

# **Community Radio in Western Australia:**

## **Notions of value**

By

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I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research.

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## **Abstract**

Although community radio in Australia is now well established and considered an important part of the radio sector, in today's economically driven world it is at the bottom of the media money pile. In order to argue for its continuing existence, funding and development in an ever-changing media landscape, some means of capturing its value is essential. This thesis develops a theoretical framework of value for community radio from existing literature and through the testing of the framework at three community radio stations in Perth, Western Australia. Through a combination of interviews with staff, observation/participation and audience focus groups the testing exercise provides a multimodal insight into the values and operation of community radio as reflected in real life practice. The analysis will reveal whether the framework of value can be successfully operationalised in the field, how value is perceived by the study participants, and to what extent value is contingent upon the characteristics of the individual community radio stations. The evidence collected also has the potential to inform policy-making at a community radio station.

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