

Cambridge University Press

0521792282 - Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies

Kevin Howley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Community Media

People, Places, and Communication Technologies

While transnational conglomerates consolidate their control of the global mediascape, local communities struggle to create democratic media systems. This groundbreaking study of community media combines original research with comparative and theoretical analysis in an engaging and accessible style. Kevin Howley explores the different ways in which local communities come to make use of various technologies such as radio, television, print, and computer networks for purposes of community communication and considers the ways these technologies shape, and are shaped by, the everyday lived experience of local populations. He also addresses broader theoretical and philosophical issues surrounding the relationship between communication and community, media systems, and the public sphere. Case studies illustrate the pivotal role community media play in promoting cultural production and communicative democracy within and between local communities. This book will make a significant contribution to existing scholarship in media and cultural studies on alternative, participatory, and community-based media.

KEVIN HOWLEY is Assistant Professor of Media Studies at DePauw University. He has published in a number of journals including *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, *Journal of Film and Video*, *Journal of Radio Studies*, and *Ecumene*.

Cambridge University Press

0521792282 - Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies

Kevin Howley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Community Media

People, Places, and Communication Technologies

Kevin Howley

Assistant Professor

Department of Communication and Theatre

DePauw University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
0521792282 - Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies
Kevin Howley
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa
<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Kevin Howley 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Plantin 10/12 pt. *System* L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 0 521 79228 2 hardback
ISBN 0 521 79668 7 paperback

The publisher has used its best endeavours to ensure that URLs for external websites referred to in this book are correct and active at the time of going to press. However, the publisher has no responsibility for the websites and can make no guarantee that a site will remain live or that the content is or will remain appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

0521792282 - Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies

Kevin Howley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

For my parents, Robert and Jean Howley

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
Introduction	1
1 Locating community media	13
2 Tracing the global through the local: perspectives on community media	39
3 Finding a spot on the dial: Firehouse Broadcasting from Bloomington, Indiana	83
4 Downtown Community Television: cultural politics and technological form	133
5 A poor people's press: <i>Street Feat</i>	184
6 Victoria's Network: (re) imagining community in the information age	226
Conclusion	258
<i>Notes</i>	270
<i>References</i>	280
<i>Index</i>	295

Cambridge University Press

0521792282 - Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies

Kevin Howley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Figures

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1 Promotional banner for WFHB featuring Spot, official mascot of Firehouse Broadcasting. (Photo by the author) | <i>page</i> 92 |
| 2 BCR's grassroots fundraising efforts included the Community Lawn Service. (Courtesy Brian Kearney) | 99 |
| 3 Jeffrey Morris making last minute preparations for WFHB's inaugural broadcast on 4 January 1993. (Courtesy Jeffrey Morris) | 103 |
| 4 Radio Ridge, WFHB's transmitter site and on-air studio, during the first jubilant year of community broadcasting. (Courtesy Jeffrey Morris) | 104 |
| 5 The debate over public affairs programming featured in WFHB's newsletter, <i>The Spotlight</i> . (Courtesy WFHB) | 119 |
| 6 This landmark firehouse in New York City's Chinatown is home to Downtown Community Television. (Photo by the author) | 134 |
| 7 Jon Alpert and Keiko Tsuno describe their work on the public television series <i>VTR</i> . (Courtesy of DCTV) | 144 |
| 8 A repurposed mail truck, purchased for \$5, brings DCTV's community television to the streets of the Lower East Side. (Photo courtesy of DCTV) | 152 |
| 9 Keiko Tsuno, with the camera, and Jon Alpert conducting interviews for their award winning documentary, <i>Third Avenue</i> . (Courtesy of DCTV) | 157 |
| 10 A student enrolled in DCTV's Envision Television (eTV) program prepares. (Photo by the author) | 179 |
| 11 A handbill from the summer of 2001 echoes earlier struggles in the Africville neighborhood of Halifax, Nova Scotia. (Photo by the author) | 191 |
| 12 <i>Street Feat</i> demonstrates its solidarity with global peace and justice movements with this cover illustration | |

Cambridge University Press

0521792282 - Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies

Kevin Howley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x List of figures

	commemorating International Food Day. (Courtesy of <i>Street Feat</i>)	196
13	Long-time <i>Street Feat</i> writer, former editor, and volunteer coordinator, Peter McGuigan. (Photo by the author)	200
14	<i>Street Feat</i> issue documenting a demonstration against the Spring Garden Road Business Association's Spare Change program. (Courtesy of <i>Street Feat</i>)	208
15	Izzy White selling copies of <i>Street Feat</i> along Halifax's fashionable Spring Garden Road. (Photo by the author)	217

Cambridge University Press

0521792282 - Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies

Kevin Howley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

To those educators, activists, and collaborators – among them Shirley Ann Bruno, Hal Himmelstein, George Dessart, and the late Loomis C. Irish – who sparked my initial interest in community media, I offer my sincere gratitude. Thanks also to dozens of community media workers around the world who encouraged me to not only examine, but also to value media making as a social practice. In your dedication and by your example, you vividly demonstrate the cultural significance and political relevance of community media. I hope my words do justice to your efforts.

Various institutions and agencies supported this work. The Graduate School of Indiana University, Bloomington, provided important seed money during this project's initial stages as a doctoral dissertation. The National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Marion and Jasper Whiting Foundation supported additional fieldwork in New York City and Halifax, Nova Scotia respectively. Research support and course release time at Northeastern University and DePauw University allowed me to spend considerable time and effort conducting research, refining the project, and completing this manuscript.

Material from Chapter 3 has previously been published in the *Journal of Radio Studies* and the *Historical Journal of Radio, Film and Television*. Portions of this revised manuscript have also appeared in the online publications *The Qualitative Report* and *Transformations*. Finally, an earlier draft of Chapter 6 appeared in the conference proceedings for the Communication Law Centre's meeting entitled "Cultural Crossroads: Ownership, Access and Identity."

Over the course of the past ten years, I received invaluable support from mentors, colleagues, and friends who, at various times, contributed to this project throughout its protracted development. While working on my doctorate at Indiana University, Michael Curtin, Chris Anderson, Harmeet Sawhney, and Andrew Dillon helped forge this project's design and inform its intellectual foundation. Special thanks also to my "long lost" friend and colleague Alex Leidholdt of James Madison University for all of his support and encouragement.

Cambridge University Press

0521792282 - Community Media: People, Places, and Communication Technologies

Kevin Howley

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii Acknowledgments

At Northeastern University, P. David Marshall, Murray Forman, Joanne Morreale, Michael Woodnick, and Alison Hearn were all generous with their time and in their fellowship. Special thanks to Alan Zaremba, a superb colleague, a gifted teacher, and a valued friend, whose sage advice and good company helped make this a much better manuscript. Thanks especially to my research assistant, Ed Grady, and the members of my seminar courses on Communication and Community for their stimulating questions and hard work.

At DePauw University, faculty colleagues, administrators, and staff likewise provided enormous support. Thanks especially to Jonathan Nichols-Pethick and Dennis Trinkle for their thoughtful comments and good conversation. And for all her logistical support, I thank Joyce Christiansen of the Department of Communication and Theatre, who demonstrated her dedication, resourcefulness, and good humor at every turn.

For her patience and unfailing support, I extend sincere thanks to Sarah Caro, my editor at Cambridge University Press. In the wake of formidable obstacles, Sarah encouraged my efforts and granted me additional time to deliver the completed manuscript. Thanks also to her assistants Jackie Warren, Elizabeth Davey, and Laura Hemming for their attention to this manuscript as well as to the anonymous reviewers whose insights and suggestions likewise contributed to this project's realization.

Of course, this study would not be possible without the insights, assistance, and access afforded me at each of the organizations described in these pages. For their wit, wisdom, and companionship, I thank some of my friends at WFHB, especially Brian Kearney, Jim Manion, Jeffrey Morris, Richard Fish, John Westhues, Mike Kelsey, "Tall Steve" Volan, Jason "Sideways," and Daniel Grundmann.

Thanks also to Jon Alpert and Keiko Tsuno at Downtown Community Television, who graciously allowed me to work alongside their staff, students, and interns during the summer of 2000. The entire DCTV crew, especially Tatiana Loureiro, Catherine Martinez, John Kaplan, Orlando Richards, Renata Gangemi, and Craig Renaud, made me feel right at home in the firehouse studio.

In Halifax, Nova Scotia, the staff and volunteers at *Street Feat*, in particular Juan Carlos Canales-Leyton, Michael Burke, and Peter McGuigan, were equally welcoming. I am especially indebted to them and their colleagues at CKDU, campus/community radio from Dalhousie University, for their compassion for this visiting American academic in the hours and days following the horrific events of 11 September 2001.

Special thanks to Adrian Bates, Stuart Hall, and Garry Hardy for your assistance in coordinating online data collection efforts at Victoria's Network. Without your help, I would never have made it Down Under by

desktop; cheers to you and all those who help make VICNET a vibrant community. One day I hope to make my way to Melbourne and look you up off-line.

Likewise, I extend my deepest appreciation to all those community media activists and enthusiasts, far too numerous to mention by name, who contributed to the global overview of community media in Chapter 2. Your passion for media making is palpable and your commitment to community communication, contagious. Those insights I have gleaned from your efforts make this a compelling account of media activism and social justice. Any errors, oversights, or omissions are, of course, my sole responsibility.

To my wife and my love, Debora Frazier, I can scarcely begin to thank you for all you have given me. Your generosity inspires me, your kindness shelters me, your love nourishes me, and your presence is a blessing to me and to our families. Now for some time “well spent” together.

Finally, I dedicate this book to my parents with love and gratitude. An academic book may be a curious way to thank you for a lifetime of unconditional physical, emotional, and spiritual support, but it’s a start. My admiration for both of you is boundless. And your love is with me, always.