why be a DJ ?

DJ: Why be a DJ. Er (.) er (.) I always wanted to become
a radio presenter. It was in my blood (.) it was one
of those things you know you want to be (.) Um even
when I was about nine or ten I used to play at the

bottom of the garden in a shed I had with tape recorders and things

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: and pretend I was on a radio station and er record tapes and its (.) its from that young I always knew I wanted to be a radio presenter but I never(.) dreamed that it would come to fruition

Int: Why leave Radio Dean ?

DJ: (2.0) Er I started at Dean when I was nineteen and I was doing travel news and was helping to produce the (.) then lunchtime beat show and goodness knows what else and I started doing the odd show and eventually got a daytime show and eventually got the mid-morning show which is like (.) pretty prestigious to have the morning show particularly on a station as big as Dean=

Int: =yeah yeah

DJ: And I enjoyed it very much and I did the morning show for about two years (.) um (.) I did enjoy it (.) and I didn't want to be there so long that I got to the stage where I stopped enjoying it(.) so//I thought

Int: Mm

DJ: I thought OK I've done this and there wasn't another programme at Dean that I wanted to do because I've just about done them all=

Int: =yeah

DJ: So I thought (.) well what do I do now ? so er (.) I decided I wanted (.) a new challenge um (.) I wanted to do more than just present records.I wanted to be involved more behind the scenes at a semi-managerial level (.) So I was looking for a challenge like that. And thankfully that challenge came within within the Dean group. It was (.) Because Radio Matchdale is very closely associated with Dean. Er. and this was offered to me (.) or indeed I offered to do it ((laughs))

Int: ((Laughs))

DJ: So I do the same job as I did at Dean and I'm also Deputy Programme Controller here as well so I I look after things on a day to day level which is exactly the position I wanted. I'm very chuffed to be here. It's a smaller radio station .It's a very compact unit and the potential audience isn't as high as Dean because of the geography of the area and(.) and how many people live here. Um (.) but I suppose I'm I'm higher up a smaller tree if you like.

Int: Mmm yeah. Do you prefer doing the morning show ? Is that your show ?

DJ: Um (.) I think everyone finds (.) its like everyone finds (.) people find they have a best time of day. It's the same with radio presenters. Um I always liked the (.) late night show and the mid-morning show. Breakfast I'm not sufficiently awake=

Int: =No ((laughs))

DJ: The afternoon show I was a bit hyperactive for. I got warmed up all day through and I was on edge by the afternoon (1.0) so I found it was better to just sufficiently wake up to do the morning show or to start to come down at the end of the day and go on the radio (1.0) and then I'm just at my best. I've never done the night show regularly. I've had it on a sort of relief basis. I've done it quite a bit (.) but it's never been mine. But the morning show er (.) you know I've been doing for ages. I love it. Because its um (.) its got so many bits and pieces=

Int: =Mmm

DJ: At Dean I used to have a phone-in for half an hour twice a week um lots of interviews (.) outside broadcasts (.) um a bit of daft DJing a bit of serious stuff. And its a whole mixture which I enjoyed linking together

Int: Yeah. Right. To you what makes a good DJ or (.) radio

presenter whichever you prefer particularly with a view to the mid-morning show? Daytime DJs.

DJ: (3.0) I think there are (.) as you've suggested in your question (.) several kinds of DJ. Er (1.0) there are some people who think that the music is the star of the show and they're merely there to introduce it (.) and their role is to pick the right (.) sort of music and present it in a particular way (.) um (1.0) and talking about (.) I suppose chart shows and (.) things like that so then you've got to be a slick engineer (.) your voice has got to be right (.) has got to sound good. You've got to project. You've got to make make it sound like a whole musical package and you're part of that// but

Int: Yeah

DJ: but a secondary part if you like.

Int: Uhuh.

DJ: That's one kind of radio presentation. But what I think we veer towards at Radio Matchdale is um (1.0) personality radio. Which is (.) you are one of the assets the programme has. You've got the news which people listen out for on a local level. You've got the music that people like because its the popular tunes people love to hear and (.) there's you as well and you're (.) you're adding to it. Um I think as a personality (.) and I use that in (.) I mean I'm not being boastful but I mean thats thats what you are

Int: Uhuh

DJ: You have to (.) to communicate. I suppose that's the best way of summing it up. You have to be a friend in the room. Um you have to pretend you're talking to your one single listener and (1.0). People talk about pop and prattle and drivelling disc jockeys but drivell is what people talk to each other all day (.) in the bus queue (.) in the shops (.) in the office. Basically that's exactly what you're doing. It's very

conversational. You say oh so and so the other day or I went down to see so and so the other day. That's the sort of radio presentation it is . People forget that you're on the radio. You're a friend in the room. You're you're part of their life. Especially when they speak to you (.) or you speak to them every day. And the funniest thing is when people get in touch with you after they've been listening for a long time. And they know you inside out. They know what you feel about certain issues they know what you like (.) what you do (.) where you live (.) They know so much about you and you know nothing about them. And they talk to you like an old friend//and

Int: Yeah

DJ: Of course you don't know them. And that proves (2.0) how well you've come accross. So its being (1.0) er er. The best radio presenters are normal people who come across as friends.

Int: Mmm. So in order to create that friendly atmosphere the main thing is to sort of talk in a general kind of way=

DJ: =Yeah its talk about things//(inaud)

Int: Chit chat you know=

DJ: =That's right. Um I think if you make (.) if you change someone's state of mind that means you've been the best kind of communicator there is. If you've made them laugh (.) or smile (.) or cry you know with some of the sad tales we have or whatever.Um (.) or or or get annoyed. You know you know if you're doing phone-ins or whatever you want people to go AARRHGH (.) you know changing peoples reactions//

Int: Yeah

DJ: means that they're reacting to the radio (.) and that's what you want them to do you know. And I tend to use this device where you you've kind of got this empathy with the listener. You (.) observe things in

life which they've observed without knowing and you say 'have you noticed why so and so happens' and they think 'OH YEAH' ((laughs))

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: 'YEAH I know what he means' And that's when you've achieved this sort of (.) of communication. It's almost psychic if you like. Those kinds of observations which I make are (.) I suppose (.) very ordinary things about everyday life=

Int: Yeah yeah (1.0) Do you feel that you always have to be cheerful (.) always feel you have to get across a sort of very friendly// not too serious

DJ: You've got to be (.) yeah you've got to be so many things (.) Um you (.) Generally I try and be happy because radio is for entertainment. People turn it on because they want (.) entertaining (.) with the music and the chat and everything else. They want information too but that comes that percolates through the base of entertainment. Because people turn on for entertainment um (.) you've got to be fairly cheerful and happy. (.)Um you know you (1.0) Going back to this friend thing (.) a friend is one who comes in and often cheers you up when you're down. A friend isn't one who comes in and mopes every day and moans you know=

Int: =Mmm

DJ: So you've got to be that sort of person=

Int: =Mmm

DJ: But you've also got to be real and be believable (.) so I think you (.) you've got to not always be over the moon all of the time ((laughs)) and it's 24 minutes past 10

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: If you listen to any programme there's a little bit of seriousness. You know you say (.) 'on a more serious note there's an event taking place for cancer

research' and you might go into an aside about cancer for 30 seconds and then you go (.) with the music you blend things to a high pitch again. And also round the news. You can't really go '24 HOURS A DAY THIS IS RADIO MATCHDALE' and then 5 seconds later 100 people have been killed in a bomb blast in Leydon. You've got to be a little bit careful there. It's being sensitive. It's it's um (.) peaks and troughs really. But generally I think it is the energy of happiness.

Int: Yeah. Right. What are the functions of an ILR station?

DJ: The function of a radio station. The function of a radio station. In commercial terms it is to attract the maximum number of listeners so that is always our aim. We have to attract as many listeners as we can and (.) everything we do is geared towards attracting that maximum number (1.0) No . Not everything most of what we do. (.) So we have to (.) cultivate an efficient news service (.) make sure our music policy is good (.) and that the DJs are the right balance throughout the day and overall they constitute the station sound (.) and we have to make the station sound fit the community. What does it do for the community ? I suppose it (.) entertains and informs er (.) and through that I suppose it educates. But I think you (.) you can only educate people if they want to be educated and (.) you have to present things in an interesting and entertaining way

Int: Mmm. Who controls the content of the show?

DJ: O::h so::o many people. We're controlled (.) um. The government decides which radio stations are going where (.) so obviously they have a great deal of control over whether we're on air at all. The IBA is the body which controls the transmitters and actually broadcasts our programmes physically (.) and

obviously they have a code of conduct to which we must adhere which gives us sort of common-sense guidelines on good taste so (.) they I suppose are the body that controls us but on a day to day level of course it's the station management. We're an ordinary company. We have a Managing Director (.) a board (.) and they keep an eye on what we do. I suppose the direct boss is the Programme Controller and it's he who decides which DJs to take on (.) what kinds of programmes they do and how we approach various issues. Having been appointed though they're given a lot of day to day freedom within the programme. They're appointed because they are the right people for the job and because they have an idea what the station sound is. So you do have a lot of day to day freedom which I think is important because they're all sort of creative people and you don't want people breathing down your neck (.) So we're allowed a lot of freedom which is nice (.) within the parameters decided upon by the company. With regard to competitions (.) small little features you discuss that with with the programme controller. Um obviously if you're talking about changing the whole sound of the station that would have to go to a higher level (.) but you do have a lot of freedom within a programme which is nice.

Int: Would you not contact listeners before a change? Like (.) I know you've got a Careline (.) how did that come into being ?

DJ: I think the Careline offered (2.0) a service (.) which at that time Radio Matchdale did not. I suppose it's a caring side. I mean they are part of the er CSV (2.0) Council Service Vol (.) Community Service Volunteers. They are offering (.) a service to the community and (.) so it's quite separate really but they they they use radio as part of that service to

inform people of (.) things that are going on and things they may wish to know about. It comes about really because its something the radio station feels that it should be involved in(.) and obviously CSV were keen to establish this kind of contact (.) So (1.0) I think (.) It's a concept which works very well at other radio stations. Dean's had one for (2.0) yes about 4 years now. Other radio stations have had them for even longer (.) and it's a nice joining together of ideas (.) I meanPeople always come to the radio station when they want to know something. We get phone calls from people who say (.) you know (.) what time is such and such a market open (.) and sometimes you feel like saying well why the devil should we know (.) you know (.) because we don't know the times of every market in Leydonshire. But the reassuring thing is that people think that the radio station knows and that's that's the biggest compliment anyone can pay us I think. So the thing about Careline is you've got people there who 've got the time to answer queries and we can accomodate all sorts of material which would be difficult otherwise.

Int: So the community does respond to careline?

DJ: Oh indeed yes. We get lots and lots and lots of calls (2.0) I mean the number of calls (.) isn't the only indicator of the success of a service like that(.) I mean we may broadcast information about an organisation and as a result of that they get lots of (inaud)

Int: What makes a good show?

DJ: You've got to enjoy yourself. I think I think if it comes to the day when you start to treat the radio station just like any other job p'raps it's time to move on. I thoroughly enjoy what I do and I think the vast majority of us within the organisation do and I feel that comes across. The feeling you get after

what's called a good show is incomparable . It's a lovely feeling of well being and you're on top of the world. It really is nice.

Int: So that's your personal definition of a good show (.) what's in a good show ? What does a good show consist of?

DJ: The thing is sometimes you really enjoy a show (2.0) and other times you don't. The art of being a good presenter is to be able to bring the standard of a programme which is going that well up to (.) a satisfactory standard. And (.) you know (.) sometimes you have to make it sound as though you're enjoying yourself if you're having a bad day or whatever. It's not easy always to sound happy when you've got personal circumstances around you that are not too good you know.

Int: Yeah

DJ: So so you just have to make sure that the average quality for your show is not average but it's reasonably good.

Int: Mmm.Yuh. Do you think your show is primarily a means of entertainment? Would you say that ?

DJ: Yes. As I've said before I think what (.)what you have to do is is to entertain and when you entertain and play good music that's how you attract the largest possible audience.

Int: When you say that//(inaud)

DJ: Can I can I just mention one thing. When I said before that what we do is attract the largest level of listenership. That is not to say we rule out things that (.) I mean I mean that (2.0) at certain times of the week(.) We don't. If that were the case perhaps we wouldn't have (1.0) um I don't know perhaps a classical music programme on saturday night.I mean its got a very good audience (2.0) but um (.) during the last series of programmes on

Matchdale it had a very good audience and people who listened to it really enjoyed it but obviously um (.) you stand to attract a larger audience by playing pop music back to back. But it's something a radio station should be doing so you try (.) try and please the maximum number of people. You have to bear in mind the various sections of the community.

Int: Mmm. The listener wants to be entertained - do you think they like entertainment that reflects real life things that are going on in the community (.) or do they prefer entertainment which provides a means of escapism? How do you see your entertainment?

DJ: Um I think you escape to a certain extent//

Int: Through what?

DJ: Through the music and because of the feeling of well being(.) that takes you away. For example people working in factories (.) it takes them away from the drudgery of a life which can be sometimes mundane. So it is escapism. You escape with the singing along of records or thinking of what a record reminds you of. Or you escape when you laugh at something the DJ says. Um (.) But then (.) continually through the programmes there is information and reality there (.) so it's//((inaud))

Int: Balanced between them?

DJ: Yeah its its fact and fiction combined. A bit like soap operas (.) there are social issues tucked in there and yet it is a source of entertainment.

Int: How do you picture an average listener? Have you got an impression in mind?

DJ: She's female(.) She's thirty five. Um (2.0) She's probably got a son like me. Um //

Int: A bit like you ((laughs))

DJ: Yeah ((laughs))

Int: Can you enlarge on that ?

DJ: No ((laughs)) I'd rather not

Ipt: ((laughs))

DJ: That's who I talk to. Having said all that(.) you obviously have to bear in mind that I mean your audience is made up of so many different kinds of people which is why we'll play a fast record followed by a slow one or an old record followed by a new record. Um (.) you've got to realise your audience is from six to a hundred and six and you've always got to be aware not to do the same thing for too long a period of time within the show (.) to balance it out. But I think it is important to have some idea of the kind of person you would appeal to. Obviously different presenters have different people in mind which is why in a radio station you have different presenters and together they please just about everyone. You know (.) because the presenter who follows me may have a 16 year old girl in his mind (.) probably has ((laughs)) But I mean that's my listener.

Int: Why do you see her as a woman thirty five with a son like you? There must be//

DJ: Well I think ((laughs)) mid-morning radio mid morning radio has always been considered housewife radio. It isn't to the same extent now (.) Um actually in some periods of the morning you have more men listening than women. It was considered housewife radio because the man went out to work and the woman stayed at home but now a lot of women work and men are at home because of unemployment and whatever (.) or listening at work. So your ideas of 1977 midmorning radio and Glen Campbell records (.) you can't really apply them to 1987 but I think to a certain extent (.) I think I still go for a female audience. I mean you flirt with them(.) that's exactly what you do for 3 hours. But what you've not got to do is to do it to the extent that it annoys the men listening. What you've got to

be is a brother to the men listening(.) you've got to be a son to the mothers listening (.) a potential boyfriend to the girls listening (.) you've got to be a big brother to the little kids listening(.) You've got to be (2.0) All listeners are part of your family and you've got to find your role and associate with them.

Int: Do you think you put more weight on one of these aspects or one of these roles?

DJ: I suppose I'm a son more than anything else.

Int: Do you think you do flirt with the audience then=

DJ: =Oh yeah

Int: How do you do this?

DJ: I don't think I could even try to explain..It's just how you would flirt with a person(.) Its its (.) TVAM called it sexual chemistry(.) and I suppose that's exactly what I'm doing now.It's the same thing

Int: Do you ever receive angry letters from husbands and boyfriends who don't like their girlfriends// and wives listening?

DJ: No no. No (.) it's not real. Because you're not doing it to them personally. They think you are but of course you've no contact with them. No no(.) But you do get some odd letters. Do you get some odd letters .I mean you get some people who are lonely and who listen to you day in day out and you become more a part of their life and they feel as though they really do know you and they start writing to you(.) everyday. And I've got (3.0) a lady who used to write me every single day day (2.0) and those were letters of 30 pages. This is not exaggeration (.) this is fact. They started off quite friendly(.) this that and the other and towards the backend of my time at Dean they were obscene (.) absolutely obscene. And the funny thing was that she created her own get-out clauses. She used to say 'I'll meet you at so and so.

Please be there' and of course I wasn't so the next day she would say 'I'm sorry I couldn't make it'. She made herself deliberately late so that she would not have the disappointment of finding that I wasn't there. So in her mind I was there and she wasn't and so it goes on and on and on. Every so often she'd (1.0) it's like Play Misty for Me really and she would interpret every record I played (.) everything I said as vital to our relationship.

Int: Did you ever find out who she was ?

DJ: Oh yes I've met her. Every every time I was opening a fete she'd find out and she'd be there so I met her several times (2.0) It's important to be nice to everyone I mean it's no good being Mr Nice on air and when you go to a fete you open it (.) take a lot of money for doing it and then just swan off. You've got to be the same person when you meet the public as you are on air. You've got to be nice to everyone. So um with people like that you've got to be pleasant enough (.) you've not got to say oh god(.) but but you've not got to encourage them.

Int: Well, with reference to this lonely listener do you think that one of your tasks is to combat loneliness (.) say the loneliness of the housewife at home. Do you try to incorporate this into the programme(.) as you've already said your programme is orientated towards women

DJ: Yeah (.) well as I said at the beginning radio is a friend and lonely people need a friend very badly so they rely on radio more than everyone else. Particularly the night shows. I mean night time I think is probably when they feel the most lonely

Int: Mmm

DJ: Sitting there on their own (.) no one to phone up no one to come round so they turn on the radio and you're there. Radio at night time I think is a little

more casual a little slower and you can communicate even better so I think for all those reasons the relationship between the radio presenter and lonely person is is is the strongest.

Int: Do you receive a lot of suggestive letters or was that just a one-off thing?

DJ: Um um (3.0)

Int: Because there is a theory that women tend to see DJs as male substitute lovers and tend to be attracted towards them.

DJ: I've probably had 3 or 4 people who tried to get closer than the relationship I tried to establish.(2.0) It all adds to the spice of life - I wouldn't have anything to talk about in interviews if it didn't happen ((laughs)). It's all part of the job.

Int: So it's not a big thing

DJ: No. Most people are fairly sensible about it but you know and er (.) and they're just (2.0) Having said that I do understand how people feel when they are lonely.

Int: Most of the letters you receive - are they from women?

DJ: You get them from all sorts of people. I don't get as many here as I got in Norchester because people haven't had as much time to get to know me(.) But it's like a friend coming round: it takes a bit of time to get to know them but then you get to say 'I like him' so it takes time. It depends why they are writing in.(end of tape - inaudible)

Int: How do you think the listener sees you?

DJ: Hopefully they they'll see me in station terms in the kind of way I've suggested within the family sort of arrangement The lovely thing is that they always do create a physical image of me and they always say 'you don't look how you sound: I thought you was

older' (mock regional accent). I started when I was 19 and what you start to do is is(.) You develop your voice. You use your voice in a slightly different way when you are on the radio. So people have always said 'I thought you were older'. I mean I'm 26 now (.) I suppose soon they'll start saying 'I thought you was younger' (mock regional accent) The thing is with DJs you exercise your voice so regularly that it doesn't age. You do of course. People I think imagine you as wonderful looking, which of course I'm not

Int: ((laughs)) oh you're beautiful

DJ: ((laughs)) Thank you just just just the average boy from next door. But people um people have got a glamorous idea of DJs.um(.) and (3.0) in a way you've got to (2.0) cultivate that . They want you to open their fetes and galas and still be a celebrity. They want that and yet they also want you to be normal on the radio so you've got to (2.0) Radio is larger than life and sometimes you've got to play that up and sometimes you've got to be dead normal. It's a matter of getting the balance right between the two. They want you to stand (.) I mean if I do a gig if I'm going to do a gig I'll dress (2.0) a little bit outrageously as that's what they expect

Int: Yeah

DJ: I won't dress like the boy next door. Going back to Tony Blackburn because I think he's wonderful ((laughs)) he once when he was on the pirate radio ships in the sixties (.) you know all about pirate radio ships don't you

Int: Mmm

DJ: He he was on there and in the sixties they were so popular and people (.) girls used to come out there on boats to see their presenters and he Tony Blackburn used to get off his boat and go down and meet them (.) and his boss said to him 'don't go down

(.) they want to see you up there (.) they want to see you from a distance (.) they want to see you looking down at them' and that to a certain extent is true. They want you to be larger than life (.) and yet they want to count on you as one of the family (.) It's a dichotomy (mock mid-Atlantic intellectual accent)

Int: ((laughs)) Very good word ((laughs)) (.) So you can't really say more more than that about how you think the listener sees you (.) you think // larger than life

DJ: Probably probably think I'm a bit older(.) a bit better looking (.) a bit bigger because your personality on radio you put everything into your voice. They probably think there's more to me physically (.) more of an aura. They also probably think I'm very extravert which I'm not by any means. I'm shy as anything (.)many many radio presenters are. I suppose those are the misconceptions.

Int: Talking about your voice. There's evidence to suggest that when you're talking to a female you talk differently// than

DJ: Course you do // course

Int: Do you think you talk differently to women than to men? Do you think this comes accross on air (.) and have you noticed it in other DJs?

DJ: I think (.)It's not just(.) presenters . It's people generally. If you're talking to someone who (2.0) sounds really common you do not start talking (.) really posh. You you (.)It's like when you talk to someone with an accent and you start mimicking their accent . You don't mean to be rude but it just happens and and you you adjust to(.) the company you are in. And in radio you do (.) when you're playing a silly record and being daft you kind of (3.0) you're a bit more (2.0) down to earth and common and normal.

Um and its its its I suppose you camp it up a bit that's what it comes down to. When you're doing a serious interview you adopt a more eloquent tone and a deep voice and and you use your voice in so many different ways because you are achieving different things. It's like its just just like people you behave in different ways in different circumstances

Int: Yeah have you picked up on it in other presenters ?

DJ: Because presenters play different roles in this family I've described um (1.0) This is getting awfully deep and I'm not sure where we're going but but I think presentation roles can be more masculine or more feminine. It depends on what they're doing and how they're doing it. Full stop. ((laughs))

Int: Right. End of conversation. Why do you think there are so few female DJs?

DJ: Research has proven (.) and this is not mine but its echoed by many surveys throughout the years - that (.) people (.) prefer to listen to a man's voice on the radio than a woman's voice. Women like to hear men on the radio perhaps because they're used to it and it's a bit strange to have a woman talking to you (.) And men seem to like hearing men on the radio (.) perhaps they're just chauvinistic. Whatever the reasons research has borne out this fact you know that people like to have men on the radio and so we go along with the consensus of opinion. So we have a lot of men on We do have women - Marie does an admirable job on the phone in. We've got a lot of woman newscasters so you know (.) there's certainly no prejudice. And also the fact that it's a more popular sort of occupation to men. We get a lot of tapes from people who want to be DJs and they're all from men.

Int: That's suprising because there's supposed to be an increasing number of women entering media jobs

DJ: I think I think I think it'll turn round a bit. I

think there will be a cult (3.0) there'll be a cult woman on a national radio station perhaps when Independent National Radio starts a cult woman on a national radio station and as soon as this happens and people get used to having a woman every radio station will have a woman. There is there is there's a sort of female presentation style which is coming up. Um I suppose it's the Janice Long style from Radio One. There are a lot of pseudo Janice Longs around and but have you noticed all the women (.) or a lot of the women (.) I've heard have got deep voices so they have the tonal quality of a man whilst having the femininity of a woman. If women stopped doing that and were just themselves I think it might (1.0) I don't know (.) I'm not averse to female presenters

Int: Why do you feel listeners are averse ?

DJ: For the reasons I've mentioned. Perhaps because of chauvinism (.) perhaps what they're used to (.) perhaps sexual chemistry. Ask me another question. Go on before the tape runs out

Int: Do you feel any social responsibility to the community? Obviously you have your own opinions on social issues etcetera (.) how far do you feel able to voice these opinions? Now there's a big one eh.

DJ: I think because you are a personality real personality you are expected to have opinions (.) on certain things I don't think you should abuse the privilege of being on the radio (.) to necessarily expound those views and to expect a result from (.) you (.) there are some issues which are pretty (.) safe (.) that you know the majority of people in this country would not like (.) child abuse. It's not a matter of saying well if I say let's deal very severely with people who abuse children you're going to get a lot of people saying he shouldn't have said that (.) you know that the majority are with you. I

think you know that you're pretty safe on an issue like that Politics you don't get into. In a phone-in situation you play the devil's advocate -arguing the point to bring out aspects of the argument. Whatever side of the political fence you're on you'll often get accused of being on the opposite side. So you don't get involved but I think you're expected to have opinions to a certain extent.

Int: Do you not think that your listeners will be able to pick up where you lie politically? Do you think not think there are times when it might seep out?

DJ: Possibly so. Especially in phone-ins (.) talking about a lot of issues yourself and you draw from personal experience so it may seep out.

Int: What sort of issues do you steer clear of ?

DJ: On phone-ins you don't steer clear of anything. You capitalise on controversy and (2.0) contentious issues. One person comes on and gets very het up and it prompts other people to do the same p'raps in the opposite direction or to reinforce what they've said.

Int: But you don't actually get involved yourself ? You wait until the next person comes on to comment on it?

DJ: You you you do get involved in that you ride with their passion (.) if they get very very passionate about something you almost have to shout to make yourself heard not necessarily to interrupt but to get through and its no good you sitting there like this if they're going AARGH you know you you ride along with the crest of the wave.

Int: Well for example if you've got a very racist person on the line do you not feel er one of your tasks on radio your job is to have to combat racism things like that ?

DJ: If you've got a racist person on the phone (2.0) um you'll put the opposing point of view um (5.0) if you've got someone who's not racist you won't

advocate that they should adopt racism (.) because that's against the law but there are other issues when you would switch the roles around.

Int: Shall we talk about music? How important is music to your show?

DJ: We've talked about it all before. We're doing it all again because the silly idiot forgot to record it. That's why we don't have female presenters ((laughs)). Very important. Music is compiled by (.) the Programme Controller decides which records we're going to play. But there's flexibility. I supplement the play list with a choice of oldies (.) bearing in mind the profile of the audience. Audience research tells us the profile of the station currently.

Int: Do you think your records um project a particular mood? Do they evoke a particular mood in people?

DJ: Yes. Which is what I said earlier about (.) yes You change people's (2.0) emotions. You play a record which reminds them of going on holiday in 1967 to Skegness their eyelashes flutter and their eyes go watery and they remember it all. Yes (.) your records like your comments can manipulate emotions.

Int: Don't you think your records are very lovey-dovey?

DJ: Yes yes I like love songs. So so my personality is probably reflected in the kinds of records I have a propensity to play.

Int: Do you play these records so that people can relate to one common interest?

DJ: Yes (.) it's something that (.) people have relationships people have feelings for each other. It's something that people can associate with you know . It's like talking about health everyone has a body. Its like talking about food (.) everyone eats. You know these are very safe issues.

Int: Moving on to adverts. How important are adverts?

DJ: Important as they pay the wages. We don't get money

from anywhere else. No adverts no Radio Matchdale. Yes very important. And also they work. Also they're providing a service (.) local information

Int: Do any of the adverts make you feel uncomfortable as they are full of stereotypes?

DJ: Give me a stereotype

Int: Let me think (2.0) I don't know you've always got your wife at home looking after the kids// your

DJ: Yeah we're conscious of that as broadcasters and try to avoid it. We realise that in all cases the wife is not left at home but there are a lot of the public where they've been brought up in that kind of society where the wife always was at home. If you're trying to sell a product to someone of that age group who has been brought up with those kinds of views you sell it in a way they will understand. So you'll sell it with a stereotype. When people's conceptions of society change ads will reflect that. I would prefer it if they wouldn't do it(.) but anyway a bad advert will disappear through natural selection.

Int: How important do you think having a representation of the family is on air like in the adverts?

DJ: Yeah (2.0) wholesome family person world is a wonderful place we're all happy together(.) I think that's the sort of atmosphere you go for.

Int: Do you definitely go for that?

DJ: Yeah (.) whilst understanding there are single parent families

Int: Do you think you reinforce the idea that it's natural for the wife to stay at home and the husband go out to work?

DJ: No. No I don't no I don't. Housewife radio does not exist anymore as such . No I don't particularly say if you're female and you're standing at home washing the dishes you know. I'll say if you're washing the pots(.) you can be male or female you know. I live on

my own .I wash the pots. I make the dinner. When I talk about cooking I talk about cooking because I live on my own and I cook sort of thing.

Int: What do you think you put accross about ideas towards feminism?

DJ: In a general show you wouldn't say you're for or against. It wouldn't come up. I think we're against sexism but that's probably as far as it goes. I hope we're not anti feminist.

Int: Why do listeners phone in?

DJ: Because you ask them to. Well (.) sometimes it's because they know you've been talking all morning and they want to talk back (.) and again that's a lovely measure of the fact that you must be communicating. Sometimes you feel as though you're communicating (.) sometimes you feel you're talking to a microphone. It's like doing a show to nobody.

Int: Are you conscious of the dual role of the DJ in that you've got to establish a relationship with the person on the phone and you you've also got to maintain the interest of all the other listeners. Are you (.) conscious of having a dual role ?

DJ: Yes you are. You've got to get to the bottom of the person's mind who is phoning in whilst explaining any terms or names or subjects which may alienate anyone else listening in. You must clarify terms in not a patronising way but a careful way. Sometimes some of the callers are so thick so that sometimes you can quietly take the mick so that anyone with a bit of intelligence knows and finds it amusing but the person at the end of the phone doesn't know what you're doing so you're not offending anyone so you're alright. You've got to be careful. If you were blatantly rude to them it wouldn't be right at all. basically most of radio comes down to common sense.

Int: How are slots for example news (.) Careline assigned

in your show?

DJ: It's all formatted. Each half hour of the day has a piechart which tells what records to play (.) and Careline. It's formulated to attract the maximum audience - also to balance it out. You wouldn't have big interviews next to Careline next to a news bulletin. You've got chunks of music between them. I mean Radio Matchdale is like a tap, turn it on and Radio Matchdale falls out. Whether I'm on or not the product is basically the same - records the same (.) the jingles the same (.) presentation style is the same (.) personalities might be slightly different but it's all the same kind of style. You tailor to people's lifestyle

Int: Do you think that's enough ?

DJ: Yes I mean look at the newspapers people buy. People don't buy the *Times* (.) well some people buy the *Times* and it's an excellent newspaper (.) but if you look at the mass market people buy the *Sun*. I'm not suggesting we're a *Sun* on the radio (.) I hope we're more of a *Daily Mail*. But people er want just enough. People can read more if they want it. People have attention spans you know. It's like they say in America (.) if you haven't got your message accross in 30 seconds don't bother.

Int: Do you ever take the mick out of political parties?

DJ: You laugh at you laugh at and draw attention to anything that people will know and understand. People will know the character of Margaret Thatcher better than the character of Neil Kinnock. Thatcher is in power longer. You use anything that you have in common with the audience (.) they know the antics of the Government better than the opposition. If it was a Labour Government um then you know you'd do the opposite (.) people always take the mickey out of establishments and that's all I do really (.) not to

a great extent just tongue in cheek.

Int: Do you think your average listener could guess your political beliefs?

DJ: No I don't think radio is that deep. The average listener doesn't go into it that deep. People just turn it on and I don't think people are really all that worried. They just find it friendly.

Interview with Morris Goodman DJ Radio Matchdale

(First tape damaged, therefore no transcript produced)

Int: Have you ever had a letter er from a bloke (.) um concerning how their girlfriend pays too much attention to you (.) anything like that?

DJ: Never. Ever. No which reflects=

Int: You seem surprised

DJ: Well not really (.) I er er (.) get hate mail from my mum and dad some weeks

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: I think it reflects the attitude that people have towards a radio presenter um (.) They don't (.) um they don't take you seriously as such (.) they just see you as being there wallpaper. No (.) I mean I'm not er er even problems about when I've taken up a subject which has been slightly (1.0) er sensitive (1.0) nobody's really bothered to write . Maybe they're just apathetic I dunno. I mean you get sometimes a phone call but not a not a not in the situation you're talking about. In reply to something you might have said on the air about politics or something like that but er not very much at all no.

Int: Oh er I'm quite surprised. David Lloyd was going on about a woman who followed him round ((laughs)) all over the place.

DJ: Oh you get nutters people you know I mean I have people who have switched in to me (.) um and have a fascination for me but usually they're unattached because of the way they are

Int: ((Laughs))

DJ: So nobody's really bothered about them except me in you er wondering (.) I mean I don't get hate mail or anything or um they just do things like they bring

you cakes in and (.) nice things which (.) you know it's nice to say thank you for (.) but I mean I've had a woman send me money before now and no address on it (.) I'm talking you know a couple of tenners (.) and you can't do anything I mean you can't ask for her to call you particularly (.) you know say 'I've got a couple of tenners' because everybody would call you (.) and there's no address it's just a comment about something you said on your programme which doesn't make any sense whatsoever and a ten pound note in the envelope and (.) you can't do anything about it. But you feel bad about it because you feel somebody is confusing reality with what's on the radio and (.) you know they probably can't afford that ten pounds and you can't do anything you can't give it back to them because you don't know who they are

Int: Mmm

DJ: You know and that's the very sad side of it. If they bring you a cake in that's that's up to them you know and you say hello but nobody gets really manic about it.

Int: So you don't get suggestive letters either?

DJ: No not really (.) no or I can't think of any. I mean you do get the occasional schoolgirl who'll write to you and say 'I think your voice is lovely and you're great and will you send me a photo' (.) so you send them a photo and a reply and and that's fine. One (.) the breakfast presenter got somebody writing him strange letters of a sexual nature but I mean he just took it in light heart. It was an obvious wind up somebody was getting a kick out of it but you know nothing ever came of it and he never pursued it (.) that's one thing you never do (.) you never take it seriously and try and meet them or anything like that because (.) you're dealing with a very risky

situation

Int: Mmm

DJ: Rule one.

Int: Mmm so do you do you think you flirt on air at all ?

DJ: Um (.) tease um I dunno about flirt um (1.0) I never um if a lady writes me a letter I wouldn't (1.0) I wouldn't really put myself in a position of trying to flirt with her no no

Int: Cos there is//

DJ: If you flirt with one person you're excluding everybody else which is the problem when you have a phone-in conversation with one person (.) you're excluding everybody else from the conversation (.) so unless you turn it around and make it a funny conversation with that person as a general thing um (.) it can be very boring. That's why I don't take phonecalls on the programme very often because I just find it boring to anybody else.

Int: Do you find it difficult trying er going for that dual role (.) do you find it difficult (.) to get accross when you are trying to have a conversation with somebody on a phone-in you are excluding the wider audience (.) do you find it really really difficult ?

DJ: No not really. My professional attitude turns it so it its part of the programme (1.0) which is er. Some people do get it wrong like that (.) I mean Martin has a very good way of just telling them they're off the air and telling them to count to ten when they aren't off the air and you leave them counting or you leave two peole talking to each other thinking they're not on the radio (.) which is a very funny way of turning a phonecall into a very entertaining piece for everybody

Int: Mmmm

DJ: But um we don't use phones all that often because you

find that most people don't have an awful lot to say who ring you up (.) unless it's on a talk-back programme because there it's entertaining just to hear people's people's ideas about things.

Int: Mmm. Right it's um been said that we alter our voices when talking to either a male or a female (.) are you conscious of this? Or can you pick it up in er other DJs?

DJ: No.

Int: Definitely not ?

DJ: I don't think so I think cos you use your (.) voice six days a week for three and a half hours or whatever your voice just remains the same (.) or should do. If you're a seasoned presenter it should do it's it's just the voice you were born with and cultured to broadcast with. I mean I don't think I change my voice when I talk to (.) I'm not changing it when I talk to you I'm not changing it for anybody.

Int: And you don't notice it in any other DJs?

DJ: No ((laughs)) not really.

Int: Right OK. Um (1.0) you said that you don't think there's a typical housewife out there. Therefore do you not see you role as combatting loneliness of the housewife at home by herself

DJ: I think I think we're an important media for anyone at home who's lonely. That's proven time and time again on the nighttime programme because there's a lot of people listening at nighttime when you'd expect the audience to be low (.) although overall it's quite low against daytime programming um they get (.) probably a better response to a phone-in than we would during the day (.) because that's when the lonely people are sitting up and they've got nothing to do and they don't want to watch television (.) and there's an access and a communication via the radio

to a phone-in programme (.) I've done nighttimes and that's what I've found. People are much more willing to communicate and there are a lot of lonely people out there. So (.) I mean it's not just women you can't say housewife (.) I don't think a housewife is particularly lonely er I think just generally (.) businessmen can be lonely they can be successful businessmen but (.) have no girlfriend because of their success and (.) you know they they wanna communicate (1.0) they switch you on if they're lonely.

Int: Um (.) why do you think there are so few women DJs ?

DJ: ((Laughs)) probably because they don't apply. It's it's that is literally it. There's (1.0) there's more men who want to be DJs for the wrong reason and most women don't even think they can be a DJ.

Int: Are you basing this on official statistics ?

DJ: Yeah because (1.0) er our boss here has looked for women and couldn't find them. They're there but the ones that are there are being used um (1.0). there are reasons why you can't use certain women who do send in tapes because they don't have the right voice or (.) the right capacity to communicate (.) the way you want them to. Or they won't handle the situation (.) so (.) er a woman broadcaster um is a rare animal. There are certain (.) I suppose because men aren't so good at doing things that maybe women can do (.) I'm not being sexist but it's true that (.) maybe certain women er couldn't do what the men do (.) so they are few and far between but I'm sure there's a helluva lot of them out there that would be really er extrememly good communicators but have never ever given it a thought of doing it (.) maybe because they're doing a job which either pays more money or is more interesting to them.

Int: No other reasons why they are not attracted to//

DJ: No I mean we don't say no um (1.0) if a good broadcsater comes along and it happens to be a woman then we'd throw our arms up in joy. Um (1.0) we've got Marie who does our phone in she er was with the Careline and (.) she was invited to become a broadcaster because they said she had what it took (.) and she wasn't sure (.) even she wasn't sure whether she had what it took and they said 'you have you have really do it' and she did it and she found out that she (.) as I said there are men who I've bumped into out there and thought 'you'd be good on the radio' er but they've never considered it because there are more important things to do for them maybe.

Int: Mmm. Do you think um the listener notices this absence of female DJs ?

DJ: No I think er for so long they've they've been used to men (.) like they've been used to the BBC. like we still have people saying (mock whining voice) 'Oh I like the radio but I don't like the commercials' because people have been brought up in this country with radio being the BBC with no comercials (.) and television has er has really only just got into that with ITV you know (.) people have people accept that. and people have always had men disc jockeys so when a woman comes along it's to a certain extent a novelty but there 's no reason why they shouldn't accept it and I've worked stations where they've had women and they've been perfectly perfectly well accepted (.) they do daytime strip shows and stuff not just late night programmes or whatever. A lot of woemn do actually go into journalism. They don't see themselves (.) maybe they they (.) men sell themselves down the river somewhat because they see they don't see (1,0) well some guys do journalism (.) but they don't quite see it as being (1.0) the kind of job it is. Women (.) think it is not serious

enough for them so they become a journalist. The trouble is most of the woemn who become journalists are very hard bitten women (.) very masculine women (.) you don't see many feminine journalists. I've never worked with any feminine journalists. They've all been very hard bitten hard left wing women which doesn't make for being a good disc jockey particularly (.) whereas men are probably a bit softer and don't take such a hard line that's why we make good disc jockeys

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: Well we're more into communication than politics and the women who get interested in broadcasting tend to be more interested in politics. Any any woman I've ever met who's been into journalism has been a hard left person with very hard views. Any woman that I've met on the disc jockey side has been very mild-mannered as a woman and not been very politically motivated.

Int: Mmm do you think a woman's voice puts listeners off (.) because they are used to a man's voice on air ?

DJ: (1.0) Um I think it depends on the voice. I mean a man's voice would put a woman or a listener off generally (.) if it's the wrong voice. As I said to you before (.) people are sensitive to voice (.) they pick up a lot in a voice they they can see it exuding friendlineess sarcasm angriness or whatever it happens to be (.) and if a woman's voice sounds grating or high (.) shrill then that will switch them off. If it sounds dusky and sexy (1.0) unfortunately that switches them on (.) now Marie has got a dusky sexy deep voice perfect for it (.) she's actually nothing like that when you meet her (.) she's a very sweet lady but she's not like that but people are conned totally by the voice. People are conned by my voice. They think I'm older when I'm not (.) they

they build a mental picture so it's really your voice
(.) if your voice is right. For some women that can
be hard because their voice is naturally higher.

(inaudible - moving around studio)

Int: Do you feel you have any responsibility to the
community cos you're on air and you can appeal to a
wider audience ?

DJ: Oh yeah because you're on air and you could be very
irresponsible um I mean we we have the social
responsibility in doing community cards you know
whats on where it's on lost and founds (.) that's our
social responsibility. Um if we were to slag Leydon
off all the time or whatever (.) I don't mean be a
boot licker and say what a wonderful place it is but
if we were to slag it off all the time we would be
very irresponsible and we have the the Asian
population and we programme for that (.) if we didn't
we'd be socially irresponsible. So in our programming
how we programme ourselves really reflects that.

Int: Do you think one of your tasks is to combat things
like sexism and racism ?

DJ: Um (.) I think we have to be aware of it I don't
think we have to push it. We're not sexist in the
fact that we have a housewife's programme or you know
a young person's programme um (1.0) we we're very
aware of the racist thing and and the political thing
as well. We we have to balance it all out. You have
to be very careful cos there's so much you're
treading on eggs in Leydon cos you know you've got a
Labour Council you've got a very big Asian community
a very big West Indian community um we programme for
all those people (.) our news isn't biased in any way
and what the DJs say is not sexist or racist or
anything you know you just don't do that (.) it's bad
taste anyway I mean (.) we it's like swearing on the
radio you don't say (end of tape inaudible)

Int: What about your own personal views (.) say towards racism and things like that (.) do you think you keep them out the programme ?

DJ: Er (.) yeah// I think so

Int: Or do you get strongly worked up about something that you've read in the papers

DJ: Well I'm not racist so it wouldn't come out really er well no I'd talk about that if I saw something that was racist (1.0) er or if it was something like Bernie Grant talking about how black people should be entitled to twice as much money for doing a job that a white person could do because they've had it so bad for so long I would come out and counteract that remark and put a point forward (.) and say he's talking rubbish or whatever (.) now that might be assumed that I'm being racist but I'd be quoting a newspaper (.) and and I think it's our duty not to be (.) oh oh we mustn't mention black people or Asian people or whatever (.) we we we deal with subjects like that and we say if it's fair or not (1.0) but we leave it open for other people (.) we try and not make it a personal issue we quote it from the paper and say that's what they've reported um so we're not accused of being biased in any way

Int: Have you ever let anything slip (.) anything that you feel strongly about (.) say er (1.0) drunk drivers or anything like that got carried away

DJ: Well I do I do feel strongly about drunk drivers and I have recently tackled that and I don't think anybody can pan you for saying quite honestly I think people who people who drive drunk should have their licence removed for ever or people who have a hit and run accident when they're under the influence of drink and kill somebody should be given life imprisonment (.) er I mean I've said that and I should imagine that the majority of people apart from

people who like to drive drunk would agree with it

Int: Mmmmm

DJ: I haven't got into trouble for that (.) I did say something once which in reflection was wrong in (.) that when you go out you're always looking for real live things to talk about you know people on the bus things like that and I went into a newsagents and like we all do you stand there and you're looking at things on the magazine rack er and I was just looking through actually for something and the guy came up to me you know and was extremely rude to me and said you know are you going to buy something (.) and I'd only just walked in (.) and er I gave him a mouthful and told him what a rude so and so he was (.) and I reflected this story on the radio but the one mistake I made was I actually mentioned (.) the shop. I said oh I won't mention it but to everybody down at so and so clean up your act otherwise you're not going to have any customers left by the end of the month (.) er now I shouldn't have actually mentioned the company's name because although they were totally in the wrong and deserved to be ridiculed they didn't have a right of reply and I was actually technically abusing my privilege of being on the radio

Int: Mmmhmm

DJ: And they quite rightly rang up and said now listen here you can't do this and we said well no we can't but you did deserve it but we will make an apology which in a way takes the sting away from what you were saying. So you have to be careful (.) you do have legal things you have to just check on before cos if I read something out the newspaper about something say the canned pilchards episode that they were taken off the shelf because they were dangerous (.) now if I made a comment on that just because it was in the newspaper this station could be sued

because in fact it wasn't even true (1.0) and um the police department might be sued because you know of this pi you know pilchard jamboree food poisoning and it wasn't anything to do with them. So you've got to be careful with things like that and your mind has to think legally can I say this could we get sued for it (1.0) and we're all made to be aware of that I don't think anything drastic has ever slipped out.

Int: What about any phonecalls an ignorant phone caller I know you don't deal with phone-ins very often but have you ever had a anybody who's completely ignorant say whos treating AIDS in the wrong manner// have you ever really snapped

DJ: Yeh (.) er well I haven't but Marie has (.) I mean I have a long time back when I did phone-calls told people that they were out of order or they are a waste of time on this planet and put the phone down on them (.) cos they can be rude to you so you can be rude back to them and anyway it generates more calls from listeners. Marie's done that (.) she's called somebody a prat and told him his opinions were weren't worth a fart or whatever you know (.) er yeh I don't see why you should be totally nice to people if they act to be ignorant or racist or or just ignorant towards life then you should tell them so (.) and er there's no reason why you shouldn't without being too heavy on them (.) shouldn't put your own oar in.

Int: Mmm on the whole do you try not to be too controversial (.)// avoid conflict

DJ: Yeh (.) er (1.0) the only reason why we don't is because people are listening really as wallpaper (.) um// and

Int: Here we go again

DJ: Yeah and the the the problem is (.) they don't hear the full conversation so they might get it wrong (.)

I mean I might be talking about (.) racism and say something which is very positive against (.) racism but they won't hear it like that and in fact that that happened in the first year this station programming we we said something (.) and somebody got it completely wrong and took us to the race relations and we we record everything you say here and we said no no you've got it wrong we didn't say that this this is what we said (1.0) in fact we were saying the opposite and what they heard was only the gist of the conversation a part of it (.) and although it was very controversial very worthwhile piece they got it all round their neck and they were ready for us because they wanted to try and get us on something these particular people which was race relations lot

Int: Mmm

DJ: And er they jumped on the wrong thing altogether and showed themselves up but it it was an object lesson in the fact that if you get too deep into something somebody will pick up the wrong gist of your conversation and they might switch off forever because they've taken it completely wrong (.) so we don't try to get too heavy.

Int: Mmm. Do you often talk about politics and politicians (.) do you think that you should do you feel that they're important ?

DJ: No not really (.) if they say something stupid (.) yeh but um we leave it to the news to their bit but I mean there's a lot of information there I mean you're talking real life when you're talking politicians (.) everybody thinks they come out with stupid things um we were talking about the motorway the other day and the Ministry of Transport coming out with all these wonderful weird ideas like if you speed it doesn't matter if its (.) its the owner of the car who gets done even if he's not in the car (.) and we just said

you know (.) ridiculous these guys are on cuckoo cloud nine (.) you know planet zanussi (.) and I think that's a fair comment because I'm a motorist and everybody else who's out there would probably agree (.) so yeah there are certain things that you can do and certain things that are really heavy that you wouldn't do

Int: Mmm so you don't feel like you ridicule any political party/

DJ: Well we wouldn't do it if it was any particular party we'd do it whoever it happens to be

Int: Mmm um (.) do you think the listener can guess where you stand politically

DJ: Er (.) don't think they could guess with me ((laughs)) um I think they try to sometimes (.) well (1.0) the general listener doesn't (.) the left wing right wing listener will. Um you always get a fanatic listening who is a student who can put the world to right and

Int: ((Laughs))

DJ: And come on there's a lot of them out there and yeah they'll come out with something trying to make it look as is you're conservative based or left wing based or whatever (.) but I don't think they could really guess

Int: You don't think so?

DJ: I don't think we're really interested (.) the news people might be they're er much more politically orientated than a DJ would be.

Int: Mmm mm but sometimes you do let out (.) Can I ask you where you do stand politically ?

DJ: Well I'm pretty muddled up actually

Int: ((Laughs))

DJ: I like Conservative policies but I like Labour policies as well

Int: So so you're in the middle=

DJ: I think if they merged we'd be well away
Int: ((Laughs)) oh God ((laughs))
DJ: Which is where I stand see
Int: In the middle ?
DJ: Yeah it is.
Int: Mmm
DJ: Mmm
Int: See I tried to guess where Martin Dale stood and//
DJ: Hard isn't it=
Int: I got it completely wrong yeah
DJ: Yeah
Int: I mean I don't listen (.) too much I've only been listening (.) the past couple of months so therefore I wouldn't (1.0) I wouldn't count myself as a regular listener. Maybe a regular listener can (.) map out where DJs stand but I don't know I think it would be quite difficult and a lot (.) a lot depends on where they lie
DJ: Does it really matter where they stand (.) I mean it doesn't doesn't actually have a lot (.) doesn't bear a lot of relation to what they say (.) because DJs don't really get into the political bit at all (.) In television (.) in journalism they do (.) and there's big arguments about this at the moment that (.) it's all left wing bias because most television journalists are staunchly unionised and staunchly left wing labour (.) and they reflect it in all the programmes they do and it's actually true and (.) I daresay (.) in our own newsrooms we have a bias in that direction
Int: Mmm I'm just interested in whether or not you communicate something that you're not aware of (.)
DJ: No::
Int: Because often (.) no you don't? Because DJs often know exactly what message I'm putting accross (.) and sometimes they can be wrong

DJ: I don't think we go that deep into it if if we don't want to talk politics you know we don't talk politics and we don't we can't keep enough out of ourselves to make it (.) I mean people might think I'm (.) maybe Conservative bias (.) but but I dunno=

Int: Sometimes you probably are and then the next time

DJ: Maybe I am that's right and then the next day (.) next day (.) yeah that's right I mean that's true . We er we put more time airtime towards Neil Kinnock than we did to to er er (1.0) Jeffrey Archer you know

Int: Do you often talk about social class (.) do you make a thing of it ?

DJ: No

Int: You don't introduce it at all?

DJ: No

Int: You don't see it as necessary ?

DJ: No (.) um we have everybody listening from the council houses right up to um you know the people who drive their Mitsubishi Showguns around the county

Int: Mmm

DJ: And um (.) I mean alright we make comments about (.) Brownstone or whatever (.) but not in a derogatory case because (.) that's where people live (.) and if that's where they live that's where they live and (.) you could be insulting to them (.) I mean you might make lighthearted jokes about people in Woodhouse Beck you know ((mock upper class accent)) okey dokey yah and people in Brownstone you know with the council walk around (.) but they they would laugh at that you know (.) you're not being insulting and saying 'God you live in a slum for Christs sake' (.) you know

Int: ((Laughs))

DJ: 'All' (.) you know 'all the toffs down Stoneybridge' or whatever (.) so you try not to (.) you just (.) don't upset anybody in that respect. It isn't

necessary it doesn't come into most conversations

Int: Mmmm um (.) we've talked about music and things (.)
how important are adverts to your show (.) I know
they're (inaud)

DJ: Yeah important (.) yeah they are. Um people hate them
to a certain extent but as we've mentioned they're
conditioned to hate commercials because of (.) the
BBC but they're getting better and it's what
commercial radio's all about (.) they don't cost
anybody anything unless they buy the product that we
advertise and in many ways it's informative (.) I've
bought things I've heard advertised on this radio
station (.) I went to a garage and bought a car

Int: Wow ((laughs))

DJ: Yeah (.) and so it must work (.) because I'm the one
person that switches off to them because I have to
listen to the cues and everything but I don't really
listen to what they're going on about unless it
interests me um (.) so it's a service they're saying
hey here we are if you want a tyre because you're
tyre's blown out and you want the best deal in town
(.) and sure enough if I want a tyre I'll go to the
place advertised so it does work (.) it's a service

Int: Mmm so you're never offended by any of the adverts ?

DJ: No I think some of them are a bit stupid but (.) not
offended (.) No they're not there really to offend

Int: But they're so full of sexual stereotypes if you

DJ: I don't think (.) but I mean so is television you
could look into that you could say that about a
record couldn't you. Listen to a George Michael
record and it's very sexist record about women but it
might be a beautiful love song (.) and you could
listen to a Paul Weller song and it's telling
everybody that Conservatives are a bunch of (.) you
know (.) idiots

Int: Yeah yeah

DJ: So you could be offended by that couldn't you (.) you could just read anything you could read anything into a time check (.) the DJ says a time check and you know why's he done that

Int: Er (.) are you allowed to comment on the ads ?

DJ: No

Int: No ?

DJ: No it's IBA regulations you keep it separate

Int: Mmm

DJ: Very dangerous ground

Int: How important do you think, a representation of the family is on your show (.) on the radio ? Like on adverts you always see a typical family

DJ: Well that's always the er the point of contention with with anybody isn't it (.) even television adverts with you know the the happy go lucky family (.) when in fact you know a lot of people have broken up families or one-parent families or whatever . Um I don't think we get that so much in radio (.) it it tends to sell a product without a family unit or whatever. Soap powder that kind of stuff. I dunno (.) it seems to be a lot (.) a lot less of a problem

Int: Mmhmm but in your actual show you don't tend to speak to a family or say bring in (.) family elements

DJ: No no (.) pretty faceless

Int: ((Laughs))

DJ: You know cause there's so many different people listening out there you don't want to angle it to one set of people because you'll you'll write out other people. You know when we do tickets for a cinema you can be an old aged pensioner or a teenager providing you're the right age to go to it (.) we don't care

Int: Mmm

DJ: We don't aim it at the young we don't aim at the old in that respect

Int: Erm (.) what view do you think you put accross about

feminism ? Any?

DJ: Don't think so no .

Int: Neither for nor against ?

DJ: Neither for nor against.

Int: Nothing?

DJ: No I mean we just balance it out. You you could say by by a man saying (.) he wants to say thank you to so and so for a great night you could be sexist towards women saying oh you had a bonk last night or whatever but in fact you're not

Int: ((Laughs))

DJ: I mean it could be the other way round (.) I mean we talk about it (.) but we don't really go either way on it

Int: Mmm do you think you put accrosss the idea that it's perfectly natural for the wife or woman to stay at home while the husband goes off to work ?

DJ: No don't think so (.) I mean in fact on my programme we make out that the man's at home and the woman's working you know we take the mick out of the sexist and feminist thing point of view you know. But we don't (2.0) I I I think people are beginning to laugh at that a lot more now. I mean yes it is something that we have to be aware of but I think people can see it as a bit of a joke the staunch feminist and her attitudes towrads it (.) um there are a lot of single parent families who are men. It's not just man woman there's a lot mixed up in it now and er ((end of tape))

We've done the feministic bit now have we ?

Int: Yes we've done the lot um um um yeah how's the show made up? what's assigned to what (.) like mid morning show I know you have news on at a certain time

DJ: Well its a framework which is used throughout the day same format (.) er early news half our headlines at a certain time of day up to nine minutes of commercials

in any one hour (.) although you don't have to have that (.) um DJ does the weather on the half hour (1.0) has areas where he knows he can talk a bit longer than at other times

Int: Mmm

DJ: But what you say and what you feature as far as interviews or whatever are entirely up to the DJs so it can vary from programme to programme

Int: Mmm (.) so you don't think slots are (.) designed to fit in with say the listeners day ?

DJ: Um well the breakfast show is (.) in the fact that the guy doesn't talk too much has lots of commercials and has to just play a lot of records because people are waking up they don't want too much gab going on (.) and gives the information out so far as the traffic is concerned and then you've got your news and your sport (.) so that's designed specifically for fast moving (.) people who can't or will only be with you for maybe fifteen or twenty minutes of of (.) any one hour

Int: Mmmmm

DJ: Um and then you the (1.0) the midmorning programme where people are a little more laid back maybe (.) you know they haven't brought kids back they've come back from bringing the kids to school or they're driving around they're a salesman or they're in a shop or a factory working so they want something which they can enjoy maybe an an interview (.) um some good music little bits of features DJ saying something that's humourous out of the newspapers maybe looking at the newspapers (.) er .Afternoon is is two things you've got (.) um fairly easy relaxed and then you've got the drive time so its two programmes in one so you ususally in the first part of the programme will do an interview look at the newspapers do (.) a few other bits and bobs the

later on its fast music (.) and travel news again .
So in that respect yeah you have a brief which says
this is what the audience probably will be doing
tailor it to account for that

Int: Mmhmm

DJ: And then late night music chat (.) bit of fun

Int: ave a laugh yeah

DJ: Good laugh let your hair down that's it

Int: Right er when did you move to the midmorning show the
Careline was there wasn't it

DJ: Yeh

Int: Has the Careline been there right from the beginning?

DJ: Um (.) what is it (.) since (.) no no no it wasn't
Careline has only been introduced a year ago (.) it's
a year old

Int: Uh huh. And do you see the Careline as being
important in the midmorning show ?

DJ: Well it's on the afternoon programme too

Int: Oh is it ((laughs))

DJ: Yeah so it goes it goes twice in the day yeah um it
was started as an experiment following on from our
sister station that had done it for some time and
been very successful and we said yes we would take
take it along and it has proved to be very successful
here too and it it generates a lot of calls on a lot
of different subjects some specialist and some fairly
general so er (.) it's it's it's a sep it's part of
the programme but it's a separate (.) set up
altogether (.) it's not even in this building so it's
just affiliated (1.0) but yeah it's it's important
(.) it's a service it's one of our community
services because we can say hey everyone we're doing
something for you here and so then it's up to them to
whether they want to take (.) what we give them or
not

Int: Mmm right er (.) talking briefly about phone-ins why

do you think listeners do phone in ? A variety of reasons ?

DJ: Mmm er yeah I think they have to be more motivated than others to do it I mean they er listen to the programme they either agree or disagree and will have the urge to phone in um (.) but it depends on the individual listener (.) er it's like competitions isn't it. You see 'win a million pounds' in the Sun or bingo or whatever it happens to be (.) some of us will do that bingo (.) to try and win the million quid and some of us won't although we might like to (.) and it's the same with the phone-in hard to tell what makes people phone-in (.) obviously it has to be interesting or aggravating (.) one or the other

Int: Right Ok. Er news. Why do you think radio news is so brief it is//

DJ: Probably because there's not a lot of news (.) um as as Radio Matchdale news?

Int: Well midmorning show particularly is quite brief

DJ: Um (.) well I don't think I don't think it is (1.0)

Int: Don't you?

DJ: Well it's four minutes and I honestly think that (.) we design that four minutes is about enough time for people to take in the news get a general idea of what's happening in the world (.) to go on any longer you're then doing in-depth news and remember that we're not television so we're not having a picture of a tanker on the rocks or an aircraft you know smashed up on a runway

Int: Mmm

DJ: You're just talking about it and that's a lot more boring (.) we do have audio cuts to go with it but that's more talking (.) it's not pictures so unlike television news that can sustain fifteen or twenty minutes we can only sustain maybe four or five minutes because it's speech and we have to get a lot

over in that time from (.) from the area and I think four minutes is fair (.) I think after that it gets boring

Int: Mmm

DJ: You know people just wanna hear maybe the four top stories with fill-in details and then (.) brief other stuff and wind up withn a funny

Int: Have you got any listener research relating to the news you know how long listeners do want to listen in?

DJ: Not to how long they want to listen in but to whether it dips over that period of time (.) it shows it doesn't (.) it doesn't say how much they do want although (.) er you know sort of testing the water over many years people (.) to a certain extent do know what people will tolerate

Int: Mmm OK that's lovely.

DJ: Is that it ?

Int: Coming to the end one more question what do you feel is the biggest problem of being a DJ ? (3.0) Is there one?

DJ: Maybe (.) well I think people are not maybe taking you seriously because they hear you on the radio playing records and it's hey ho lets have a great time everybody (.) although you do interject your serious bits (.) but I think maybe they think ((regional accent)) oh he's a maniac you know (.) I mean Steve Wright sums it up in his own way (.) he reflects a lot of DJs thoughts that you know (.) er the guy comes on (.) and says everybody's mad and

Int: Mad

DJ: Mad mad they think that's what we are and they don't take you deriously and they also forget that you do have another life

Int: Uh huh

DJ: But er I dunno um I don't have a problem (.) I make

the kind of money I want to make er I have my free time I work very hard doing other things I enjoy my job immensely (.) there will be a time when I want to (.) go into something maybe a little (.) different (.) television or whatever but er I don't feel I have a problem really (.) you are asked to work funny hours and it does take up quite a bit of your time but er (.) it's a job that you have to enjoy to do (1.0) and I don't think I've never really enjoyed it (.) even when I've had a headache (.) cos it's a damn sight better than working for ICI which is what I did

Int: Mmm what about when you're doing a live presentation or you're opening some kind of store or you're meeting the public (.) do, you find that (.) Or you don't mind doing that ?

DJ: Well some DJs don't like to do it (.) there's certain aspects of it I don't like to do (.) er I don't like signing autographs (.) er and stuff like that. Um I like doing clubs but I like to do them in a certain way (.) I don't like doing store openings

Int: Mmmm

DJ: I don't know why I just don't really like (.) there are certain other things I do like (.) and everybody is the same (.) there are certain DJs that won't appear in public that won't even go down and do a night club well I (.) do a lot of that um I dunno (.) I think it's part of the job and you have to get out and do it but it's a it's in the context that it's done=

Int: =Mmm=

DJ: =that will either make me enjoy it or or not. You know to go and do a charity thing where where you're the man who has to call out the bingo numbers or do the charity raffle I like doing that um (.) but to be the guy who (.) opens the Pizzaland store with the cut of the ribbon (.) you're being made to look more

important than I think maybe you are (.) and you feel guilty taking the money that they pay you for doing it although they're happy with it I'm not so I don't like doing that (.) but I'll go do a club and be happy because I have to work hard for it

Int: Mmm so when you do clubs and do things like that and you do meet a lot of your regular listeners do they not see you as being kind of a megastar

DJ: No

Int: Definitely not (.) very down to earth always kind of (.) ordinary guy?

DJ: Yeah they don't see you as a superstar cos cos they see DJs from Radio One being that but when they see you as a superstar they don't like you because there's this thing in England (1.0) that (1.0) everybody's behind the guy who's trying to make it but once you've made it they want to knock you off your pedestal (.) and they always see people in commercial radio as the guys who are just friendly (.) and haven't really made it to superstardom on Top of the Pops (1.0) um so therefore they like you you're just one of the boys but you're on the radio and um (.) I'm quite happy to be that because I make the kind of money I want to make without having that problem of (.) people not liking you before they even know what you're like (.) you know they might call you gay they might say you're a right sour sod you know (.) when they don't really know what your personality is which is what people do about famous people and make stories up about them

Int: Mmm

DJ: And I couldn't stand that (.) so I just like to be Mr Ordinary and goes along and OK they know you're on the radio and I do a lot of venues where um you get these oinks come up and they're they're quite happy to talk to you ((male regional accent)) 'oh you're a

great guy' they see you as an ordinary person not as somebody they want to hit because you think you're famous (.) so I prefer to be Mr Ordinary which does a job which (.) people (.) you know can also be involved in

Int: Mmnhmm and you don't feel that you you er put accross a particular role like er fatherly role brotherly role son ?

DJ: Friend

Int: That's(.) you're definite role friend not family role?

DJ: No not family role just a guy on the radio who who reflects the fact that I come to work sometimes by bus I know what it's like when the bus driver doesn't smile you know

Int: You know what it's like being attacked in newsagents

DJ: Newsagents yeah I mean you know that that that is it you're looking for that all the time because it really does happen to you and I mean people are rude to me like they're rude to anybody else

Int: Mmmmm

DJ: Um I get stuck in lifts like other people and if you reflect that on the radio people say oh yeah you know he doesn't come to work in a Porsche or a Rolls Royce you know and all that kind of stuff

Int: Mmm do you do that deliberately you put accross sort of (.) common experiences so that people will accept you more as an ordinary person or is it just that//

DJ: I think you reinforce that you are an ordinary person I mean I I really am no different to anybody else I'm not you know//

Int: Oh really ? ((ironic))

DJ: No I don't think so I mean I eat

Int: Really ((mock incredulity))

DJ: Go to the toilet ((laughs))

Int: Sometimes

DJ: I don't think I'm any different. I mean some people's standard of living is much much better than mine (.) other people's standard of living is worse than mine it doesn't make me any more special you know Terry Wogan is special and Steve Wright is special and Esther Rantzen is special cos cos they're in big bucks (.) and it does put them aside you know or Phil Collins (.) um but I don't think I am particularly.

Int: But if listeners ask you for your autographs you've got to be special for them

DJ: Oh yeah if they if they think you're special fine (.) you are the guy on the radio that they hear and I s'pose there is a certain something when they meet you he's the guy I listen to every day and I'm like that when I see certain people because you know I've seen them on television (.) but I'm a bit more blase about it because I see it all the time but yeah I mean there is that magic and if they want it (.) fine and if you're nice to them and you're ordinary they think well what a nice guy you know he's just nice (.) which is what I want them to do because that's what I am I don't want to sort of kid them off

Int: Mmm

DJ: And I think this job really you succeed in it by being ordinary and not being um ((mock upper class accent)) 'hi' you know 'you may talk to me now' because if you're like that because of the people that you work with like my boss he's very realistic he's Mr Straight Mr Down-to-earth (.) um you wouldn't last a a minute with them um (.) and they do tend to hire people who are down-to-earth people who just want to pay their mortgage wanna do a job do it well (.) give the company a good reputation and and make the company money and at the same time (.) give people enjoyment and everything (.) so it is a

special quality which you have to have and sometimes
you don't know you've got it

Int: Mmhmm

DJ: Until you discover that they're going to keep you on
like next year you know well I must have it

Int: Right that's it then.

Interview with Mick Toller

DJ Radio Dean

Int: How long have you been a DJ ?

DJ: Years and years and years (.) it all started (2.0) back in (.) I started off at hospital radio (.) which was (.) I used to have a really boring job (.) in Northampton where I lived (.) at Barclaycard (.) and a friend introduced me to hospital radio and I was there for about five years and then after that I went to er work in Israel for a (.) I suppose you might call it a pirate (.) radio station um (.) but it wasn't really a (.) it (.) there's no such law to say that (.) you couldn't broadcast you know in Israel there's no such law (.) like the marine law that we've got um (1.0) Marine Offences Act (.) So I was there for about a year in 1978 and er then I came back and after a spell of about seven months as a postman ((laughs)) I I needed a bit of money um I got got a job with Radio Dean and it it was filling for a start off for about a year (.) and then I was sort of taken on in the early part of 1980 (.)so you can work out how many years that is. Then I was there for at Dean firstly for about four and a half five years (1.0) then they transferred me for a year down to Matchdale which is (.) well you know Matchdale

Int Yeah yeah

DJ: And I was there for three years and then they said will you come back and do the morning show so I've been here a few months

Int Mmm (.) about four or five ?

DJ: Yeah about four or five months now.

Int You've you've taken over from Martin Dale

DJ: So I suppose if you add it all together (.) one two (.) it's a long time thirteen or fourteen years maybe.

Int Mmm yeah. What did you at Radio Matchdale before you came here ?

DJ: I was doing the afternoon show (.) that that I was (.) at the time I was doing the night show on Dean and I was getting fed up with working unsocial hours you know (.) although there's a nice atmosphere at night and the people that listen to you I think (.) really need you to be a friend to them you know you're talking just to them (.) it's a nice cosy atmosphere (.) but I got a bit tired of the nights so I just said when when you open Matchdale can I go down there and do something. And they said what show do you want to do ? And I didn't want to do breakfasts cos um I did that for a year last time I was here and it it wears you out

Int: Too early

DJ: So I said oh well I'll I'll I'll do the afternoon show so thats (.) that's what I did for three years. And then (.) well you probably know this story Martin Dale wanted some more responsibility (.) so they made him Deputy Programme Controller at Matchdale so they had to send him down there and they needed someone to replace him for his show here so we did a swop.

Int: MmmSo you do you see DJing as your end career ?

DJ: I think it must be because (.) even when I was working in the office in Northampton I didn't know what I wanted to do I had no clear idea (.) and it just seemed to click through a friend. He said come up and have a look at hospital radio (.) and and I just seemed to take to it like a duck to water. Er having said that I mean (.) years and years ago I can remember going to Blackpool with with my mum and dad on holiday and we used to to go to the Tower Ballroom and watch um (.) you'll never have heard of this organist (.) what was his name ? a really famous

organist (2.0) used to play er AAAH I'VE FORGOTTEN HIS NAME NOW REGINALD DIXON and he used to do a live broadcast every night on the BBC and er I I used come home and make dummy headphones and dummy microphones

Int: Aaah

DJ: So I suppose it was (.) it was in me but it never came out till a bit later.

Int: Martin Dale said he used to go to the bottom of his garden (.) go into// his

DJ: DID HE ((laughs))

Int: Go into his shed and pretend to be a DJ ((laughs))

DJ: I used to do it in my bedroom. I used to have um (2.0) an old tape recorder which used to double as like a (.) a little PA system so so I put the tape recorder on the (.) and run the microphone down to a little table and broadcast out onto the street (.) so it's a bit embarrassing really.

Int: What do you think makes a good DJ ?

DJ: I don't know. Um (2.0) er what I try to do and and what I think Dean does in general is (.) is is a very (.) you've got to be able to reach across (.) past the microphone and and be friendly I (.) I think that's that's the main thing because after (.) after all you're popping up in people's living rooms and things and becoming part of their life (.) and it's like a one way friendship becuse you you hardly ever hear from them

Int: Mm hmm

DJ: But they're always hearing from you (.) so I think friendliness and and the ability to communicate across the mic and into somebody's home I I think that's the most important aspect.

Int: Mmm. How do you create that friendly atmosphere ?

DJ: It's difficult I mean I (1.0) I when I (1.0) if you saw me working in the studio I I I just ignore the

microphone and I look beyond it and I have a picture in my mind of who of who I'm broadcasting to (.) but that picture sort of changes and it's never really fixed (.) I I couldn't tell you (.) oh now I'm thinking of a woman in Clifton that wrote to me last week (.) it's just it's it's right in the back of your very mind and you just thinking of one person and you're talking to her and (.) Instead of imagining you're broadcasting in a discotheque when you're talking to crowds of people you (.)it's just one person you've got to get across to um (2.0) I mean it might be (.) um sometimes I I get a letter one morning from a lady who says oh I enjoy the programme (.) so it'll be then I'm very conscious of broadcasting to her and doing everything for her um (.) whatever happens I have a different picture (.) but it's usually a woman

Int: Yeah

DJ: Um (2.0) because I mean the show that I do in the morning it's based on I mean you know it's for housewives really isn't it (.) and people in factories and shops and things.

Int: So you don't have a general impression of that listener ? It depends // on

DJ: No no

Int: It depends on what mail you receive and things like like that

DJ: That's right yes it does yes it's very sweet Yes (.) yes it does change

Int: (2.0) When you're on air do you feel that you have to always be cheerful ?

DJ: Yeh I mean er that's er er ((laughs)) er I think the last thing someone's going to have on their radio is somebody saying oh dear I'm having awful problems and this has happened to me and that's happened to me and you know oh I feel so depressed.They don't want that.

They turn on to be entertained and to hear the music and then they want a friendly voice so you uh I mean sometimes it's very hard I mean cos everyone has their problems and some days you get up and I think ah I I can't do it (.) I don't want to speak (.) you've got to open your mouth and talk for three hours so it's difficult but um (1.0) yeah I think if you can it it it's like a acting you've just got to get over that I suppose and put your cheerful front on while the microphone's on and then then when you turn it off you can be back to your miserable self again ((laughs)) but yeh I mean yeh that is a requisite.

Int: So in order to create that sense of familiarity between yourself and the listener you you do you think you do this with chat with chit chat ? What kind of thing ?

DJ: It's it's very basic I mean I got a letter a couple of weeks ago from a lady who said oh I love listening to you because you always tell me what you've been doing and and what what you get up to and you feel like a friend you're like a friend to me.

Int: Mmm

DJ: I mean boring and mundane things like er (.) making light of going round a supermarket shopping or or what you did over the weekend or (.) anything anything it's just (.) I s'pose you're just you (.) I mean it's a horrible thing to say but you come down to the level of your listener

Int: Yeah

DJ: And talk about the sort of things that maybe you'd say if you were talking with her face to face(.) you know just everyday events really

Int: Mmm

DJ: Right er you're working for an Independent Local Radio station (.) what do you see as its main

function ?

DJ: Well we I mean (.) I suppose when you compare us to the BBC they're much more speech orientated. We're basically a music station you know a pop station (.) a top 40 radio station with a few oldies thrown in (.) and a few album tracks (.) But interspersed with that we've got to be not only entertaining (.) we've got to be informative because that's what we're here for so you know you've got all the usual things like traffic and information cards and things like that (.) Just an entertainment and a music station I think we are.

Int: Mmm. Do you think you have roughly an even balance between entertainments and information (.) the giving of information

DJ: I think so yeah I I think I'd say that the information is probably greater than than just the chat and the entertainment but but I don't know how you'd class the music part of it really (.) I suppose people have the music for entertainment. But (.) yeah I think the balance is right.

Int: So to you er (.) what makes a good show ?

DJ: O::h ((laughs)) (.) It's it's hard to say because I think when you're involved when you're making the programme you're very (.) I mean I'm very self critical and I I never come off the end of a programme (.) well very rarely and think oh that was a good show (.) I usually come off and think er oh well that was OK but (.) I could do better (.) you know (.) Maybe I didn't say that properly or do that properly

Int: Mmm

DJ: I mean very rarely do I come off and think oh that was good (.) maybe one show every, every two or three weeks I'll come off .Maybe it's cos I enjoyed it (2.0) Um (.) but I nevre would say that I'd come off

and say that I'd I'd done a good show so I don't know
(.) so I don't know what a good show is because
you're (2.0) people have said to me it sounds it
sounds so different (.) I mean if they come into the
studio and watch the show being made and then go and
listen on a radio set they say it's totally different
(1.0) to what's coming out of the radio set to what's
going on in the studio so I don't know I don't really
know what's a good programme (.) it's hard to say
because you're so I'm so involved with it.

Int: Yeah (.) but wouldn't you say sort of like oh yeah
you've got to have a certain type of music (.) you've
got to be humourous (.) you've got to be funny (.) is
it a combination of//

DJ: I think if you're too humourous it gets on people's
nerves// quite honestly

Int: Yeah

DJ: I think you've got to strike a balance (.) you know
to do some straight things and do do some funny
things so you strike a balance there and (1.0) I
dunno (2.0) What did you just ask me ?

Int: What makes a good show ? You've got no set
definition?

DJ: I dunno (.) I mean I've done what I thought has been
a diabolical programme (.) loads of times (.) and
people come up to you afterwards and say oh I enjoyed
the show today (.) that was a really good show but
but I I think maybe it's up to the listeners to make
their own minds up and it (.) I don't think I could
say what's a good show and what isn't (2.0) I mean I
was taken on to do the job so I can't be that bad can
I really

Int: No you could be alright ((laughs))

DJ: Yeah I'm alright alright

Int: When you want to change something within your show
who do you have to see ? Do you have to (1.0) have it

acknowledged by somebody else ?

DJ: What sort of thing are you talking about ?

Int: Well, if you say want to inject a quiz or or something like that. Or or a phone in ?

DJ: Well (.) I suppose (.) really out of courtesy I'd probably see Mick who's the Programme Controller or Paul Paul Lightfoot who's the Deputy programme Controller. (.) No I mean we're given a an awful lot of freedom um (2.0) we can more or less do what we want in the show but but I would actually actually go to him and say Mick is it OK if a I run a new competition ? I'd have to see him to see about prizes and everything you know if i wanted to spend money on it I'd have to see him anyway. But to to a great extent we can get away with with a lot without asking. It's (1.0) they leave it to our own devices.

Int: Mmm. How do you think the listener sees you ?

DJ: Um er (.) Now this is strange because er everywhere I go (1.0) the first thing people say to me is oh you don't look how you sound you look totally different and I say to them well what do you imagine me to be like? (1.0) and it varies and a lot of people say oh you look older you sound older we imagine you to be sort of like fortyish (1.0) with dark hair and quite fat ((laughs)) so they get this blonde chap who's quite (.) thin I suppose and totally different (.) what are you loo//

Int: ((laughs -very loud))

DJ: Totally different to the way I sound. I dunno I mean but I mean I don't know how people see me but I get a lot of comments that say oh you don't look like you sound

Int: Mmm yeah. What about personality wise ?

DJ: What do you mean ?

Int: o you think they see you as an extravert ? do you see yourself as an extravert ?

DJ: Er people see people say to me as well er no I'm not ((coughs)) I can be when I have to be and I think over the ye I used to be so shy when I was at school and (.) when I first started to work (.) but the job has obviously brought that out brought myself out of myself a bit um (2.0) No I mean I I I'd say that I'm sometimes quite a shy person (.) quite introverted when I'm not on the radio but I suppose that is like an event isn't it when I can get rid of my my shyness and when I talk for three or four hours everyday (.) and when I've finished that I don't really want to be extravert off off the radio

Int: No it's just that that most of us tend to se DJs as being very wild outgoing people// that's the general impression

DJ: Yeah they do they do I mean people have said to me (.) if they've met me and talked to me they'll go away and say to someone he's so he's like a different person um (.) he's so quiet when you talk to him yet when he's on the air he's all confident and

Int: Yeah

DJ: And bright and cheerful. That's just the act isn't it. I mean it's just acting

Int: Yeah but don't you feel that you've got to carry out that act (.)that you've got to carry on with that act when you go out and say meet the public// and open a store and

DJ: Yes yes you do you do you have to put a front on. I suppose it's as we were saying it's that one way friendship and they they like to see the person and yes you do you do have to live up to that image and it's no good (.) it's no good going and being really quiet (.) I mean it's just hard sometimes cause when you're seeing an audience (.) you're seeing people you're and you're basically quite a shy peson it's quite difficult but you you you just push down the

barrier and get on with it you know it's// it's

Int: Hard life

DJ: Yeah (.) Oh you're tape's nearly run out

Int: Yeah it'll start clicking soon. Next question er is your show (.) will it be more appealing to a female audience you've already said that you feel that it is.

DJ: I think so just basically because of the time of day I mean (.) you've got a lot of housewives and their husbands and kids have gone off to school and to work and and they're doing the housework and everything (.) maybe maybe that's sort of an old fashioned (.) type of thing but still true I mean there's a big a big housewife audience yes basically housewives (.) but I'm also aware that we have a lot of people in factories cos they write to us (.) obviously a lot of ladies. It's mainly I'd say a a female audience (.) well I don't know (.) I think it's more a female audience than a male one

Int: Do you ever receive angry letters from husbands and boyfriends ?

DJ: No

Int: Never ever ?

DJ: No not all no (.) I get one or two cheeky letters from ladies (.) um When I was in Leydon there was a lady who used to write in from Eadby (.) and she got quite cheeky in her letters (.) sort of going on and it's just you and me and you know I enjoy our little three hour get togethers in the morning and er (1.0) I don't know they're probably little fantasies but (1.0) no no no

Int: No ((imitating))

DJ: No they must keep it very quiet (.) I've never had any complaints

Int: Mm hmm. When you're on air do you think you flirt ?

DJ: (2.0) Mmmmer yes er yes. Yes I'd say I try to flirt

(.) mind you it's hard when you can't see the person

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: I suppose yes I like to be (.) if I can a bit on the cheeky side a little bit sort of sexy cos er I think most people like that (.) I think (.) deep down er so yes I would say I do flirt yes.

Int: So you you put across a (.) quite a sexy image on air?

DJ: Well I don't know I don't know how it comes out the other end but yes occasionally (.) I mean sometimes and sometimes not. Sometimes I'll go on and do a very matter of fact programme and then other times I'll come on and and er (.) try and try and get across to my audience. I mean I suppose so yes (.) I like to flirt a little bit.

Int: So how do you flirt on air ? As you would//

DJ: Aaah (.) it's difficult really to desc (.) You imagine your imaginary lady who's obviously very attractive and (.) I suppose if you're playing romantic records (.) the way to do it is to (.) you don't shout for a start off you talk very close to the microphone and you talk quite low because apparently low voices are supposed to be more effective than high voices you know and er (.) you just say cheeky things you can have a (.) you gotta be careful I mean you can't go too far but but you (2.0) you can have a little flirt and say one or two cheeky things a bit you know a bit on the sexy side but (.) I think that gets the message across

Int: So are you conscious of the fact that when you're say talking to a female you change your voice ?

DJ: Mmm yeah I'll be I'll be softer (.) gentler whereas if I'm talking to a man it's more matter of fact

Int: Mmm have you picked up on this in any other presenters ? have you noticed their voice difference ?

DJ: Um (.) I can't say I have actually I I I'd say that um (.) I mean if you're talking about Dean (.) John (.) I get the impression he's he's talking he's on a stage and he's talking to the people not one particular person that's that's how it comes over to me. Um Trev very much the same I don't know .

Int: Have you ever listened to Morris Goodman or Martin Dale ?

DJ: Yes oh yes. Now Martin (.) Martin's Martin. I mean (.) a very individual style (.) and I think a style that would (.) say to a lot of ladies (2.0) I don't know effeminate is not the right word (1.0) lost little boy I don't know lost sort of dark giggly which would say to ladies oh I want to mother him. I think he's bringing out the mothering instinct not the sexy instinct

Int: Mmm yeah

DJ: And Morris ? Yeah I'd imagine Morris is Morris goes Morris is going for the ladies he's broadcasting to the ladies with this sort of deep voice and this sort of ((deep voice)) hi I'm Morris. Same sort of thing as I'm flirting on the air this sort of macho (1.0) man appealing to the women.

Int: So so Martin sort of appeals to the mothering instinct and//

DJ: I would say so yes definitely

Int: And you think you're more a sort of boyfriend attractive figure ?

DJ: I would hope so yeah hopefully that comes out in the voice.

Int: Yeah cos I was talking to Morris Goodman and he said no no I don't flirt no

DJ: Yeah yeah I think (.) that comes out even if he doesn't admit to it

Int: Yeah

DJ: I mean I'm sure that (.) and he's a club DJ so his

his whole style is based around sort of a club approach (1.0) but I'd say he's broadcasting to ladies and trying to flirt a little bit.

Int: Mmm. You've mentioned housewives (1.0) er do you think that one of your tasks as a DJ is to combat their loneliness? You know you've mentioned being friendly and everything (.) do you feel there are a lot of lonely housewives out there//

DJ: Yeah I mean this is it (.) it's just that friendly voice (.) It's a bit of company isn't it while they're (.) busy doing other things around the house (.) just as you play their favourite music the music they like and a nice friendly you know you know as if I'm in the living room as a friend just as having a nice friendly chat while evryone's out to work and school and things.

Int: Mmm. With regard to the mid morning show do you feel the show forms a background of music rather than having listeners listening carefully to say//

DJ: Yeah I think to a greater extent that's the same of programmes through through the day um (.) I mean people are too busy doing other things sren't they you know we've mentioned housework and people doing shopping and working in factories and cars . I'd I'd say to a great extent it's musical wallpaper. (.) But then again if I was to say something and wanted a response then people would respond so there must be something there there must there must be a little trigger (.) but but I'd say it was (.) to a great extent just a bit of background with a friendly voice (.) you know they listen to now and again. And a lot of people will sort of misunderstand what you say you know if you (.) especially with phone numbers (.) if you read something out and say phone this number they won't catch it all and they'll phone up and they'll say oh um um can you give me the phone number of

something the disc jockey mentioned so so they're sort of listening half cock and doing other things.

Int: Mmm hm. Talking about the structure of radio now. Why do you feel there are so few female DJs ?

DJ: I don't know. I mean I really don't know. I mean I myself would love to hear more female voices. (1.0) we had someone here until quite recently called Yvonne Hills who was (.) it's just such a lovely contrast to in what is I s'pose what is still a male-dominated (.) um thing you know. I think it's getting better I mean there was a day when there wouldn't be any female broadcasters full stop but they're sort of coming (.) you've got Gloria Hunneyford (2.0) ofcourse and um (2.0) who else is there ?

Int: Anne Nightingale.

DJ: Anne Nightingale yes. So it's getting better (.) but it's still very male dominated and I don't know why (.) I don't know why.

Int: Do you think it's because listeners don't like listening to a female voice on air ?

DJ: No I can't believe that. I can't believe that. No. I can't. As I say I'm sure (1.0) most men would really enjoy it. Well I'd like to hear a female more than a male voice.

Int: What about women ? Do you think//

DJ: Yeah maybe the other way round you see so it's hard to know what's right and what's (.) I think it could strike a balance and have half and half.

Int: Mmm

DJ: It's hard to know.

Int: Mmm. There has been research done and a lot of it tends to say that women don't like listening to women (.) and men don't like listening to women because their voices are either too shrill too husky//

DJ: Yeah I suppose I suppose that yeah (.) I mean (.) I would say that Yvonne's voice was a bit shrill which

gets a bit wearing after a while but (.) but I mean Gloria Hunneyford's got a lovely soft voice I could listen to her all day

Int: (laughs))

DJ: I suppose it's just choosing the right person but (.) er there should be more females.

Int: Mmm yeah. As a DJ do you feel you should combat issues like racism and sexism (.) and things like that ? Do you feel you've got social responsibility towards your community ?

DJ: Oh yeah.

Int: Definitely ?

DJ: Yeah yeah you can't go round upsetting people. And people are very (2.0) they are sensitive (.) you can say something which to you (.) is not that sort of important but they'll they they'll sort of take umbrance you know (1.0) yeah yeah there is a social responsibility don't upset people

Int: Mmm. Do you think you express opinions on the things you say (.) to a great extent ? Well how much are you allowed to talk about things that mean a lot to you ?

DJ: Well I I I mean yes (.) We've got quite a lot of freedom in what we say (.) but I try not to I mean I don't think (.) I mean as we said radio is is is a one way (.) medium and if somebody can't answer you back and put their point of view and if you start coming out with your opinion on everything it's just going to make them angry (1.0) isn't it

Int: Yeah so//

DJ: I mean the only vent they've got is is the phone in so I suppose (.) cos we have got a phone-in every night they could sort of come back at us then (1.0) but it's probably something that happens on the spur of the moment (.) I'll say something which is my opinion which'll upset someone and they'll want to

answer back straight away.

Int: Has that happened in the past where you've let something slip (1.0) but you// didn't really want to ?

DJ: Um not to a great extent cos I try not to do it//

Int: So on the whole really you avoid controversial issues?

DJ: I do really I mean the worst thing that happened to me is (2.0) I mentioned the fact (.) I was talking about my childhood and I said oh it wasn't till the age of twelve I realised there wasn't a father Christmas (2.0)

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: And you don't think about it (.) and I said my parents had to tell me there was no father Christmas and (.) and of course loads of mothers phoned up and said you can't say that so I had to sort of come back and say something to get round it (.)

Int: Yeah

DJ: That's about the worst thing that's happened to me. Oh I er played a Donna Summer record which is (.) what's that sexy record ? Oh I love to love you baby of a lunchtime once and somebody phoned up and said I was sitting there with my children and one said to me why's that lady making those funny noises ? ((laughs))

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: And so you gotta be responsible and you gotta think you know (.) what time of day it is and who you're broadcasting to and what you can say and what you can't say (1.0) but that comes with experience and I try not to upset people

Int: Mmm. Der dede. So you don't really talk about politics and politicians ?

DJ: No never. I don't touch politics. It's not my it's not my not my role (.) I'm not there to talk

politics.

Int: Mmm. Do you think your political views creep out in your programme ?

DJ: No. I really haven't got that (.) I mean I'm Conservative

Int: Mmm

DJ: But I would never ever (2.0) sort of take sides. I just don't talk politics (.) I've never ever even sort of touched on it

Int: Not even if something big has happened and it's it's hit all the headlines (.) I mean d'you avoid it cos (2.0)

DJ: Yes I would actually avoid it I mean that's up to the news team isn't it

Int: So you you don't think the listener could guess where you stand politically ? you you

DJ: Certainly not no. No I've made money on that.

Int: How important is music to your show ?

DJ: Well it's the backbone isn't it (.) it's very important (2.0) Um although the sort of music we play now (.) maybe I'm just getting old (.) the sort of music we play it it just goes above my head I mean (.) there's such a lot of records I don't like now (1.0) I suppose it's always been the same really you just turn your headphones down while it's playing and talk to somebody. Um extremely important yeah I mean you've got to reflect (.) we've got to reflect our market so we've got the top 30 or top 40 (1.0) that we must get in and then we have oldies from the seventies and the sixties to appeal to older people (1.0) and album tracks. Yeah very very important I'd say but then again the station has one station sound throughout the day so I can't do much about it really. I choose the oldies(.) but not the playlist (.) that's very structured.

Int: Mmm.

DJ: And I choose album tracks (2.0) that's it (.) so we haven't got too much choice.

Int: Do you think you choose records that evoke a particular mood ?

DJ: Yeah at I mean what I try to do (.) what do you mean?

Int: Do you like sort of quiet records or ?

DJ: It does depend on what your mood is but I mean you've got to try and forget about that because other people have got different moods haven't they so waht I try and do on my show is to do the first hour really fast and then maybe come slow down in the second hour of the programme and then gradually build it back up to fast records towards the end so you've got a natural sort of flow. You go in fast and then go slow and come out fast again.

Int: Mmm hm. So you think your music appeals to both men and women and not just to mainly women ?

DJ: Oh I hope so yeah. I mean so the surveys would say sobecause I mean we've got good figures

Int: Do you think you er stress the importance of relationships a lot in your show (.) like er Martin Dale does a lot he's always going on about (.) being in love and (2.0) and things like that (.) and he plays lots of soppy records (.) That's his own personal taste coming out.

DJ: Mmm um I like a lot of soppy records but er (2.0) I don't think so no (.) not to a great extent no. I mean obviously I quite often get letters from people which are (1.0) really intimate (.) they're going into their own relationships and things like that. But er er not not sort of personally no.

Int: Mmm right ok. Um how important are adverts to your show ? I mean I know they finance//

DJ: I mean they make us they pay our wages. You mean how important are they to me ?

Int: Yeah do you like them?

DJ: Er no not really. I mean this is a terrible thing to say I just play them because they're there. They tend to get in the way sometimes I think especially when you've got a busy day and you've got to fit five or six breaks in in an hour (.) it's difficult to get the programme going because you've got to come to a sudden halt with the commercials

Int: Mmm

DJ: So it tends to break things up a little bit (1.0) so they are a bit annoying.

Int: Yeah (.) are you ever offended by their actual content ? // because they tend

DJ: No to a great extent they go totally above your head when you're busy planning what you're going to say or what record you're going to play (.) all you're listening for is the little out cue at the end of the tape to fire the next commercial so (1.0) to a great extent they go right over your head. So I'm not really bothered. I mean some I find pathetic ((laughs)) you just think oh dear that's really corny oh what a terrible script or whatever (1.0) but others are really good.

Int: Mmm. You're not allowed to comment on the ads ?

DJ: You're not s'posed to no (.) they're they're supposed to be a total separate entity so you have to go in to the break by saying I'll be back after the break and you have to come out of the break with a jingle (.) a station jingle (.) a station identification (1.0) so they have to be totally separate. Now and again something (.) one 'll come on that'll be so funny that you feel when you play the jingle after the break (1.0) I mean some just cry out for a comment so you can sneak in a quick comment and people don't notice (.) but no you're not s'posed to talk. like for instance (.) I mean one example is the Jimmy

Young ariel commercial (2.0) which er I mean they just drove everybody up the wall and Jimmy Young started the whole series with the same words .hullo there

Int: ((laughs))

DJ: So I mean I couldn't resist one of those now and again after the commercials but no not really.

Int: When you're talking to your listeners// do you

DJ: My listener

Int: Your listener. Well do you talk to your listener in terms of his or her role like mother father brother sister (.) Do you ever sort of (.) oh this is for all you mothers or all you women

DJ: (1.0) I might say oh this is one for the ladies (.) if I play Tom Jones or something(.) this is one for all you ladies (.) just behave yourselves girls you know (.) don't throw anything intimate at the radio set (.) it makes me sound muffled (1.0) yeah um yeah i suppose you do categorise a little bit (.) this is one for you if you just left school or er just come out of school and you're waiting for mum and dad to come home for tea (.) yeah I suppose you do a little bit

Int: Mmm. Do you think you stress the importance of the family ? Is that right you know // you

DJ: It's difficult to say really because you know I'm single so I don't really know what it's like to be in the family situation (2.0) I mean I feel close to my mum and dad and everything so I tend to stress (.) I talk about my mum and dad a lot (1.0) Um I live with someone at the moment so I talk about her quite a lot um (2.0) so in that respect (.) not as regards being married or anything like that (.) looking after the kids (.) cos I've got no experience of that.

Int: You will when you have them though

DJ: Yeah (.) I think I just bring out my surroundings

what's happening to me.

Int: Mm hmm. when you're on air do you think you put across any views about feminism things like that ? Do you think you put across that you're very pro or very against or it doesn't really bother you ?

DJ: Er (2.0) again I wouldn't really stress that um (.) I'm all for the ladies I mean I love equality (2.0) In fact I I tend to be on their side more than anything else cos I I can't stand the old sort of way where women were treated as second class citizens (1.0) and you know the guy sort of going out to work and the the wife staying at home and doing all the cooking (.) I mean I can't I hate that sort of thing (1.0) so I would probably push that aspect of equality (.) liking equality (.) and trying to build the ladies up more than anything else.

Int: Mmm. Do you think you can do that when you are talking to a housewife(.) like you were saying you talk to housewives can you push the idea that it's fairly normal for a woman to go out to work and the man to stay at home and look after the kids ?

DJ: I try to (.) I mean from my situation again I mean I will always cos I mean I do I do some housework and I'll make a point of saying God what a day yesterday I had to do the hoovering and (.) I did the meal and washed up afterwards (.) you know and I think that way it's saying well it's normal for a man to do that sort of thing as well as as as a woman. You know it should be equal it should should be shared.

Int: Mmm good. How are your programmes assigned? Not who gets each slot but you know what goes in each slot like in the mid morning show there's a certain type of music a bit of this a bit of that ?

DJ: There are I mean most things (.) some of the things are structured so you start on that and build up from it you know so you know you've always got the news

cos that's when the news goes out the five minutes on top of the hour (1.0) I mean on my show I've got two editions of the Careline which is you know a sort of community thing (.) and one of those has to go out at quarter to eleven cos it's been decided by by the bosses and one at quarter to one. Um (.)if we've got any headlines they always go out on the half hour (.) but then I mean you build on the structure (.) you've got a certain structure (1.0) and then you can build and put like a competition in or (.) a few of your own little spots but you know(.) bits and bobs around fixed ones and that's how it gradually builds up.

Int: Mmm. Do you think you tend to incorporate the listeners activities into your show like (1.0) say it's eleven o' clock in the morning ok it's time for a cup of tea. Do you say things like that ?

DJ: Yeah I mean that's that's nice isn't it?

Int: Mmm

DJ: Yeah eleven o'clock get the kettle on oh I've got my coffee here you know (2.0). Yeah I mean lunchtime what have you got in your sandwiches ? I've got ham and cheese in mine (.) yeah so you're associating with what other people are doing like having their lunch or (.) having their elevenses or coming home from work or going to work (.) yes you have to sort of associate like that.

Int: Mmm. how important do you think the Careline is to your show ?

DJ: Mm er it it well it has to go somewhere ((laughs)) um (3.0) I suppose from the respect of being part of the community and being really involved with the community and helping the community it's good (.) it becomes (1.0) in that respect it is good but I don't see it as (.) it's a total separate entity cos I mean their studios are on the Manchester Road (.) and they just have a five minute slot within my show

Int: Yeah

DJ: So in some ways it's it's just separate (.) but in other ways it's not it's it's sort of nice to help with community matters.

Int: Mmm. Do you get a lot of feedback to Careline?

DJ: Yeah I mean (2.0)yes I mean every time there's a bulletin (.) the phones are crazy. You can never get through with to the Careline. If I wanted to phone and speak to someone on the Careline it would ninety percent out of a hundred be engaged so I mean they get a helluva lot of response from it.

Int: Mmm. how many people do the Careline ?

DJ: They've they I mean they've got quite a small team. In Leydon they've got a massive team. Loads and loads of people (.) not actually voices on air we've got Mandy (.) Tracey (.) Sian and we've got Mark and there's Ian(.) about six.

Int: What's the worst part of being a DJ ?

DJ: What's the what ?

Int: Worst part. Is there anything you dislike ?

DJ: I find (.) er no I mean what a marvellous way to earn a living but you take it for granted and you get up some days and think oh I can't sit down on the radio and talk for three hours (.) I just don't feel like it but no (.) I mean when you analyse it it's just a wonderful way of earning a living. The worst part of it is er people tend to think that you do three hours on the air and then you go home and there's no preparation and you come back the next morning and do another three hours and clear off and they reckon it's really easy to be on the radio but it's not. But there's a lot of administration work as well so I mean for every record we play we have to fill in(.) it's called a logging form(.) to PRS the Performing Rights Society

Int: Mmm

DJ: Cos we have to pay for every record we play so there's logs to fill in which is really tedious (2.0) especially if you leave them for a day or two and they start to mount up

Int: Yeah

DJ: And um I mean I'm not that keen on the administration I mean you have to get guests along and that and organise outside broadcasts and

Int: Do you choose the guests ?

DJ: Yeh that's up to me. Mmm hm. we get a lot of local information sent to us and just choose what's on so so it's fairly easy (.) but I find the administration bit quite mundane but but being on the air is (.) great.

Int: Mmm. Do you ever receive any criticism from listeners? Complaints and things ?

DJ: Um (3.0) we do er as a whole now and again they'll have a little dig at you for something you've said but that's their prerogative and it's nice when they do phone back up and say something. I had a case a couple of weeks ago (.) you know that Freddie Mercury and Monserrat ((inaud)) record ? Barcelona ?

Int: yeah

DJ: I used to get into the habit of a morning of singing over the end. It's just just lighthearted fun you know (.) and somebody wrote to me and said are you the twit who plays records (.) how dare you sing over the magnificent Monserrat ((laughs))

Int: Does anybody write in to say we want this we want that (.) any additional features within your show do they ask ?

DJ: Not (.) features no. They'll ask for records yeah or if we're not playing a certain record they'll write in and say why aren't you playing this you know. No I wouldn't say they try and structure the programme no. They respond (.) what I like about Norchester is

the people respond so easily. I found in Leydon (1.0) that you really have to work at it to make people respond.

**Interview with Paul Lightfoot
Deputy Programme Controller
Radio Dean**

Int: Erm right you're um Deputy Programme Controller

PC: That's right yeah

Int: So (.) what do you do as Deputy Programme Controller?

PC: Well Radio Dean is a bit unusual in that it's got a Programme Controller and a Deputy Programme Controller (.) what I do is (.) I I'm more concerned with the day to day running of the programming department whereas my boss Mick Chapman is more concerned with the weekly running of it like meeting people outside the station because to communicate with the people you've got to go to their outside broadcasts and their events and to get involved in it (.) what I do is do the daily tasks of looking after the presenters (.) doing programme cover (.) doing the playlist which the presenters use (.) sorting out the information cards that they use (.) monitoring their output which is a very important part of it (.) making sure that they're doing what the station tells them to do because they don't don't do things by free choice a lot of it is dictated by (.) musical regulations or speech regulations in general about the language they can use on the air because you can't say what you want to say (.) you've got to obviously be completely impartial

Int: Mm hmm so er when it comes to things like (.) political views are the DJs not really allowed to, express their opinions on (.)// political

PC: What happens is is if you're doing a phone-in and somebody rings in and says oh Thatcher's awful you've got to take Devil's Advocate (.) whatever you may think (.) that's very very hard to be Devil's

Advocate it's like somebody saying to you um tell me fifteen reasons why you hate wearing black you can't you say I like wearing black I feel comfortable in black so if somebody rings in (.) if I was on a phone-in I've obviously got my own political beliefs (.) but if somebody started knocking Margaret Thatcher I'd obviously find it very easy to defend her but if somebody started knocking Neil Kinnock I'd find very hard to defend Neil Kinnock but that's what you're asking a disc jockey to do so it's it's rather like saying to somebody who's planting bushes plant some bulbs (.) you know you've got to be able to do various things. A disc jockey's not just an unthinking person linking together records he's actually got a very very complicated line to balance on (.) and if one person complains about that programme we have to investigate the complaint so it is is a consideration

Int: Mmm hmm do you plan the schedules of programmes for example the midmorning programme do you decide what goes in there ?

PC: We decide the stop and start time of programmes and the overall concept the the actual content of the programmes is partly decided by us like we have police call which is always in the afternoon show there's a careers spot in the afternoon show we've got like the careers service to try and get youngsters involved in these schemes and so on um we have a housing swap spot which is done by the local council (.) they're all things that we (.) want to happen on the radio station and we say oh we'd like you to do this one everyday for us and the presenters so yes they are told but also they have on a weekly basis a responsibility to line up their own features of a topical nature. The topical stuff is from them although occasionally I'll say oh Louise Goffan is

coming in on friday who's actually coming in this friday a singer

Int: Yeah

PC: To do a an acoustic session with her guitar so I said look do you fancy doing it so I offered it to two of them and they said yeah we'll do it and that way it gets kind of hawked around

Int: Mmm yeah with regard to midmorning show do you have any listener research do you know who your listeners are ?

PC: Um (.) we have research every year now (.) it's done for one year solid and we get the figures the following march

Int: Mmm

PC: And it breaks down into half hour segments over the seven day week so we've got 48 segments per day we've got segments monday tuesday wednesday thursday friday and saturday we've also got columns which are under 18 18 to 24 25 to 35 36 to 45 and so on up to 55 plus. We've got housewives at home without children housewives at home with children and so on so we can tell if a certain DJ is pulling more response from males or females more response from housewives than from women (.) generally and we obviously want a housewife DJ on the midmorning show (.) not as much as it used to be but the person on the midmorning has got to appeal to the housewives who are at home plus the people in the offices so he's again steering a careful line because what appeals to a woman at home isn't quite the same as what appeals to an office worker or somebody working in a factory. But you want somebody who (.) women like the voice of basically

Int: Mmm hmm

PC: I I a philosophy we've had here which is completely unwritten but (.) something which we'd probably all agree with is is that if a broadcaster appeals to

women he'll appeal to men (.) but a broadcaster who appeals to men won't necessarily appeal to women.

Int: Mmm

PC: Which is one of the reasons why women aren't there aren't many women disc jockey's on the radio

Int: Mmm

PC: We haven't actually got any women disc jockeys here as such now (.) we have Marie who does present programmes but not on a regular basis and this is why most stations haven't got a female presenter or they find one at night like Radio One

Int: Do you think then that women wouldn't really want to listen to a female presenter ?

PC: Um (.) I I don't think it it's as definite as that I think though that it's safer to put a man on and also I get the of all the applications to come in here we get about 400 a year we've had none from women in the last year. Not one to be a presenter

Int: Mmm hmm

PC: And you can only use the clay you're given you can't invent a broadcaster out of somebody unless they've got a natural spark a natural personality (.) and they want to do it

Int: Mmmhmm

PC: Being a radio presenter is you've got to really want to do it because you'll be unemployed for years to start with because you've got to train hospital radio train university radio and you've either got the job or you haven't and before you start working you can't do much else you can go and do a temporary job of course so

Int: Mmm

PC: I think women tend to go into journalism or (.) television rather than radio for that very reason.

Int: Mmm hmm

PC: It's also very much a man's world so they're very

much picked on if they are here (.) you know a woman has got to assert herself pretty definitely if she's working in radio

Int: Mmm hmm Do you play a big part in interviewing potential DJs for the station

PC: I do in the first processes in the handwriting if they've handwritten a letter or their ability to use the language in the letter if it's typed (.) we set it out as basically as that. At one stage we were actually having the handwriting analysed because I thought that was a good way of actually finding out

Int: ((laughs))

PC: I don't want to know about people's hangups and problems but I want to know about them before they come here and not afterwards

Int: ((laughs))

PC: Um we don't do that anymore (.) we can't (.) unfortunately but um I go through the tapes and cassettes and from this if we've got a vacancy find somebody who might be good enough get them in (.) and then Mick Chapman who's the Programme Controller and I go through them if we like them we put in the studio and they do a tape if um there's stil not possibilities the MD will see them (.) and also we might get one or two other people in the building to suss them out see if they can (.) what it is they've got to be a very good disc jockey but not fit in the team

Int: yeah

PC: If they're kind of mad keen on football you know we don't want anybody who's mad keen on football here for various reasons (.) they've got to be be part of a typical team. We've got a wide range of people here though having said that (.) they're not all clones (.) um because people develop once they're on the radio anyway so er I mean I do basically choose the

people who work here but having said that we very rarely take on beginners (.) um most of our staff have worked at other ILR stations or the local hospital radio service (.) or occasionally university radio but I tend to find that university radio people are too intelligent get bored with being disc jockeys and go and work in television or (.) some some other allied thing. They they get bored being just a disc jockey (.) as they would call it (.) they're too bright for it.

Int: Mmm. Can (.) you give me a list of the characteristics that make a good DJ (.) that you look out for in a DJ

PC: Um the voice is the most important thing (.) obviously their speech has got to be very clear (.) you've also got to have a certain tone in your voice a mid to bass range in your voice to be very warm or (.) alternatively to be like say Graham Bird who's our new afternoon presenter and have a boyish sound to your voice that women like anyway and that men don't find challenging because it's boyish.

Int: Mmm

PC: They've got to have a lot of common sense that's very very important. They've got to be able to react incredibly quickly to situations (.) if there's a royal bereavement or something while you're on the air you can't start stuttering and go all throaty because somebody's died in the Royal Family (.) um they've got to be able to interview the deputy chief constable at five minutes notice um they've got to be able to go out on an OB with 300 girls on a beach at Skegness with just a microphone and a small transmitter and no visible sign saying we're on the air live and still (.) handle the whole situation. They've got to be able to do appearances at clubs at night (.) they've got to be able to do a six day week

monday to friday and saturday or sunday on top of it and still maintain their marriages etc (.) er the pressure on a broadcaster is quite high so you got you want somebody strong and generally over 25 and generally under 35. Cos the disc jockey's like a ballerina he's only as good as his last pas de deux

Int: ((laughs))

PC: And once a disc jockey has stopped doing that (.) once they can't do it any longer (.) they've lost the ability. There's a certain naiivety and youthful quality that's very desirable on the radio (.) somebody of 45 doesn't fit on Independent Local Radio

Int: Mmm hmm well with regard to the midmorning show do you deliberately chookse a DJ that is going to play up to women ? Who can (.) say get accross that boyish image(.) that kind of flirty element?

PC: Er (2.0) well with reference to Mick who's currently on it yes because he has got that kind of image (.) but the previous presenters of the programme haven't had that image they've had a slightly camp image

Int: Martin Dale ?

PC: Er they basically kind of appeal to women (2.0)

Int: In a motherly kind of way ?

PC: Er it it's not motherly (.) I think basically they they understand women very very well therefore they communicate better to women um (.) but you you can't have one policy on a programme you've got to use the clay you've got. Mick is on the programme because he was with the station before and he was very popular on the station before anyway (.) and we'd lost Martin Dale who who I think you're aware of (.) we haven't actually lost him he still works for us but in Leydon. But we had to follow Martin Dale a very hard act to follow (.) so rather than trying to find somebody the same which haven't got on our books anyway (.) we went for an alternative which is

somebody the audience knew and loved already (.) it was a very safe bet it was rather like um Pat Phoenix coming back to Coronation street not that she could obviously but if she could you know it would be a very popular kind of thing so er it was a conscious decision there there's always more than one way of doing a programme there's ten different ways of doing something right but a hundred different ways of doing it wrong aren't there.

Int: Mmm what do you see as the major functions of Independent Local Radio ?

PC: Er well we're in a crux state in that at the moment the day we're doing this interview they'll be of course the Home Office is changes to regulations (.) which are all coming out. Um at the moment to reflect the community which is why some stations are very successful and other stations are very unsuccessful (.) if you reflect your community truly if you're in Bradford you're reflecting a very average community there's not a lot going on if you're in Norchester a lot happens in Norchester

Int: Mmm

PC: Um so Radio Dean is successful because it's in a successful area anyway (.) having said that we have got in very very high figures for listening (.) people listen to us for 13.7 hours a week average which is the second highest figure in the country not only for Independent Local Radio but also for BBC local radio (.) if you get the BBC figures for Norchester BBC Radio Norchester they will tell you that we are number one and they are number two so so we achieved that and really what I'm saying is that what we should should be is what we are. We've achieved it by always having local information every hour of the day (.) information cards are always read we have regular news bulletins which contain lots of

information (.) the presenters live locally the presenters live (.) you know in West Bridford or in Arndale or whatever so it relates to the area over and over again so it it's what we've become through what we've done in the past (.) you're obviously local by the sound of it are you?

Int: No ((laughs))

PC: Oh yeah you're from Leeds aren't you. You knew Martin Dale you sussed Martin Dale you were aware of him you knew who he was

Int: Mmmhmm

PC: Um people relate to us as being people who live in their area which is a strength. Radio One if they try and be local instantly delocalise themselves to the rest of Great Britain

Int: Mmmhmm. With regard to the midmorning show again because that's the one I'm featuring on (.) do you think there should be an even balance between entertainment and information or do you think one (.) has more weighting than the other.

PC: Um I wouldn't distinguish between the two in the sense of how you use those terms on mid morning radio the information can often be very entertaining and the entertainment's often the information. If there's somebody coming in and talking about a record is that information or is it entertainment. If its er somebody reading out an information card (.) it could be for a dance being held that night that people will go and enjoy themselves at it um I think more and more it's got to the stage where (.) the daytime programmes have got to be entertaining but the information has got to be put in sugarcoated if you start doing long slabs of speech you start to sound like Radio Norchester (.) and people choose us because we don't do that therefore we try and keep it flowing if we can

Int: Mmhmm

PC: Um (1.0) we have problems in that there are so many things that we could put in it's difficult to say (.) yes to some people and no to others and people ring up and say can we can you do this for us um (.) the only time we go purely into information is probably during the news (.) or if we're into a conversation's programme on a friday evening which is a half hour chat programme (.) where we get somebody in and talk solidly for half an hour rather like this

Int: Yeah

PC: This is pure information we're conveying now (.) but we don't do that very often now

Int: Uh huh do you think there should be an even balance between lightheartedness and seriousness?

PC: No because I think the people who turn the radio on turn on for a friend (.) and the one thing you can't do with the radio is to tell it your problems (.) now friends have got two purposes either to cheer you up or to go and pour your problems out to

Int: Yeh

PC: Er and I think radio can can solve a problem by taking your mind off the problem (.) but the the problem comes back afterwards. Where we can occasionally get round to that kind of communication is on the phone-ins if someone's suicidal or got a really heavy problem people don't always think to ring the samaritans they don't know the number perhaps but they know Marie on Radio Dean and they ring her up and they just pour their heart out to her because at night and its one to one communication on the telephone people will be much more open than they will be during the day (.) so any kind of programme like that tends to be at night because of the nature of the of the nighttime hours people's feelings during those hours.

Int: Ok (2.0) so on the whole you don't really like DJs talking about say sexism and racism you know to combat such issues ?

PC: The problem is that a comment can often be misconstrued (.) a disc jockey certainly can't put his own opinion accross on the air if somebody asks a disc jockey what do you think Steve? In fact we wouldn't use the word disc jockey we'd use the word presenter as a reference (.) you know Steve Merton say who does the phone-in at night between 11 and 1.30 on fridays ((end of tape)) Now he basically is a very important person he reads the papers from cover to cover ten days a week even so we occasionally get complaints from someone saying he's unbalanced but what is unbalanced is in that person's mind (.) but what we say we've got to balance over the course of the programme over the course of a week the balance is actually within the station not on a programme necessarily. If we get a phone-in all about one topic and somebody complains about the topic being aired to such an extent and they want to be negative about we'll give them a chance to come and talk about the opposite side of it

Int: Mmm

PC: We always investigate complaints anyway (.) um but (.) you can't (.) get your own personal opinions about these issues. Obviously if we employed somebody who was racially prejudiced on the radio they wouldn't last very long anyway (.) You can't beracially prejudiced on the radio they've got to be a balanced person in the first place to get the job

Int: Mmmm I think that's it really.

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