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A PLACE TO STAND: COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTERS

James Joseph Knightwright

65 Pages

With the experience of 30+ years in community media, I envision providing a resource for scholars as well as community media practitioners and stakeholders. I am investigating the processes of training at community media centers (CMC) to determine potential impacts and effects. Functioning as a participant observer, I will prepare a documentary film focusing on the practices and processes utilized by CMCs to serve their communities.

Concentrating on Columbia Access Television (CAT TV), Columbia, Missouri and the Sun Prairie Media Center (SPMC), Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, I plan to visit each location to interview station staff, volunteers, and community members. These are two very different CMCs and viewing their successes and concerns will give contrasting perspectives on community media. Supplementing site interviews, I will include an expertise angle by conducting interviews of community media specialists and communication theory scholars.

With awareness that sense of place is critical for the quality of life in a community, I will explore potential influences on civic engagement and on the development of relationships among encounters and experiences of participants in community media. The video documentary will address implications for media literacy and civic engagement together with identification of benefits for CMC constituents, including the station participants, area civic leaders, and communities in which CMCs locate.

KEYWORDS: community media; public access; television; communication infrastructure
theory; media; civic engagement; social capital

A PLACE TO STAND: COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTERS

JAMES JOSEPH KNIGHTWRIGHT

A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

School of Communication

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A PLACE TO STAND: COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTERS

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SUMMARY

This project explores the link between community media center involvement and civic engagement. Using a case study approach and digital video production, researchers document the experiences of public access channel users, public, educational, and governmental cable TV access (PEG) station employees and managers, municipal leaders, and national community media leaders.

The project is an on-location documentary of the process of involvement with PEG media channels and studies the issues and concerns facing PEG media through understanding place and processes.

This project investigates the process of involvement with community media, particularly looking at media literacy and civic engagement. Significant considerations require examination if involvement in volunteering at a PEG access center or utilizing access center resources to produce programming affects the participants' media literacy and/or their civic engagement. Other questions investigate how PEG access centers are involved with media literacy education and in what ways do PEG station participants engage with their community.

Studies by Hardyk, Loges and Ball-Rokeach (2005) found that the community media successfully operated as storytelling network agents at a meso-level. However, despite the emergence in the 1970s of public access television and their continued presence as local media, public access stations have not been studied in light of the communication infrastructure theory. This project builds upon current research to study the effect of community media centers on civic engagement. Through the lens of communication infrastructure theory, this documentary focuses on the impact on civic engagement and media literacy occurring at community media centers.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project benefitted greatly from the assistance of many, many people. I would like to thank Illinois State University and the School of Communication. The program's breadth and depth of the different aspects of communication offered excellent guidance to me, providing a solid theory-based foundation for my analysis of community media. I would particularly like to thank my committee: Dr. Maria A. Moore, conversation with whom inspired my decision that Illinois State would be the excellent place to address and pursue scholarly goals; Dr. Lauren Bratslavsky, whose origins in community media are similar to my own; and Dr. Brent K. Simonds, who has shared the guidance of focus on the importance of narrative in documentary storytelling.

I owe an immense thanks to the community media professionals who consented to participate in my documentary. Particularly I would like to thank Mary Cardona, Tina LeGarde, Ross Rowe, Mary Van Sickle, and Mike Wassenaar. I would also like to thank and remember the legacy extended to me by my mentors in community media: Roxie Cole, who founded Dayton Ohio's public access channel and was a pioneer in community media, and Bob Muhlbach of Michigan State University, who was, over our many shared years, friend, peer, and academic guide. It was my privilege to have worked for and with both of them. Their presence is greatly missed.

Most importantly, I would like to thank my family. My sons, Benjamin and Alex Knightwright, dealt with my odd hours and my being unavailable on their schedules, yet they were always willing to help out. Finally, I would like to thank my spouse, Mary Knightwright. She is the public access volunteer with whom I have been married for the past 32 years. Her

support, prodding, proofreading, critical eye, and production assistance is invaluable. I know I have the best partner to share this journey and the next adventures of our lives.

J. J. K.

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CHAPTER I: SIGNIFICANCE

This documentary looks at community media centers (CMCs), their unique place in the local media ecology, and how processes of CMCs affect community engagement and looks at CMCs as places for training, nurturing, and encouraging collaboration of community producers and volunteers. These observations will determine CMCs involvement in increasing positive civic engagement and in enhancing media literacy.

Assessing participation at CMCs will explain their relation to positive community development. Policy makers decide where financial resources go. Clarifying the contribution of CMCs moves the assessment of value from the number of subscribers and number of clicks to the evaluation of the ‘dollars and sense’ impact CMCs offer through increased civic engagement.

Communication theory researchers will benefit from this documentary’s examination of the work of community producers within their CMCs’ context. This relevancy of media impact has applicable value to identify specific variables within the community media process. Significant for this researcher, as a television professional with forty years’ experience, is the evidence to articulate the variables which address the valuableness of community media centers.

Information must be available in usable, practical form for the community media professionals and for the diversity of persons who interact in communities. Through delivering findings in a video narrative, this documentary uses the best format for educating civic leaders, CMC users, and community media professionals.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A sense of place is critical for the quality of life in a community. Yet, nearly one third of people in the United States feel little or no sense of attachment to their local community (Pew Research Center, November, 2016). Only one in five adults feels a strong attachment to their community. What's more, only 27 percent of adults say they always vote in local elections, and an even lower number, 23 percent, report that they know their neighbors (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). These figures are reflected in the voter turnout trends where the average voting in midterm congressional elections over the past 40 years is 35 percent.

This detachment of voters and volunteers concerns their elected officials as well as scholars from many disciplines. Robert Putnam framed the decrease in civic engagement and social capital as a communication issue, particularly a mass communication issue (Putnam, 2000). He suggested that people's reliance on mass communication has taken their time away from other social interactions and civic activities. Through social interactions, people discuss issues and build attachments to their local communities. Jurgen Habermas suggested that daily discussions within the public sphere formulate public opinion and supplies direction to the public agenda. (Habermas, 2006). This public sphere is more accurately a local communication ecology and promotes the discussions necessary for a working democracy.

For a community to experience a sense of place, people need to hear and repeat stories about their community. The lack of stories can lead to residents' silence about their community and a decrease in the community's quality of life (Ball-Rokeach, Kim, & Matei, 2001). The loss of neighborhood newspapers and cutbacks in local newsrooms factor into lack of local shared stories (Ninan-Moses, Breitbart, Losey, & Glaisyer, 2011). The control of regional media by national and multi-national conglomerates further reduces local stories and fosters content aimed

at national, common-denominator audiences. Cutbacks in local newsrooms also decrease the numbers of purely local stories, limiting coverage of local issues. This affects coverage of and perceived transparency for local government actions.

The rise of radio and then television broadcasting correlated in an evident decrease of local stories' coverage. Free speech advocates concerned about these trends explored opportunities for community media, and, specifically public access television, as an intervention to address the lessening of diverse voices in media (Aufderheide, 2000). Called a "public forum" and "a speaker's soapbox," public access television was suggested as a free speech space set aside for the community on the local cable television system (Stein, 2002, p. 123).

Prior writings about community media have centered on the *space* for free *speech* and funding for their operation (Ali, 2014). Studies, however, have noted that much of the success of community media has involved the *process* of participation in program creation at the channel (Ali, 2012; Higgins, 1999; Howley, 2005; King & Mele, 1999). Beyond *space* and *speech*, community media centers provide *place* and *process* which are equally important to realizing the goals of participation in the local public sphere. Ali (2012) suggested that community media centers create a sense of place, which is the CMC's "ability to bring community members together in time and space for the purposes of education, deliberation, networking, community building, and of course, media production" (p. 1120). For community media centers to fulfil their promise of providing a public forum to enhance civic engagement, centers need to offer the experience of *place* to create and to curate that speech.

Civic Engagement

Researchers continue to examine how forging connections between people contributes to their involvement in their community and their quality of life (Martens & Hobbs, 2015; Putnam,

1995; Putnam, 2000). Putnam depicted television as the driving force in the decline of social capital in the United States (1995; 2000). Over the past two decades, Putnam's declaration inspired increased scholarship on the connection between television/Internet use and social capital/civic engagement (Gil de Zúñiga & Valenzuela, 2011; Hoffman & Appiah, 2008; Moy, Scheufele, & Holbert, 1999). While some studies have found a negative correlation between media use and civic engagement, others saw a greater positive connection between the intentional media use and civic engagement (Moy, Manosevitch, Stamm, & Dunsmore, 2005). Television and Internet use for entertainment correlates with lower civic engagement. By contrast, media use for surveillance and information acquisition results in increased civic participation (Gil de Zúñiga, 2012; Jeffres, Jian, Horowitz, Bracken, & Yoon, 2007). Civic engagement is related to neighborhood communication measures, principally newspaper use, and to neighborhood ties. Decline in local media coverage of local news may also lead to a decreased reliance on mass media for information and a greater dependency on interpersonal connections for information gathering (Ognyanova et al., 2013).

People define their community involvement in many ways. The concept of civic engagement is complicated and involves multiple dimensions. In one view, civic engagement expresses as a continuum from individual or private actions to collective public group activities (Adler & Goggin, 2005). In another view, civic engagement exists on the continuum from community volunteer participation to direct political actions such as voting or electoral campaign participation. Analogous studies have explored civic engagement in terms from episodic (one-time projects) to intensive (9 to 12 months of weekly commitments). This multi-dimensional aspect has complicated conceptualizing civic engagement.

Citizen engagement takes on more forms than political activities such as voting and campaign work (Zukin, Keeter, Andolina, Jenkins, & Delli Carpini, 2006). This engagement can involve contacting government officials, working collectively to solve community problems, and participating in non-electoral community activities (Zukin et al., 2006). These activities range from conventional behaviors (organizational memberships and meeting attendance) to unconventional activities (petitions and boycotting products or businesses). Civic participation also involves the public voice of contacting elected and non-elected leaders. Zukin, et al. (2006) likewise observed participation through cognitive engagement of seeking community information in the news and through interpersonal relationships.

From early assembly to mass movement, connection flows into action. Ancient Greek mathematician and physicist Archimedes purportedly told Syracuse's King Hieron, "Give me a place to stand, and I will move the earth" (Pappus of Alexandria & Hultsch, 1876). Although, apocryphal to the Punic Wars, the legend of Archimedes addresses how the lever and block and tackle he arranged set a ship to sea and showed how the right tools can be employed effectively. Community media centers, providing places as a fulcrum for involvement, offer their resources and media literacy education among the necessary tools to enable community movement and civic engagement. Scholarship needs to pursue inquiry into this civic engagement within community media centers as place connection.

The Public Sphere

Habermas thought the public sphere was the place where people come together in an informed discussion of the issues and agendas governing them (Friedland, 2001; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006b). He worried that capitalistic influences were supplementing those discussions with mediated messages more intent on persuasion than discussion (Habermas, 1989). For

Habermas, the formation of a public sphere of dialogue was a condition for the formation of a bourgeois liberal democracy. Habermas' primary concentration addressed the sociostructural relationships between the quality of the social context and the quality of the democracy formed (Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006a).

Using behavior to judge people's reactions to their society is common in social science research. How people choose to express or choose not to express ideas and opinions about the communities where they live is a way of judging their attitudes about their communities. Kim & Ball-Rokeach (2006a) supported observing the communication structures and processes like mass communication when considering civic engagement. Awareness of the relative importance of communication channels for specific goals increases the cost-effectiveness of mediated messages (Wilkin, Ball-Rokeach, Matsaganis, & Cheong, 2007). In turn, this knowledge of communication structures helps understand audiences in a media-saturated environment.

Habermas (2006) wrote about citizens creating a public sphere through regular participation and responses to public discourse. Considering the public sphere of discourse, Gil de Zúñiga and Valenzuela (2011) found that network size and type have strong predictive value for the likelihood of engaging in civil activities beyond political involvement. Strong tie networks are intimate relationships such as family and close friends. Weak tie networks involve less intimate (friend of a friend) discussions. Weak ties afford more diverse information-which is not as available within the confines of strong tie networks. The weak tie networks have their own opportunities for engagement. The exchanges of weak tie networks allow encounters with differing cultures and subcultures. Community media centers offer contacts among people from different parts of communities, drawing out individuals from isolation into interaction.

Communication Infrastructure Theory

The communication infrastructure theory (CIT) is a useful lens to make sense of particular communication ecologies. CIT asserts that individuals draw from a variety of mediated, organizational, and interpersonal resources to construct knowledge and achieve their goals (Ball-Rokeach, Gonzalez, Son, & Kligler-Vilenchik, 2012; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006a; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006b; Wilkin et al., 2007). The communication connections, in turn, allow an individual to access cultural, social, political, and human resources. Each individual forms these communication connections into a network in the context of individual communication environments. Shaped by particular social and cultural conditions, this multi-modal communication network constitutes an individual's communication ecology (Wilkin et al., 2007). Consequently, the ecology a person would form when pursuing information about a community would be different than the ecology the person would develop in pursuit of entertainment goals.

The communication infrastructure theory draws upon Habermas' idea of the public sphere, and CIT is a continuance of the media system dependency theory (MSD) which expanded on the uses and gratifications theory (Ball-Rokeach, 1998; Wilkin et al., 2007). While the uses and gratifications theory centers on how individuals use media to gratify their conscious or unconscious needs, MSD concentrates on relationships of goal-attainment and media connectedness and sees the incorporation of diverse media in reaching goals. CIT extends MSD with the application of media modalities: old versus new media, mainstream versus local and ethnic media, and mass versus interpersonal (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001). Moreover, CIT looks at the interaction of an individual's communication action context and the local storytelling network.

Neighborhood Storytelling Network

The neighborhood storytelling network (STN) is “the process where people go from being occupants of a house to being members of a neighborhood,” highlighting the “active construction of neighborhoods through discourse” (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001p. 394). For Ball-Rokeach et al., “storytelling is the act of constructing identity through narrative discourse,” while STN reflects the act of creating “an identity as a member of a residential neighborhood” (p. 394). Positively or negatively, residents identify with their community through the stories, or lack of stories, they hear and relate about that community.

Ball-Rokeach et al. differentiated communication into *generalized storytelling* and *neighborhood storytelling* (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001). For communication to become *generalized storytelling*, the encounters originate with sharing topics of local interest, concerns, or realities, including natural occurrences, local events, or transportation topics among these areas. However, without repeated, regular interaction, these did not necessarily progress into deeper connection. In the same way, without repeated occasions for interaction and deepening contact, the emergence of ‘peril or promise’ occurrences may be the only catalysts to move from *generalized storytelling* to *neighborhood storytelling*. A neighborhood storytelling network involves the geographic discourse including neighborhood concerns, gossip, and public school issues (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006a). Residents’ connection and affinity with their community are built on the skills and connections of the storytelling network.

The storytelling system operates at macro, micro, and meso-levels (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006a). Among neighborhoods, there are macro-level storytelling agents who reach across the municipality, sharing stories of the larger world and relaying information of national, regional, or city focus. The micro-level agents communicate as

interpersonal storytelling connectors. These micro-level communications include conversations over the backyard fence, chance meetings at a park, library, or grocer, and mediated interpersonal communications such as email or social media messaging.

Meso-level agents have essential linking roles (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001). The meso-level storytelling communicates information through local organizations, in neighborhood newspapers, and on community media. Meso-level communication has receivers in specific geographic areas or among specific populations (Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006a). Their key function in bridging macro-level and micro-level communication involves finding relevance of macro-level stories for the micro-level as well as offering opportunities for conveying neighborhood issues and stories into the broader public agenda and sharing stories to mainstream media. (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006b). A recording of a college speaker on foreign affairs can help provide a local reference for national and international events. Likewise, coverage of a school board candidates' forum can raise issues of local education concerns for the entire community. Positive two-way relationships between residents' civic and neighborhood pride arise through the integrated linkage of shared communication among all levels.

Unfortunately, disconnection between macro-level and micro-level storytelling reflects the neighborhoods' experiences of mainstream media and institutions' disregarding their communities' stories. Residents subsequently become reluctant to talk about their neighborhood (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001). The greater integration within levels of the storytelling system, the more probable local residents will feel a sense of belonging. Rich storytelling environments encourage them to participate in their community.

At the meso-level, when local media, community organizations, and residents share discourses about the community, they form a storytelling network (Broad et al., 2013; N. N. Chen, Dong, Ball-Rokeach, Parks, & Huang, 2012). When groups or individuals wish to realize goals or attain successes, they leverage that storytelling network to access resources and create alliances.

Communication Action Context

A storytelling system set within the local communication action context (CAC) is the communication infrastructure. Advancing on Habermas' related consideration, Ball-Rokeach et al. (2001) gave attention to dimensions of openness and closedness. Open communication contexts facilitate engagement; closed contexts inhibit communications. With awareness that to some extent CACs show aspects of both, the examining of communication action contexts examines the impacts of these dimensions of openness and closedness. The CAC observations consist of identifying boundaries of physical features such as street arrangements, specific locations, psychological features such as comfort levels and personal perceptions of safe/unsafe space, sociocultural features of class, ethnic, cultural identities, and the technical features of Internet access or similar connectivity (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001).

Whereas Putnam highlighted the realities of rising distrust in government, the rise of commercial journalism, and declines in voter turnout and political party membership, other researchers have suggested that civic engagement is restructuring into new areas available through modern communication (Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006a; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006b). The communication infrastructure theory takes a third perspective framed on the structure, processes, and obstacles which make community building by residents either easy or difficult. CIT suggests that some communities have strong communication infrastructures and others

communities do not. Differing communication environments afford easy or difficult connections to resources. Communication resources enable individuals and groups to connect beyond themselves to individuals and groups with similar goals. By analyzing the communication structures, CIT indicates a way of understanding the ecological relationships among communication environment, communication action, and the infrastructure that supports or hinders that interaction (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001). Communication infrastructure theory looks at that communication action context and the consequences for civic engagement. Analysis is needed to comprehend meso-level actors like community media centers.

Community Media

Community media (CM) is in a unique position, acting as a storytelling agent and providing infrastructure as a communication action context. Internationally, community media have two common characteristics: reliance on volunteers and a local orientation. Community media globally can cover anything from pirate radio stations to local broadcast television and from web-based news outlets to newsletters and posters (Dunbar-Hester, 2014; Hollander, Stappers, & Jankowski, 2002; Rennie, 2006). By the same token, definitions of community media are uniquely local. Community media centers vary by location just as culture can be particular to the needs, settings, and issues of a region. Finally, most definitions of community media utilize the terms participatory and access to media (Rennie, 2006).

CM worldwide tends to involve the participation of nonprofessionals in the presentation of the media messages and to undergird a platform for the presentation of alternative ideas. Community media is seen as a means to a more democratic and local form of communication (Carpentier & Doudaki, 2014; Riedel, 2015). CM can be seen as a service to the community, as an alternative form of media, and as a part of linking civil society which is separate from market

or governmental forces (Carpentier, Lie, & Servaes, 2003). Carpentier et al. (2003) suggested that community media cuts across neighborhood boundaries, growing new connections among groups. These connections allow linking of differing economic, arts, and social organizations as well as connections with government without the groups' loss of identity or cultural assimilation.

The Community Communication and Alternative Media section of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) broadly defines community media as “the field of communication that exists outside of the state and the market (often non-government and non-profit), yet which may interact with both” (International Association for Media and Communication Research, Community Communication and Alternative Media Section, n.d.). Community media becomes a vital part of the local communication infrastructure, differing from large-scale and institutionalized mass media in content, type, and size of operation (Hollander et al., 2002). Community media is an attempt at creation of a local forum for discussion, rather than being a conflicting alternative to the establishment. Hollander, et al. (2002) suggested CM is a part of the “locale öffentlichkeit, or local public sphere” (p. 25). Within the system's context, community media is part of a process of exchanging information, instead of the linear transmission by a small group of professionals to a large audience.

Common Challenges for Community Media

Across the globe, the main challenges for community media centers are funding, distribution, and relevancy (Ali, 2012; TimeScape Productions, 2009). These challenges limit community media and can pose a threat to the establishment and sustainability of community media centers (Stiegler, 2009). For community media to function as a part of the local public sphere, these financial, applicability, and outreach challenges must be addressed.

Funding. Internationally, funding for community media generally involves government funding, private grants, and advertisements. Without reliable funding, centers tend to limit community outreach, particularly to marginalized populations (TimeScape Productions, 2009). Centers with inadequate funding concentrate on program playback, letting the democratic goals of public participation, interaction, and debate suffer.

In the United States where funding has been tied to fees from local cable television franchises, funding issues have forced more than 100 community media centers to close since 2005 (Goldfarb, 2012). Those franchise fees are usually funneled through municipal governments who serve as the franchising authorities. Flat cable television revenues, competition for those fees with other municipal budget concerns, and limits placed on community media funding by federal regulation requirements and statewide franchising laws have combined to add instability to the once stably-funded U.S. community media centers (Fuentes-Bautista, 2014).

Distribution. With the exception of pirate stations, which operate illegally, most places with community media have some kind of licensed channel to carry community programming (TimeScape Productions, 2009). The United Kingdom has experienced success with community radio, but low cable television penetration has not led to similar gains for community television (Ali, 2012). The transition to digital television has similarly affected broadcast community television in Australia where community television was not included in funding for tower and transmitter upgrades, leaving the channels transmitting analog signals incompatible with digital television sets (TimeScape Productions, 2009).

In the United States, cable television has been the primary distribution channel for community media. The digital television transition has limited CM channels since they are primarily transmitting through analog signals, and, as system operations move to digital, CM

channels end up removed from basic cable subscription tiers. (Goldfarb, 2012). In 2010, Charter Communications cable systems in the St. Louis area moved the PEG channels from lower, analog channels to digital channels in the 900-plus range. This required viewers to rent a digital cable box for an additional \$5.00 per month to be able to watch the channels (Hampel, 2010). As a condition of the Comcast-NBC Universal merger, the FCC required that Comcast keep community media channels on the basic tier until an entire system is upgraded to digital.

Relevancy. The struggle to remain relevant continues to be a profound challenge for community media. YouTube and other social media are recognized as extending the public sphere. The price of entry for these Internet services is low, allowing anyone to author media messages. Media consumers can sample from established media outlets such as *The New York Times* or from narrow-based bloggers who do not necessarily adhere to the same journalistic standards (Kamerer, 2013). As Kamerer remarked, “There's still a lot of junk out there” (p. 18). The problem with social media is not the number of voices but is instead the number and availability of local voices.

Husband (1994) pointed out a limitation of Internet media that “A public sphere that operates through parallel and exclusive communication systems cannot promote dialogue between fellow citizens” (p. 2). Being geographically focused, messages geared to a particular community are not as relevant to a wider audience outside of the community’s boundaries (Stiegler, 2009). Besides a loss of the local cohesion, there is a concern that substitution of Internet services for community media will encourage separation of individual activity from group activity, social activity, and community interaction (Higgins, 2011).

These challenges for CM can overlap. Internet availability in the United States has been a rationale to cut funding for community media. However, social media algorithms do not always

promote messages with low viewership. The algorithms tend to emphasize the quantity of dialogue over the quality of dialogue. This limits accessibility to new, local audiences.

Chen, Funk, Straubhaar, & Spence (2013) stressed continued significant applicability for public access television, even in an age of cord cutting and especially for groups who have experienced marginalization within a community. “The digitizing, converging media landscape is enhancing public access channels viewership, not diminishing it.” (W. Chen et al., 2013, p. 279). Their investigation in Austin, Texas keyed on the audiences for public access. The researchers found that racial and ethnic minorities in particular were viewers and beneficiaries of public access television and observed that viewers gained empowerment and showed higher levels of social capital.

History of Community Media

Early international community media endeavors in the 1970s emerged out of efforts to democratize the monopolies of national media (Rennie, 2006). Corporate and political control of media favored some groups over others. UNESCO, in 1976, formed a commission to study international communication and to speak to the north-south disparities in how cultures were being presented. The processes and media varied in each country.

In North America, the community media movement sprouted simultaneously in several areas in what Engleman (1990) called “a confluence of forces – technological, institutional and ideological” (p. 39). Community radio origins trace to Pacifica’s KPFA in Berkley, California in 1949 (Sussman & Estes, 2005). KPFA was the first non-commercial radio station which was not affiliated with an educational institution. In the late 1960s, several United States public television stations experimented by allowing local organizations airtime without cost. Among these were Boston’s “Catch 44,” Detroit’s “Your Turn,” San Francisco’s “Open Studio,” and Philadelphia’s

“Take 12” (Linder, 1999). Grounded in a social documentary tradition, the Canadian National Film Board, beginning in 1966, sponsored the Challenge for Change and Société Nouvelle service organizations (Engleman, 1990; Linder, 1999). Using film, and later video, the Film Board program involved the direct participation of the subjects. Subject involvement brought an awareness of the need for change and the empowerment that the subjects could be part of that change (Munro & Gillespie, 1975). This process led, in 1970 in Thunder Bay, Ontario, to establishing an early version of a public access cable television channel (Linder, 1999).

The introduction of portable video recording technology rose concurrently as a factor in the formation of community television. Sony Corporation introduced its first “portapak” camera/recorder in 1968 making location recording possible without the ongoing cost of motion picture film and film developing (Engleman, 1990). The ease of operation offered the documentary subjects the opportunity to participate in the editing and reviewing of the productions in progress.

In the United States, in 1968, cable television franchises began hosting community television channels in Dale City, Virginia, and in New York’s Borough of Manhattan. In 1971, the Alternative Media Center at New York University was founded to produce public access programming and to act as a clearinghouse for information and policy formulation (Linder, 1999). One effort by the Alternative Media Center, funded by local cable companies and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, supported the formation of public access television stations in Reading, Pennsylvania; Orlando, Florida; DeKalb, Illinois; and Bakersfield, California. Alongside the Alternative Media Center, other groups promoting the early adoption of public access television in New York City were Open Channel, the Center for Understanding Media, and Global Village/Survival Arts Media (Linder, 1999).

In 1968, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, alternatively known as the Kerner Commission, stated that inability of minorities' voices to be heard in the media was among the causes for the civil unrest of the mid-1960s (King & Mele, 1999). At that time, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) was looking at the growth of cable television and its impact on the broadcasting industry. Several studies undertook to suggest policy for the development of cable television. The Rand Corporation study, funded by the John and Mary R. Markle Foundation and the Ford Foundation, addressed how the federal government should regulate cable television (Fuller, 1994). In 1971, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation-sponsored Sloan Commission on Cable Communications considered the opportunities through cable television for serving the public interest and identified the possibilities for channel space arrangements for education, local government, and public access (Engleman, 1990).

United States Federal Regulation

The Federal Communications Commission established public access television as the primary form of community media in the United States in 1972 (Fuller, 1994; Linder, 1999). The FCC's Third Cable Television Report and Order established four important policies: the FCC's right to regulate cable television, local government freedom to negotiate franchise agreements, must-carry rules requiring carriage of all local broadcast stations within the cable company's area, and systems with 3500 or more subscribers must set aside channels for public, educational, and governmental access channels (PEG). While the U.S. Supreme Court case *FCC v. Midwest Video* (1979) removed the PEG access requirements, rules were reestablished by Congress as part of the Cable Communications Act (1984) and reaffirmed with the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act (1992) and the Telecommunications Act (1996).

Current federal regulations allow a franchising authority to require the provision of PEG access channels and may require the cable operator to provide service, equipment, and facilities for those channels (FCC Media Bureau, 2015). The local franchising authority may collect franchise fees from the cable company as a payment for use of the local rights and ways. Franchise fees are limited to 5 percent of a cable company's gross television revenues from the franchising area and are controlled by the local municipality (Detwiler, 2003; FCC Media Bureau, 2015; Fuller, 1994; Linder, 1999). Although generally, the franchising authority is a local municipality, 25 states have taken control of franchising at the state level (National Conference of State Legislatures, November 2014). A franchising authority may make non-content based rules regarding the use and operation of PEG channels. These could consist of minimal production standards, a requirement for production training, and rules for resolving competing time-slot claims.

Public Access Television

Today, more than 1500 cable systems in the United States have community media centers, managing as many as 5000 PEG channels (Goldfarb, 2012; Waldman, 2011). These are non-commercial. Public access channel time is available on a first-come, first-served basis (Aufderheide, 2000; Aufderheide, 1992). While content must be within local obscenity standards, public access channel operators may not administer any prior restraint on program content. In return, those channel operators are exempt from responsibility for that content. The responsibility rests with the program producers. Because governmental and educational access channels control their content, they retain responsibility for programs they cablecast.

PEG channels may not carry information about lotteries or other games of chance. Public access channels must treat political programming as they would any other program for cablecast

(Horwood, 2016; Horwood & Driver, 2002). Educational and governmental channels, within local and state rules, may produce programs without implementing the First Amendment, although they need to be concerned about not appearing to exclude non-governmental speech.

Community media centers are uniquely local and may offer services besides cable television. Some are co-located with public libraries. The office and studio for Grand Rapids Community Media Center (GRCMC), in Michigan, locates in a public library, with their outreach extending through a newspaper, an FM radio station, and a restored theater (Grand Rapids Community Media Center (GRCMC), n.d.; Waldman, 2011). In the United States, though, the common component is PEG cable television channels, mainly public access channels.

Space and Speech

In the United States, public access television has been seen as a space. PEG channels are communication space set aside for the public's use in the same way a park or village commons is set for public use. As the public forum shifted to media from mostly interpersonal encounters, a need was seen for an electronic means of enabling participation in the public agenda. Public access television would be free from the corporate gatekeepers of modern media companies.

Public access television is seen as space for free speech expression. Similarly, PEG public policy centers on space. The 1984 Cable Act allows franchisees to require channel space but is less specific on funding. The United States Supreme Court in 1995 recognized public access television as a public forum for free speech, striking down provisions in the 1992 Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act which required cable operators to censor access programs for obscenity (*Denver area educational telecommunications consortium, inc, et al.. v. federal communications commission*, 1995; FCC Media Bureau, 2015; Horwood, 2016).

Place and Process

While much of the rhetoric surrounding public access television involves free speech and the space for sharing that speech, studies of public access and community media in the United States indicated the necessity of providing space and a means of sharing ideas (Ali, 2012). Studies which looked at the production side of public access programming show the *process* of creating videos and working with a diverse group of volunteers and producers from other parts of the city increased individual media literacy, civic engagement, and tolerance for differing ideas and lifestyles (Ali, 2012; Atkin & LaRose, 1991; Higgins, 1999; King & Mele, 1999; Rennie, 2006; Rennie, Berkeley, & Murphet, 2010; Riedel, 2015; Turner, 2010; Vargas, 2015; Waldman, 2011). The accepted definition of media literacy is “the ability of a citizen to access, analyze, and produce information for specific outcomes.” (Aufderheide, 1993, p.6). The *process* of learning to create television programs has been well documented as a benefit of public access television. The benefits extend beyond the content produced for public access. Producing content impacts and affects the producers and the viewers (W. Chen et al., 2013; King & Mele, 1999). Learning to present issues is empowering, primarily to individuals too-frequently excluded from mainstream media. Looking at an access center in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, King and Mele (1999) observed that community producers and volunteers benefitted by

- Mastering of the technology
- Conveying a message via television
- Increasing their tolerance for differing points of view
- Creating a community through the interaction with other volunteers and
- Making a difference in people’s lives by presenting issues and ideas that are important to them.

Studying community producers and volunteers in Columbus, Ohio, Higgins (1999) concluded that media literacy was an outcome for all of the participants in his research. All were able to recognize and evaluate the content, intent, and technical elements within television programs. Most were able to read the structure of media organizations and systems to recognize the economic, cultural, and political interests of the people who constructed those programs. Often, producers were empowered to become more accepting of themselves and others. Researchers concluded that self-awareness tips towards increasing awareness, understanding, or appreciation of others (Higgins, 1999; King & Mele, 1999). Juxtaposition of place and process at community media centers compels extending a targeted inquiry.

The sense of place is what attracts people to the community media centers. Independent producers and station volunteers stay involved with a community media center because of the access to training and equipment and the ability and freedom to be creative (Fuentes-Bautista, 2014). They continued to remain active because of the center's outreach within the community and because of their personal friendships and the sense of community at the center. This *placeness* of the center is crucial to sustaining volunteer and community support.

Case studies of community radio have found that the stations had direct connections to community civic engagement. Sussman and Estes (2005) found that KBOO radio in Portland, Oregon aided residents in identifying with their local neighborhood and in encouraging active civic participation. Similarly, using the CIT lens, studies of KKBT and KPCC in Los Angeles found their local stories were repeated by neighborhood residents in interpersonal communication (Hardyk et al., 2005). The stations acted as storytelling agents in the formation of neighborhood storytelling networks.

The more residents are informed about what happens in their own community and the more those residents share their knowledge and experience of what is happening in that community, the more likely it is that they will have a strong experience of belonging to the community in which they live (Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001). The Los Angeles radio stations worked to maintain connections with organizations within the neighborhood communities and, in doing so, kept the residents more informed about the daily happenings in their community (Hardyk et al., 2005). The stations' commitment to their local community maintained and strengthened ties with organizations within those communities and in turn acted as a bridge for those organizations with their listeners.

Residents in the Crenshaw neighborhood of Los Angeles, a mostly African-American community, showed a greater sense of "belonging" than did other neighborhoods which did not have the community radio focus (Hardyk et al., 2005). In this way, the community radio stations functioned not only as storytellers but as the communication action context, forming an open context for communication in that neighborhood community. This enabled other communication agents such as social service agencies to get their messages distributed through the radio stations. Examination of a community media center should express similar results to the case studies in community radio.

Merely making space is not enough. The creation of place makes a community media center successful. This sense of place and process is intriguing and, while highlighted in studies, has not been directly examined.

In the United States, policy at the national and local levels has focused on content: free speech and the space and placements of channels on cable systems (Ali, 2012). Speech and the public forum are the moral and ethical mandates for community media. Space is the guarantee of

distribution channels for that content. Thus far, policy discussion has not thoroughly addressed the *placeness* of community media. Looking at the place created by community media centers can provide insights on how meso-level actors affect local communication.

This study's design examines specific community media centers to ascertain relational results of community media centers' place and processes to the case studies observed in community radio. Further, by following one or more producers and telling their story, the resultant documentary thesis will describe how the community media center creates a sense of place within the local community. The research, qualitatively observed in community media centers, should answer investigation into the processes which engage producers, volunteers, and audience. Finally, this project will discover how the communication action context of relaying information is supported by community media centers.

CHAPTER III: TREATMENT

Logline: A Place to Stand - Community Media Centers, Social Capital, and Civic Engagement

Columbia Access Television (CAT TV) struggles to maintain its place as it remains dependent on dwindling funding from the City of Columbia, Missouri. CAT TV operates a single public access channel. Sun Prairie Media Center (SPMC) in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, is well funded and operates two cable television channels and a community radio station. Community media centers across the United States face comparable challenges of relevancy, affordability, and access. The documentary will contrast the two centers while following community producers through the process of creating a program.

Social media, streaming programs, and channel diffusion continue to fragment communities and to pull the plug that previously amplified local voices while national challenges dominate issue discussions and multimedia conglomerate businesses overlook neighborhood needs. Although budgets, facilities, and changing technologies interrupt and interfere with community media centers' abilities to function, access is the focus for concern. Questions to be addressed include:

- 1) What are the training and processes when citizens become involved with community media?
- 2) What is the role of community media in creating a public communication place for people to become engaged in their communities?
- 3) How can community media stay relevant in a changing technological, political, and funding environment?

Producers, station volunteers, community media champions, and local audiences connect at CAT TV, at SPMC and at the many stations serving their local communities. Media literacy and local stories offer the connection. CMCs offer places to connect.

After consulting with SPMC Director, Jeff Robbins, I have identified producers Don Hooser and Chris Mertes to follow as they work on their program *Talk of the Town*. At the suggestion of CAT TV Managing Director, Sean Brown, I will speak with Pat Holt and Marlin Thompson on their current productions.

This documentary intercuts the production activity with interviews from local community media center participants, the staff at CAT TV and SPMC, staff at other media centers including Keith Thibault, Fall River Community Media (Fall River, MA); Mary Van Sickle, Dakota Media Access (Bismarck, ND); Richard Turner, Carroll County Community Media (Westminster, MD); and Antionne Haywood, PhillyCam (Philadelphia, PA). National community media experts for interview include Mike Wassenaar, president, Alliance for Community Media; James Harwood, communication lawyer with Spiegel & McDiarmid, LLP; Christopher Ali, associate professor, University of Virginia; and Patricia Aufderheide, professor, American University.

The documentary is divided into four parts: introduction, pre-production, production and post-production. Each section will be 7 to 8 minutes in length and includes the on-site activity of the local stations within national community media's topics and issues. The CAT TV budgetary issues heighten dramatic tensions as CAT TV struggles to continue operating.

The video closes with a crew "wrapping up" a production to air. Audio plays as the scene fades. Volunteers, departing the studio, share thanks and exchange "see you soon" comments. As the lights go out, this juxtaposes with footage back in the studio of another new group participating in orientation training. Video of the CAT TV training moves into the upper screen

as other cities' classes are interspersed from community media centers across the U.S. Each is holding a beginning workshop for community producers. The audio and visual, multiplied and replaced in layers of local voices, shows the continuing readiness of volunteers, paid staff, and community media supporters to come together in their own locations to learn, to communicate, and to connect in their own Place to Stand.

Documentary Elements

Length: 30 minutes

Audience: Academics studying communication ecology, local and national public policy officials, and community media professionals and advocates.

Goal: Identify and highlight the elements of community media center processes which produce and which explore the significance of a sense of place in the community media centers as well as the local community for community media users (station volunteers, community producers, and station viewers).

Style: Visually, establishing shots of *place* items – street signs shots of recognizable locations. Using street sign graphic for name keys. On-location interviews emphasizing place as context. Set production elements such as cameras and lighting equipment for background.

Soundtrack: Utilizing royalty-free licenses, the soundtrack will feature music reflective of the Missouri blues styles (piano and rhythm) and soft rock electronic/guitar music.

Tone: Alternating with the lighter music of energy and the weariness of slower tempos. This catches the cyclical work of community media centers, sometimes struggling, sometimes surprised by new avenues for service. Always working to connect communities in their own spaces to share their own stories. In their unique places to stand.

Narration: Featuring voices from community media center participants and community media experts' interviews. Minimal transitional narration by Alexander Knightwright, non-Equity voice actor with 10 years community and school theatre performance experience.

Production Team: Researcher as Producer, 40 years of television production experience, handling lighting, shooting and editing. Mary Knightwright, as production assistant and consultant on style elements, whose training included public access television work and who received regional award for co-producing a documentary about a Chicago Quaker community, *Friends in Cabrini-Green*.

Project History – current status: As a part of this process, several key community media leaders have been identified for initial contact. Working with them will identify one or two community media centers (CMC). Once the community media centers are selected, staff, advocates, and detractors from their regional constituents will be selected to interview as subjects. This study also will contact for interview academic experts in the areas of media literacy and the communication infrastructure theory.

Historical background or context: Community media is at a critical point in its history. Personal media delivery services such as YouTube and other social media networks place into question the relevance for a community media channel. Loss of cable television subscribers to cord-cutting Internet applications decreases the ability to reach audiences through cable television channels and decreases cable company revenue which determines franchise fees. Local governments have budget concerns which affect the use of cable franchise fees to fund community media centers. Statewide franchising legislation in some places has limited funding agreements which supported community media.

Techniques

Within the practiced-based approach, this production will choose formats that would be available to community producers. Interviews and footage will be recorded using an LG G4 smartphone, an iPhone 4S, and a 4th generation iPod Touch. Recordings will be in 1080p or 720p video formats and WAV audio formats. The intent is to produce a professional documentary, using consumer to prosumer quality equipment.

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APPENDIX A: MEDIA INDUSTRY REVIEW

Community Media in Works Already Produced

Documentary films: Focuses on content. Indie filmmakers Gustavo Alberro and Mike Verna's nationally distributed *Access Nation* (2004), highlighting vanity TV and interviewing quirky access producers. Also available are numerous examples of local CMCs documentary productions promoting their local stations to their local audiences. For example see *The Open Channel: Public Access Television and the People Next Door* (Reed, 2011).

Parody: Focus on entertainment. Hollywood's fictional treatment (content focused.) National distributor entertainment films such as *Wayne's World: The Movie* (1992), *Wayne's World 2* (1993) and *Public Access* (2015). Thematic exploration of eccentric producers.

Project's Distinction: While this documentary employs the narrative of community producer working on a program, the operations and the environment of the community media center will be highlighted rather than the content of production work.

Project's Distinction: Focus on CMCs' environments, operations, and communication ecology. Addressing issues for community media centers, access to or loss of local voices, and impacts on civic engagement. While this documentary employs the *narrative* of community producer working on a program, the *processes* of CMCs, their operations, and the environment of community media centers will be highlighted rather than the content of production work.

Investigation of hyperlocal storytelling in multiple situations and heterogeneous neighborhoods is a valuable step in understanding the civic engagement hurdles for these communities (N. N. Chen et al., 2012). This documentary will look at the efforts of a

community media center to recruit, train, and retain community producers and volunteers and the CMC's efforts of outreach to the greater community and public policy leaders. This *placeness* of CMC's local communication ecology will be examined through the wider issues and conversations of U.S. national community media concerns.

Audience

The *Place to Stand* documentary's audience includes academics interested in the processes of meso-level communication, local and national public policy officials who are charged with regulating community media, community media advocates, and professionals who work in the community media field. The documentary creation as a research process and the documentary film as a presentation mode have primary significance for reaching the professional and policy-oriented audiences. The documentary production, however, itself a product of the medium, will have particular effect to make visual investigation, to convey information, and to invite reaction and continued reflection. The documentary, as does a case study, provides ways to define the various variables needed in future quantitative study. The *Place to Stand* brings community media centers' constituents (boards, members, policy makers and advocates) a resource for discussing their local and specific issues within the national issues discussion.

Exhibition and Distribution

Distribution: Available for use by community media centers nationwide. Downloadable broadcast-quality file will be placed on *Archive.org* and available for non-commercial, no derivative use. Intended for sharing with public officials who oversee funding and regulation of community media. Published as Master's thesis by Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois.

Exhibition: Intended to be submitted for inclusion in community media video festivals including: *The Hometown Awards*, a national festival sponsored by the Alliance for Community Media; *The Best of the Midwest* video festival sponsored by the ACM-Midwest Region and Wisconsin Community Media; and *The Philo T. Farnsworth Awards* sponsored by the ACM-Central States Region.

APPENDIX B: CONTENT SOURCES

For this documentary, research includes discussion with experts and practitioners of community media. Each interviewee works primarily in the United States; however, the list includes persons who consult globally about community media and local channel/franchise developments and negotiations. Available interviewees include (Mr.) Mike Wassenaar, president of the Alliance for Community Media (ACM); (Ms.) Mary Van Sickle, past chair and current secretary on ACM's National Board of Directors; (Ms.) Mary Cordona, executive director of Wisconsin Community Media; and (Ms.) Tina LeGarde, chair, ACM Midwest Region. Further context comes from (Mr.) Ross Rowe, Multimedia Administrator, Elk Grove Village, Illinois and from (Ms.) Bunnie Riedel, executive director, American Community Media. In addition to being interview subjects themselves, I will request these people's assistance to participate in selecting the community media center identified for the profile focus of the documentary. Following a consultation with that particular CMC's staff, the community producer and volunteers to interview will be selected.

APPENDIX C: BUDGET

Most of the production costs will be mine, supplemented with use of in-kind postproduction equipment. I will use readily accessible non-professional cameras (consumer-quality phone/iPod) that I already own, augmenting existing equipment with affordable professional quality microphone and tripods. For editing and postproduction, I will use software and equipment from the School of Communication, Illinois State University. Wherever possible I will use public domain audio sources; however, I have budgeted for music licensing for a single project use. I have consulted Internal Revenue Service reimbursement guidelines to calculate meal and mileage rates for 10 days of travel.

To model affordable community media production, I plan to travel and record as inexpensively as feasible and to produce interview segments using available resources. Therefore, I aim to lower my costs. I am expecting at least two trips to visit community media centers for interviews. With agreement to be interviewed for, to be consulted with, and/or to appear in the production, all participants, whether community residents, organizational/municipal staff, or civic representatives, will acknowledge and agree that their participation in this documentary will be voluntary, without compensation or remuneration by the thesis project.

Table C-1

<i>Budget</i>		
	Cost	Actual
Equipment		
<u>Cameras</u>		
iPhone 4S	\$ 120.00	In-Kind
LG G4	\$ 200.00	In-Kind
2 tripods	\$ 100.00	\$ 25.00
lens extensions for iPhone, misc. adaptors and extension cables	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00
<u>Audio Recorder</u>		
iPod touch 5th Generation	\$ 190.00	In-Kind
Shure MVL Lavalier condenser mic with 3.5 mm plug	\$ 70.00	\$ 70.00
<u>Lighting Kit</u>	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
<u>Post-Production</u>		
iMac MC309 (or better)	\$ 420.00 (to \$2200.00)	In-Kind
Apple Final Cut Pro X editing software	\$ 300.00	In-Kind
royalty-free music rights	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Animoto effects	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
Travel		
Hotel, lodging, meals for 10 days/2000 miles	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 3,400.00
Contingency	\$ 515.00	\$ 515.00
TOTAL	\$ 5,665.00	\$ 4360.00

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDES

Questions for Community Media Center Volunteers and Community Producers

Background/general questions

Please, tell me a little about what you do for a living.

How did you become involved with _____?

(Community Producers) Where can viewers see your programs?

How long have you been (producing/volunteering) with _____?

Tell me about _____ (community media center).

How has it changed while you have been here?

Outside of _____, what other media experience do you have?

How has working with _____ (community media center) affected your life?

Storytelling Networks

How do CMCs contribute to storytelling, particularly neighborhood storytelling?

What kinds of stories are you helping to tell?

What kinds of stories are not being told?

Communication action context

How do you find out what is going on in your neighborhood?

How often do you talk with your neighbors?

Where/how do you talk with your neighbors?

In your opinion, how much do your neighbors talk with each other?

In what places in your neighborhood do your neighbors see and talk with each other?

**Questions for Community Media Center Volunteers and Community Producers
(continued)**

What are the obstacles for you and your neighbors to find out about events and issues concerning your community?

Talk about how these obstacles are overcome.

Media literacy

What kinds of media do you use (i.e. watching television, reading newspapers)?

How often do you watch videos?

On what device(s)?

What kind of videos do you enjoy the most?

Please tell me about other media, besides videos, that you enjoy.

How is _____ (community media center) funded?

How are commercial media funded?

How does video shape reality?

How has volunteering/producing videos at _____ changed how you watch television or movies?

Has it changed how you look at other media?

Talk about a video you think had an interesting point of view.

Civic engagement

Tell me about your town.

What do you think is the greatest strength of your town?

Tell me about your neighborhood.

What is the best part of your neighborhood?

Tell me about the values which are important to this community.

What is the biggest problem facing your community?

**Questions for Community Media Center Volunteers and Community Producers
(continued)**

Where does the community find solutions to problems like that?

Outside of _____ (community media center), how are you involved in your community?

How are your neighbors involved in your community?

Without naming anyone, from what different backgrounds are other people you meet at _____ (community media center)? (Descriptors could include racial/ethnic, economic, religious, cultural, educational backgrounds)

Could you talk about how you worked with someone with a different background or opinions?

Questions for Community Media Center Staff

Background/general questions

Tell me about your background.

How long have you worked at _____ (community media center)?

Tell me about _____ (community media center).

How does the community use your services?

How do you promote community involvement?

Storytelling networks

How do community media centers contribute to storytelling, particularly neighborhood storytelling?

What kinds of stories are being told with your help?

Tell me about a story that your station is helping to tell.

What stories are being told that would have been absent without your community media center's assistance?

What kinds of stories are not being told?

Who are the biggest users of your station?

What population is underserved by your group?

How do you think they learn of events within their community?

Communication action context

What are the barriers for people to talk about events and topics in their community they might find important?

How does _____ (community media center) aid in how people talk about their community?

What are the threats facing community media in this town?

What are the factors supporting community media in this town?

Questions for Community Media Center Staff (continued)

Why does this town need community media?

Media literacy

How would you define media literacy?

Where do you see _____ (community media center) supporting media literacy?

Who else in this town supports media literacy and how do they do it?

What kinds of media are available in this town?

What kinds of media deserts (areas without local media coverage) exist?

Civic engagement

How would you define civic engagement?

What would you say is the relationship between what you do here at _____ (community media center) and people's civic engagement?

Tell me about the values that are important to this community.

Tell me about the diversity within this town.

How do the staff, volunteers, and community producers of _____ (community media center) reflect the town's diversity?

Have you seen any examples of how people from different communities in this town have interacted with each other because of this station?

Talk about the relationship between what you do at _____ (community media center) and the involvement of residents with their town.

How are users of your center involved in other ways in their community?

Questions for Local Policy Makers

Tell me about your background.

Please describe your community.

Could you talk about the values held by this community?

What role does _____ (community media center) play in your town?

What role should it play?

Storytelling networks

How do community media centers contribute to storytelling, particularly neighborhood storytelling?

What kinds of stories are being told?

Communication action context

How do individuals in your town find out about issues which are important to them and the community?

Media literacy

What role does media literacy play in citizen participation in the community?

Civic engagement

How important is civic engagement for a community to function and grow?

Could you talk about _____ (community media center) and how it can help citizens participate in their community?

What are the major issues facing your town?

How does your community resolve problems and issues it faces?

How can citizens help find a solution to these issues?

Questions for National Leaders in Community Media

Tell me a little about your background.

Describe what you mean by community media.

What makes a successful community media center?

Storytelling networks

How do community media centers contribute to storytelling, particularly neighborhood storytelling?

What kinds of stories are you helping to tell?

How do you see community media centers as conduits for local information?

In what ways do they serve as a catalyst for local information?

Should they operate in a role beyond being a common carrier for programming?

Communication action context

How do community media centers connect people and information?

Media literacy

How are community media centers contributing to media literacy?

Civic engagement

How would you define civic engagement?

How do community media centers promote civic engagement?

Could you talk about community media centers and tolerance for other people and ideas?

Community media

What are the challenges facing community media?

How are people working to address those problems?

How are community media centers different from town to town?

Why are they different?

APPENDIX E: PRODUCTION TIMELINE

Implemented upon approval from Thesis Committee:

October 15 to October 30, 2017

1. Confirm community media center for featuring in the program
2. Confirm community producer and interviewees for featuring in the program
3. Set up production dates on location at featured CMC
4. Set up interviews with community media experts

October 20, 2017 *Philo T. Farnsworth Festival of the Media Arts*, Lake Orion, Michigan.

Opportunity for expert interviews. Intended CMC B-roll and interviews.

November 1 to 3, 2017 *ACM-NE Region Conference & Trade Show*, Falmouth, Massachusetts.

Opportunity for expert interviews and coverage at the *ACM-NE Video Festival Awards*.

November 6 to 8, 2017 Alliance for Community Media National Board and Foundation for the

Alliance for Community Media meetings, Washington, D.C. *ACM Capitol Hill Day* on November 8. Opportunity for expert interviews with ACM National and Foundation Boards and other members attending Capitol Hill Day. Washington, DC is also headquarters for American Community Media, another community media advocacy group. Opportunity for expert interview.

November 9 to 24, 2017 On-site recordings

(Included as example using Columbia Access Television (CAT TV), Columbia, Missouri)

November 9 CAT TV Three-Minute Movie Challenge Kick-Off and class on filming
and editing with a smartphone

November 10 CAT TV fundraiser

November 18 CAT TV Three-Minute Movie Challenge screening

November 25 to December 4, 2017 Initial Edit

December 1 to 15, 2017 Follow-up recordings

December 1, 2017 to January 25, 2018 Edit sessions and any additional recording

December 30, 2017 Rough edit complete

January 15, 2018 Finished edit with graphics

January 26, 2018 Final edit

APPENDIX F: SAMPLE TALENT RELEASES

LETTER OF CONSENT & VIDEO RELEASE *(Page 1 of 2)*

A PLACE TO STAND: COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTERS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
(TARGETED AUTHORITY)

Dear _____ (participant name, from list of participants responding to phone solicitation)

I am a graduate student in the School of Communication at Illinois State University and am conducting a research study both to document and to explore the relationships among community media centers and media literacy and civic engagement. Your name was given to me by (insert name here), as you are a relevant authority on the topic. You responded to my phone call of (insert date here), indicating that you would be interested in participating in this research study. This letter details the project and the specifics of your consent to participate.

I am inviting you to take part in this study. This will involve granting us the opportunity to document your participation in a brief interview and allowing our video production team to follow while you engage in your daily activities for approximately one hour. You will not be asked to perform any tasks outside of your regular activities. You may skip any questions during the interview and you may ask we do not record any particular aspect of your work which you wish to be excluded from the documentary. Our video production team will be on site as observers, not as participants, while you go about your daily routine. Only consenting participants will be included in the final edited video. All images of non-consenting participants

will either be edited out or will be blurred beyond recognition through video production techniques.

Your participation in this study and the resulting digital documentary production is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any point, until the documentary has been edited. At that point, changes will be made at the discretion of the production team. Electing not to be part of the video project will not result in any penalty. The results of the research study will be published or distributed, and, if you participate, your name and likeness will be used and made public. You must be 18 years or older to participate.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, it may benefit the public to hear your views on the topic. Through the recording, you will have the opportunity to share your experience with others who later view the finished video, and being part of a video production may enhance and deepen your own understanding of the topic.

In addition to uneasiness related to appearing on camera, there are also potential risks in discussing a controversial topic in a recorded medium that will be viewed publicly. If you voice opinions contrary to that of your employer, you could be subject to penalties at your place of employment. If you perform or discuss involvement in illegal acts while on camera, you could be subject to legal action. If you feel that your words or actions could put you in jeopardy and still wish to participate in this documentary, you will be given the option to have your face or voice obscured by the producers. Raw video will be viewed only by the video production team.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be required to sign this consent form and the video release giving us permission to videotape you and to share and distribute the resulting edited video product. If you have any questions concerning this research study or the video production, please call me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or email me at xxxxxxxt@ilstu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Research Ethics & Compliance Office at Illinois State University at (309) 438-2529.

Sincerely,

Jim Knightwright

Graduate Student

School of Communication, Illinois State University

I consent to participating in the study described above.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

LETTER OF CONSENT & VIDEO RELEASE (*Page 2 of 2*)

A PLACE TO STAND: COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTERS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
(TARGETED AUTHORITY)

Video Release Form

For this research study, we will be making video recordings of you during your participation in the research. Your participation in this study and the resulting digital production is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or if you choose to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty.

The results of the research study may be published or distributed and your name and likeness will be used and made public. By signing this video release, you agree that the videotape recordings can be used for these purposes:

- The video recordings can be studied by the research team for use in the research project.
- The video recordings can be used for scientific publications.
- The video recordings can be shown at scientific conferences or meetings.
- The video recordings can be shown in college classrooms to participants as

demonstration of civic engagement experiences.

- The video recordings can be shown in public presentations to non-scientific groups.
- The video recordings can be used on television or cable, or the audio portion can be used on radio.
- The video recordings can be posted to a web site.

I have read the above descriptions; I certify that I am over the age of 18; and I give my consent for the use of the video recordings as indicated above.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Study Leadership

Principal Investigator: Brent K. Simonds, School of Communication faculty member,
xxxxxx@ilstu.edu

Co-Investigators: James Knightwright, School of Communication graduate student,
xxxxxx@ilstu.edu

LETTER OF CONSENT & VIDEO RELEASE *(Page 1 of 2)*

A PLACE TO STAND: COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTERS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
(GENERAL PUBLIC)

Dear _____ (participant name, from conveniently chosen citizens in public spaces)

I am a graduate student in the School of Communication at Illinois State University and am conducting a research study both to document and to explore the relationships among community media centers and media literacy and civic engagement. You have been randomly selected on _____ (insert date here). You responded affirmatively to my solicitation, indicating that you would be interested in participating in this research study. This letter details the project and the specifics of your consent to participate.

I am inviting you to take part in this study. This will involve granting us the opportunity to document your participation in a brief interview and allowing our video production team to follow while you engage in your daily activities for approximately one hour. You will not be asked to perform any tasks outside of your regular activities. You may skip any questions during the interview and you may ask we do not record any particular aspect of your work which you wish to be excluded from the documentary. Our video production team will be on site as observers, not as participants, while you go about your daily routine. Only consenting participants will be included in the final edited video. All images of non-consenting participants will either be edited out or will be blurred beyond recognition through video production techniques.

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In addition to uneasiness related to appearing on camera, there are also potential risks in discussing a controversial topic in a recorded medium that will be viewed publicly. If you voice opinions contrary to that of your employer, you could be subject to penalties at your place of employment. If you perform or discuss involvement in illegal acts while on camera, you could be subject to legal action. If you feel that your words or actions could put you in jeopardy and still wish to participate in this documentary, you will be given the option to have your face or voice obscured by the producer. Raw video will be viewed only by the video production team.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be required to sign this consent form and the video release giving us permission to videotape you and to share and distribute the resulting edited video product. If you have any questions concerning this research study or the video production, please call me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or email me at xxxxxxxt@ilstu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Research Ethics & Compliance Office at Illinois State University at (309) 438-2529.

Sincerely,

Jim Knightwright

Graduate Student

School of Communication, Illinois State University

I consent to participating in the study described above.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

LETTER OF CONSENT & VIDEO RELEASE *(Page 2 of 2)*

A PLACE TO STAND: COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTERS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
(GENERAL PUBLIC)

Video Release Form

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The results of the research study may be published or distributed and your name and likeness will be used and made public. By signing this video release, you agree that the videotape recordings can be used for these purposes:

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