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A Perspective on Communications Development and Training
Needs for the James Bay Cree of Northern Quebec:
A Case Study

George Oblin

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Communication Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfiilment of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

A Perspective on Communications Development and Training Needs
for the James Bay Cree of Northern Quebec: A Case Study

George Oblin

Approaches to communications development and training for the James Bay Cree of Northern Quebec must be dictated by Cree cultural values and perspectives.

Existing mainstream models of communications development, media applications and training reflect the values of the Western society within which they have evolved. Therefore, such models cannot be wholly adopted by Cree broadcasters without replicating the cultural tension which stems from culturally-based opposing values.

Cree attitudes and values have been shaped by the traditional subsistence lifestyle, historical developments and social influences. These influences include contact with mainstream society. A perspective on such developments and influences is therefore provided, as a basis of analysis of the interaction between Cree culture and communications development and training.

This case study includes information on Cree media development and programming, and several concrete examples of how Cree communications development and training issues were addressed through a series of meetings. It also contains recommendations on how to reconcile differences in cultural approaches to communications development and training.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACP	Accelerated Coverage Plan
CANCOM	Canadian Satellite Communications Inc.
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CEGEP	Collège d'Enseignement Général et Professionnel
CEIC	Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (now HRD)
CFP	*Commission de Formation Professionnelle* (now SQDM)
CRAAR	Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations
CRTC	Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission
DINA	Department of Indian and Northern Affairs
DSOS	Department of Secretary of State (also SEC; now part of Department of Canadian Heritage)
GCCQ/CRA	Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec/Cree Regional Authority
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
HRD	Human Resources Development Canada (previously CEIC)
ITC	Inuit Tapisirat of Canada
JBCCS	James Bay Cree Communications Society
JBNQA	James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement
NACS	National Aboriginal Communications Society
NATCOM	National Native Communications Federation
NFB	National Film Board
NCP	Native Communications Program
NNBAP	Northern Native Broadcast Access Program
SEC	(see DSOS)
SQDM	*Société Québecoise de Développement de la Main d'Oeuvre* (previously CFP)
TNI	Taqramiut Nipingat Incorporated
TVNC	Television Northern Canada

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I: INTRODUCTION

Thesis Statement

Cree approaches to communications development[1] and training can best be understood within the framework of Cree cultural responses to mainstream Western society. Since Cree and mainstream values conflict, and existing models of communications development, applications and training reflect the values of the Western society within which they have evolved, Cree broadcasters cannot wholly adopt these models without replicating this cultural tension. The relationship between Cree broadcasters and mainstream approaches to media can therefore be considered as a microcosm of the Cree-mainstream Western society relationship. It is characterized by a culturally-based resistance to opposing attitudes and values.

There is a sense among Cree broadcasters that improvement in their uses of media is desirable, and that improvement can be achieved through training. This raises a question: what constitutes improvement with regard to communications training for the Cree[2]? To answer this question, it is necessary to consider what the role of media should be within Cree society. If the role of Cree media is to reinforce the Cree culture and language, Cree attitudes and values must dictate approaches to communications development and training. The purpose of this case study, therefore, is to present a perspective on Cree culture, values, and attitudes as a means of assessing Cree communications development and training needs.

A perspective on Cree cultural responses to Western influences- which have been increasingly pervasive since the time of contact- helps contextualize issues pertaining to Cree communications development and training. Therefore, much of the discussion within this study does not pertain to media training per se, but is presented as a broad contextual framework of social,

1

cultural and political reality pertaining to the James Bay Cree within which communications issues can be examined and considered.

It is assumed that the desired role of Cree media training is to facilitate the knowledge and skills necessary to provide culturally-reinforcing media services. If this were not the case, there would be no need to consider media approaches different from the mainstream. Cree core values[3] include a holistic worldview, spirituality based on a harmonious relationship with nature, egalitarianism, sharing, conflict-avoidance, non-verbal communication, and a strong sense of community.

At the 1994 Cree communications symposium (see Chapter IV, #4), Deputy Grand Chief Kenny Blacksmith addressed the issue of the appropriateness of communications technology with regard to cultural values in this statement:

> Appropriateness is... a question of impacts, and of values and transformation. What will the impacts be of this technology? Will it enhance the core values that we uphold - community; real communication; caring for one another and for the animals and the land; and sharing? Or will it erode them? (Blacksmith, 1994, p.6)

Blacksmith was, in fact, assessing the appropriateness of technology on the basis of whether or not it supported and enhanced Cree culture and values. It is also the premise for this study that communications development and training for the Cree can only be assessed through a cultural perspective. Only through such an approach can the uniqueness of Cree needs be appreciated. This study aims to establish a framework which is, concurrently, broad enough to make the reader appreciate the significance of the cultural context, yet focused enough to provide hard data on Cree communications development and training.

Approaching research from a cultural perspective does not

2

mean focusing only on the past, on tradition. Culture is viewed within this study as a dynamic process which both affects and is affected by surrounding influences. Therefore, consideration of current Cree cultural issues and concerns are as important to this study as historical developments. In this regard, there is some analysis of such matters as a recent conference on human resources development for the Cree, submissions to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) on a review of Native broadcasting, and the amended Broadcasting Act of 1991.

Because of the importance attached to the analysis of culture within this study, there is perhaps a greater reliance on historical and anthropological sources than would usually be the case in a study within the communications field. It is hoped that such emphasis will- however modestly- help redress the imbalance of research which tends to view media characteristics as the only determinants of communication interaction.

Reports, documents, and personal experience within the field[4] are important sources of information in this study because of the limited amount of academic research materials available on Cree communications development and training. Intercultural communication and audience reception theory have also influenced my approach.

CBC involvement is considered with regard to the historical development of Cree broadcasting. However, since CBC's mandate is to reflect mainstream Canadian objectives its training is not central to this analysis.

A brief perspective on the Cree and Cree media is included here to help contextualize this research.

Background on the Cree and Cree Media

The James Bay Cree population in 1993 was 10,827 according to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada[5]. The audience survey done for the James Bay Cree Communications Society in 1989 indicated that 99% of the Cree population understood and spoke Cree but the ability to read and write Cree was weaker among the younger segment of the Cree population. (Wilson, 1990, pp.3-8) There are two Cree dialects, 'coastal' and 'inland'.

At present, there are nine Cree communities or "nations" as they are self-designated: Whapmagoostui, also known as Great Whale; Chisasibi, newly formed as a result of the relocation of Fort George following the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) of 1975; Wemindji, previously called Paint Hills; Eastmain; Waskaganish, previously called Rupert House; Nemaska; Mistissini, previously known as Mistassini; Waswanipi, regrouped in a new location two years following the JBNQA and approximately fifteen years after having abandonned nearby Waswanipi Post; and Ouje-Bougoumou, a newly-established community on the outskirts of Chibougamau, Quebec which regroups Cree families forced to relocate numerous times over the past few decades because of mining and forestry activities in the area.

Presently, radio is the principal medium in use in the Cree region. Local telecommunications associations and the regional communications society have, to a large extent, developed and operated independently of one another. All are incorporated and operate within their own established mandates.

The regional society, James Bay Cree Communications Society, is a non-profit corporation mandated to develop and deliver communications services on a regional basis and to provide support services to the local associations. Incorporated in 1981, the

Society presented this description of itself in the National Aboriginal Communications Society (NACS) *Information Registry and Advertising Agency* publication dated June 1991:

> Operating in the village of Mistissini, the Society broadcasts 13 hours of programming a week to the nine Cree communities of the James Bay Territory of Northern Quebec. Our broadcasts cover a variety of subjects pertinent to the James Bay Cree: local and national Native news, social and political topics, environmental issues, cultural affairs and traditional pursuits.

JBCCS presently broadcasts 15 hours per week. All of its programming is in the Cree language. This includes one hour each weekday morning and each weekday afternoon. Pre-recorded weekend programming consists of two hours on Saturday and three hours on Sunday.

The weekday morning program, *Enoo Etoon* (Cree Way), includes interviews relating to current issues, music (Native, country, fiddle), news, weather and sports. *Petachiimoon* (Stories) airs weekday afternoons except Wednesday. It features stories and legends, elders' stories, music (country, pop), community announcements, news and weather. *Osteneechoo Etoon* (Youthway) is presented once per week, on Wednesday afternoons. It focuses on youth issues, and includes announcements such as job opportunities and sports tournaments. The music format is dance and rap.

Weekend programming includes the two-hour show *Osteneechoo Negamoon* (Youth Music) on Saturday, featuring the weekly chart countdown, contests, performer profiles, concert reports, movie and video reports, and youth activities. Sunday programming consists of the one-hour show *N'Doheenoo* (Hunter) which relates to Cree culture and traditional activities and includes Native, country, and fiddle music; and *Miyupimatissiun* (Positive Living) which deals with health issues, life experiences, testimonials, positive role models, and social announcements. The music format is easy listening and gospel.

Besides the regional service, community radio stations alsooperate in eight of the nine Cree communities. Most of their programming, with rare exceptions, is also done in the Cree language. Only Ouje-Bougoumou, the most recently established Cree community, does not yet operate a community radio station. All nine communities receive both the Cree regional radio service of the James Bay Cree Communications Society, as well as the CBC North Cree radio programming. The receivers belong to CBC in six communities and to the communities in the other three.

Other media services pertaining to the Cree are:

- CINI FM, a 50,000 watt commercial radio station, which has operated out of Mistissini since 1991[6].

- CBC North Cree television programming, one-half hour weekly.

- The Nation, an English-language magazine whose content pertains mainly to the Cree of northern Quebec. It is published in Montreal every two weeks by Beesum Communications.

Whereas Cree regional radio programming clearly reflects Cree reality and concerns, it has been much more difficult to relate communications training to that reality- for reasons considered and discussed throughout this study. Briefly, these include the lack of a communications development and training model based on Cree cultural values and objectives, and the need to function on a day-to-day basis within a system which is based on conflicting values.

Research Method and Analysis

Personal involvement[7] in the Cree communications milieu has provided me with much of the information contained in this study. Contacts with other people working in the field of Native communications have also been valuable sources of information, both verbal and written. Other resource materials pertain mainly to studies in cultural interpretation, both general and in relation to media (Geertz, Salomon)- including audience reception theory (Tomlinson), anthropological studies pertaining to the James Bay Cree of northern Quebec (Feit, Tanner), and studies and reports on Aboriginal communications in Canada.

The goal of this case study is to provide a perspective on Cree culture, values, and attitudes as a means of assessing Cree communications development and training needs. The purposes of such an approach are:

- To create an awareness of the existing cultural tension which results from mainstream media approaches within Cree society.

- To show how this cultural tension has played a role in communications and training development.

- To indicate how future choices made by Cree media practitioners pertaining to communications development, including training, will reflect their responses to this cultural tension.

This analysis is based on the following premises:

1- There is an important link between culture and communications.

2- While it is worthwhile to consider how media affect culture, it is equally important to consider how culture affects attitudes and approaches to communications.

3- The relationship between culture and media is an interactive one. Considering only the media part of the interaction will lead to an inadequate understanding of that relationship.

4- Information on Cree cultural values, attitudes and responses is likely to be less accessible than literature on communication theory; therefore, more emphasis will be put on the former in this study.

5- A historical perspective on developments in Native communications in general and Cree communications in particular, and analysis of recent events pertaining to development and training in the Cree milieu will provide a good context for this analysis.

6- The preservation of language and culture is the stated aim of the regional and local communications societies. That aim may not be realized if the communications training which is developed and implemented does not take culture and language into account.

Parameters

Since the scope of such a study can be unwieldingly broad, I will attempt to establish the parameters of this thesis. This relates to timeframe of communications training being considered, media services concerned, and analysis of specific events which have attempted to deal with Cree training concerns.

Following is a brief summary of the thesis organization and some comments on how it relates to the research approach:

Chapter I:

The thesis statement stresses the importance of Cree culture in relation to communications development and training.

Background information is provided to help situate and identify the Cree of northern Quebec with regard to geographical locations, population breakdown by community, available Cree media services, and actual regional radio programming.

Research sources identified include personal involvement in the Cree communications milieu, and studies in the areas of cultural interpretation, audience reception theory, and anthropology.

The stated goal of the case study is to provide a perspective on Cree culture as a means of assessing Cree approaches to communications development and training.

Chapter II:

The theoretical assumptions upon which the study is based are briefly examined. These include a concept of cultural interpretation which allows for generalizations only within a specific context; these generalizations cannot be assumed to apply within other contexts. Another theoretical concept upon which this study is based is that anthropological studies provide a good source of information for the analysis of group-level intercultural communication. This information serves to provide insight into the unique aspects of Cree culture. The more Cree culture is understood, the better the relationship between it and media and the consequent implications for training will be understood.

Chapter III

Media developments in the North indicate that cultural concerns prompted northern Aboriginal peoples to become involved. This involvement led to various governmental initiatives pertaining to Native communications, the subsequent implementation of Native media services, and the need for culturally-supportive communications training.

Initial Cree responses to media indicate that the Cree recognized both the positive and negative potential of media, depending on how they were used. Since actual Cree uses of media pertain primarily to radio, this analysis is mainly on radio development and training. Most of the issues and developments are contained within a timeframe spanning from the mid-seventies to the present.

Chapter IV

Four events pertaining to Cree communications development and training are analysed. These include a regional communications meeting, a human resources development meeting, a communications training steering committee meeting, and a communications symposium. This analysis provides concrete examples of the conflicting demands of Cree culture on the one hand, and of mainstream organization, standards and practice on the other.

Chapter V

A perspective on the historical developments and social factors which have helped shape Cree cultural values and perceptions is provided to contextualize the question of Cree

communications development and training needs.

The link between cultural factors and approaches to communications practices and training is also considered.

Although political developments and policy issues impact on culture, they are peripheral to this study. Some of the major policy issues relating to Cree communications development and training will be briefly considered. Since access to resources necessary to meet Cree cultural needs is dependent on politics, a brief perspective on this point is provided.

<u>Chapter VI</u>

A summary, conclusions and recommendations are presented.

Recommendations include attempting to reconcile differences in cultural perspective between Cree and mainstream approaches to communications development and training through increased awareness of existing cultural tension, setting culturally-based communications goals, consulting elders, clarifying regional and local mandates for communications, adapting training methods to meet Cree needs, maximizing Cree resources, and improving Cree language skills.

II: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As stated in Chapter I, the purpose of this study is to present a perspective on Cree culture, values, and attitudes as a basis of analysis for Cree responses to communications training. Such an approach suggests the need for a theoretical basis of analysis relating to cultural interpretation. The following discussion pertaining to cultural interpretation theory, intercultural communication theory, audience response theory, anthropological research approach, and reciprocal interaction theory serves to explain the theoretical assumptions upon which my analysis of the Cree culture-communications relationship are based. A brief examination of how these theoretical concepts relate to Cree communications development and training is contained at the end of this chapter.

Uncovering the "conceptual structures" of a cultural group as theorized by Geertz (1973) is useful in analysing the intercultural interaction of the Cree in relation to mainstream North American society. Geertz's semiotic concept of culture is a good basis for analysing the behaviors of the James Bay Cree in relation to media. Geertz (1973) proposes an interpretive method of cultural analysis which generalizes within cases rather than across them. In other words, certain generalizations about culture can be made within a specific context but should not be assumed to be applicable elsewhere. (p.27)

Tomlinson (1991) echoes Geertz's caution about attempting to interpret cultural responses:

> Reading audience responses to media texts in other cultures is... potentially much more complex than has generally been allowed for in empirical projects. The problems of interpretation involved should make us cautious of drawing premature conclusions from empirical work, or at least of generalising from existing work to other, perhaps more 'distant' cultural contexts. (p.55)

Intercultural communication theory suggests valuable conceptual approaches relevant to this study. Gudykunst & Kim (1984) define this research area as follows:

> Intercultural communication refers to the communication phenomena in which participants, different in cultural backgrounds, come into direct or indirect contact with one another... The focal point of intercultural communication is the communication process between individuals and groups. <u>The two critical concepts, contact and communication, distinguish studies of intercultural communication from predominant research purposes of anthropologists and cross-cultural psychologists ... (i.e., to describe cultures and/or identify cultural similarities and differences).</u> (p.16)

Gudykunst & Kim (1984) distinguish "intercultural" from "cross-cultural" as follows:

> As we use the terms, cross-cultural research implies a comparison of some phenomena across cultures. On the other hand, intercultural implies the study of interaction between people from different cultures. (p.8)

Research in intercultural communication is done both at a group level and at an individual level, and the distinction between the two approaches is determined by the researcher's interest and perspective. Most examples of group-level inquiry in intercultural communication are found among anthropological and sociological studies. (ibid,pp.15-21)

As applied to this study, anthropological studies pertaining to the James Bay Cree (e.g. Feit, Tanner, Chance, Elberg & Salisbury) are an important part of the analysis.

In this study, the relationship between Cree culture and

communications is considered unique because of the uniqueness of the culture. This is not to say that it does not share common characteristics with other cultures, particularly other Native cultures. Nonetheless, the more the unique aspects of Cree culture are understood the better its relationship to communications development and training will be understood.

Geertz (1973) refers to his cultural analyses, which attempt to describe the social contexts within which symbols and meanings exist, as 'thick descriptions'. The purpose of thick descriptions is to "uncover the conceptual structures that inform our subjects' acts, the 'said' of social discourse, and to construct a system of analysis in whose terms what is generic to those structures, what belongs to them because they are what they are, will stand out against the other determinants of human behavior." Geertz sums up his approach as follows:

> .. the aim of anthropology is the enlargement of the universe of human discourse. That is not, of course, its only aim- instruction, amusement, practical counsel, moral advance, and the discovery of natural order in human behavior are others; nor is anthropology the only discipline which pursues it. But it is an aim to which a semiotic concept of culture is peculiarly well adapted. As interworked systems of construable signs (what, ignoring provincial usages, I would call symbols), culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly- that is, thickly- described. (p.14)

Applied to this study, an analysis of Cree culture serve to indicate how historically formed and transmitted attitudes and perceptions of the Cree affect their experience of mainstream media, and suggest what implications this has with regard to communications development and training. The dynamic nature of culture and the implications of social and cultural change on the experience of media are significant.

Feit (1978) provides a good description of this aspect of culture:

> Culture is a social reality that appears as a reality external to an individual because it is built up out of a myriad of acts and communications of other persons, and thus is learned by each individual as something that is not his own creation. But culture itself is an abstraction from the myriad of individual actions and does not exist outside of its continual actualization in the actions of individual human beings. Culture and act are therefore in a dialectical relationship each continually in the process of being produced and thereby changed. Culture is therefore continually in the process of formation and transformation. (p.113)

Salomon (1985) relates Geertz's concept of culture to his theory of reciprocal interaction. He explains his approach in his article, "The Study of Television in a Cross-Cultural Context":

> I have deliberately labeled this article 'the study of television' and not the study of televisions *effects,* or '*impact*,' because I believe television contact with a culture and the individuals of that culture to be of a genuinely *interactive* nature. and it is interactive in two complementary senses. First, exposure to television tends to interact with various individual and cultural variables in the sense of having differential effects on them. Elsewhere (Salomon, 1981) I have called this the 'first-order interaction.' The second sense of interaction implies, in addition, reciprocity of influences, whereby television is seen not only to exert its nonuniform, differential effects but to be also affected reciprocally by the very factors that it influences. I have called this the 'second-order interaction.' (p.386)

Salomon sees a problem with research limited to what he refers to as "first-order interaction" such as that of Lonner & Thorndike et al (1985), and Granzberg (1985). An example from Granzberg is his conclusion that "the introduction of television into a culture that has a tradition of exploitive adaptation to Western ways of life *leads to* (my emphasis) different outcomes than its

15

introduction into a culture defending itself against Western intrusion." Salomon (1985) comments that an important feature of such studies is that television is usually seen as the active independent variable and the culture as a mediating variable. This implies unidirectionality of effects, "sometimes bordering on a latent theory of technological determinism." (p.387)

Salomon finds that the problem with this perception of television and culture is that "it has great difficulties in dealing with television and culture as related in other unidirectional ways." He poses the following important questions in this regard: Is television always the *determinant* of changes? To what extent can culture affect television use, thereby determining its nature and "effects"? (p.388)

In this same vein, Mischel (1977) is quoted by Salomon (1985): "We continuously influence the 'situations' of our lives as well as being affected by them in a mutual organic interaction". (p.388)

The relevant socio-cultural influences which affect the experience of media may be conceptualized on the basis of Collier & Thomas' (1988) view of culture:

> We define culture as a historically transmitted system of symbols and meanings, and norms. Our definition of culture is liberal yet definitive, entailing a broad understanding of what may constitute intercultural communication. "Culture" can refer to ethnicity, gender, profession, or any other symbol system that is bounded and salient to individuals. (pp.102-103)

Salomon (1985) points out that this view of the experience of media as an interactive process is shared by Bronfenbrenner (1977), Bandura (1978), Gibbs (1979) and Magnusson (1981). (p.388)

It is also the theoretical viewpoint which forms the basis for this case study which focuses mainly on how Cree society and culture determine attitudes toward communications training and

media uses and responses, rather than on how media influence culture. The two approaches are closely related but the difference in approach is nonetheless significant in establishing a research focus.

Salomon (1985) stresses the importance of treating individual behaviors and environmental factors as separate and variable:

> Only separate, independent, and changing entities can really interact (Phillips, 1976; Salomon, 1983). The idea that 'it [is] impossible ever to completely separate the environment from the person observing it' (Bowers, 1973, p.328) is based on the assumption that 'mind creates reality.' It is equally unsuitable for the study of interactions as is the assumption, typical of perceived technological determinism, that 'reality creates minds' (Bandura, 1978). For in both cases one postulates the existence of only one entity that determines all others, thus prohibiting the study of interactions. (p.383)

Refering to Geertz's concept of "thick description", Salomon comments:

> If the experience of television is affected by [culture, personality and cognition, and behavior], then the thorough understanding and the detailed ("thick") description of the so-called independent variables, particularly culture and its specific manifestations and correlates, become essential...
>
> One needs to consider the possibility that exposure to television in culturally different locations can result in the same or in similar consequences... But note that similarity of consequences... does not necessarily indicate similarity of experiences or processes. (p.388)

Therefore, in order to understand how media and culture relate to one another, there must be as strong a focus on the historical and social influences which shape attitudes and perceptions as on the processes and content of media. As Salomon (1985) contends (citing Reeves, Chaffee & Tims, 1982), we must seriously consider

people's expectations, perceptions, cognitions and emotions, all of which are " to a large extent cultural and social products that strongly, though not exclusively, affect the way we experience communicational acts and situations." (p.388)

In keeping with this approach, this study considers communications   technology not as an unalterable development which impacts upon society but as a tool which can itself be influenced by cultural initiatives.   This study therefore provides a perspective relating to Cree culture separate from that of media in order to better understand the interaction between the two.   The "symbols, meanings and norms" of the Cree are considered in some detail in Chapter V, Relating Cree Culture to Communications Training.   As previously stated, anthropological studies pertaining to the Cree provide the theoretical basis for this analysis.

Existing mainstream models of media applications and training methods reflect the values of the Western society within which they have evolved.   Since models which are reflective and supportive of Cree society have yet to emerge, mainstream media provide the benchmarks for Cree broadcasters both as to what should be emulated and what should be avoided.

The structuring, functioning and content of media are not neutral. Stuart Hall (1972) provides an analysis of Raymond Williams' view regarding how society selects and emphasizes central values and meanings, and interprets values outside the central ones:

> The dominant system must ... continually make and remake itself so as to 'contain' those meanings, practices and values which are oppositional to it.   Williams therefore understands any society to contain many more systems of meaning and value than those incorporated in its 'central system of practices, meanings and values'- 'no mode of production and therefore no dominant society or order... and therefore no dominant culture in reality exhausts human practice, human

energy, human intention.' What then constitutes the 'dominance' of these dominant meanings and practices are the mechanisms which allow it to select, incorporate and therefore also exclude elements in 'the full range of human practice' (the selectivity of tradition plays a key role here). (Hall,1972, pp.331-332)

According to Raymond Williams, intention needs to be restored to the process of analysing the role of television in society in order to understand how it was developed with certain purposes and practices in mind to which the technology is central. In the development of various forms of technology, there has been a complex interaction between new needs and new inventions. Williams views development in technology as a response to changing needs rather than as a cause of change. Technology, however, does not stem so much from actual needs as from the priorities of people with decision-making powers.

The importance of communications development for the Cree, including media training, relates to the need to present a culture-enhancing alternative to the existing "monopoly of knowledge" (Carey, 1975) of mainstream media.

Mainstream media tend to uphold existing power structures in that they tend to present situations and values which are supportive of the status quo as 'legitimate'. However, concepts of legitimacy are culturally-derived and within mainstream society "the mass media legitimize the social systems of which they are a part." (Curran, 1977, p.220) Ridington (1990) also makes this point in his study pertaining to the Dunne-za or Beaver Indians of northeastern British Columbia:

> The unstated assumptions of our mass media tell people what is "normal." The language of their discourse with us conveys messages about "reality" as well as objective information. The media are largely supported by commercial or state interests, dedicated to influencing audience attitude and action. This bias is commonly accepted without question. People raised

within such a system of communication do not readily recognize or comprehend systems of communication structured on different principles. Similarly, people raised within a system of consensual discourse may be profoundly shocked at how the mass media distort their reality. They are simply not accustomed to being interrupted in their thoughts and endeavors.

The supposition that the norms which media reflect applies to other cultural groups is both ethnocentric and self-serving. Mainstream Canadian media do not, for the most part, represent the reality of the Cree. Therefore, the maintenance and development of Cree media is an important element in the reinforcement of Cree culture and language. This point was emphasized by JBCCS in its submission to the 1989 CRTC Call for Comments on Native Broadcasting:

> In recent years our communities have been invaded by English, and to a lesser extent, French language mainstream broadcasting. Community and regional Cree language broadcasting is essential to safeguard our language.

The role Cree media must play within Cree society is to reflect what is 'legitimate' within Cree society and culture. The difficulty for northern Native media to fulfill this role is one which Kenneth Banks (1983) has observed in relation to communications training for the Inuit:

> The function of communications perceived by many Inuit is to ensure their survival in the face of continued White introduced and directed changes. To gain control of one's own media equipment, however, does not guarantee cultural survival. For if the Inuit operating those systems- principally television and radio broadcast stations- have traditionally depended upon training funded, designed, implemented and evaluated by people outside their culture, then they may tend to reflect the bias of the other culture in their media work.

20

The theoretical concepts discussed in this chapter suggest the following in relationship to the analysis of Cree communications development and training:

1- Certain generalizations can be made about Cree responses to communications development and training by analyzing Cree culture. These generalizations, however, should not be assumed to apply elsewhere.

2- The more the unique aspects of Cree culture are understood the better its relationship to media and the consequent implications for training will be understood.

3- Although the Cree are influenced by mainstream media approaches, including approaches to training, Cree communications development and training are also influenced by cultural responses.

4- How the Cree experience communications training depends as much on culturally-based expectations, perceptions, cognitions and emotions as it does on course structure or content.

5- Mainstream concepts of normality, legitimacy and desirability with regard to communications development and training are supportive of existing mainstream power structures. The Cree must establish their own concepts based on their own culture if communications training is to be culturally-reinforcing.

III-a: A BRIEF HISTORY OF MEDIA DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NORTH

As this overview of media developments in the North will indicate, Native involvement has been primarily a reactive one based on cultural concerns. It did not stem from Native cultural need for such development, but from the recognition of these developments as an emerging reality. Media could either be avoided to the extent that it was possible to do so, or adapted to Native concerns. As discussed in the next section of this chapter, responses varied.

Following is a brief historical perspective to help contextualize the training issues considered within this study. As previously mentioned, the focus is mainly on developments pertaining to radio.

Communications technology was first introduced in the North with the purpose of transmitting information there from the South. The interests of northern natives was not high on the list of priorities of those with decision-making powers:

Radio broadcasting, begun in the 1920's included no native language programming prior to 1960, shortly after the formation of CBC Northern Service. When television was introduced through "Frontier Package" broadcasts in 1967, it followed the same pattern. Native Northerners recognized that, at the same time as southern media excluded them from information, it played a role in imposing southern culture in their communities. The introduction of satellite television posed an even greater threat to native languages and cultures. In addition, the South-North structure of the broadcasting system could increase southern domination, making native Northerners more marginal to the political and economic reality of southern Canada. (Valaskakis,1985, p.53)

The idea of using communications technology to communicate

from North to South was not a major consideration for those in control. Linking northern communities to one another was even less so:

> [Native northerners] were never consulted in the discussions which led to the [Anik] satellite program. They knew that the introduction of earlier media in the North played a role in maintaining the authority of non-native institutions and in restricting native access to information which affected their communities. (ibid, p.53)

It remained for northern Natives themselves to argue for 'fair access' to means of communications, as discussed further in this chapter.

The CBC Northern Service[8] was created in 1958- the year following the Royal Commission on Broadcasting (Fowler Commission) which had recommended improved services to the North. Seven years later, the Fowler Advisory Committee on Broadcasting indicated that progress on improving broadcasting services to the North was slow. In addition to its reference to "the forgotten north" the following assessment was made:

> Out of fifty-five briefs submitted to the Committee, not one made any mention of the northern regions of Canada and their broadcasting needs. (Fowler, 1965, p.189)

Although Native programming was very limited at this point in time, consisting of only three and a-half hours weekly in 'Eskimo programming' on shortwave radio, its importance for the Inuit was recognized:

> No other CBC broadcasts, for the time and money spent upon them, have yielded a greater return in audience-appreciation than these. (Fowler, 1965, p.191)

The importance of looking at communications in the North within the social context of the area was emphasized by R.F.

Salisbury in his foreword to a 1977 study on the regional communication network of James Bay:

> ... if the planning of northern development took the perspective of looking at communications within the North as a region, rather than regarding the north as an area to be communicated to from southern centres, very different patterns would emerge. (Salisbury foreword, authors Elberg & Visitor,1977, p.*ii*)

The Inuit of northern Quebec took the initiative in seeking increased access to means of communication in the North, not only in terms of receiving media but also of producing and transmitting it:

> Inuit realize that to participate in the process of northern development, they must be more than receivers of messages. They must participate in the northern communication system as initiators and users of information provided by media. Interactive satellites establish the potential for media to contribute within this approach. Inuit were aware of this when ITC and TNI proposed interactive experiments through the Anik B Communications Program. (Valaskakis, 1983, p.242)

The question of media control was an important issue for the Inuit from the outset. Media control was deemed necessary in order to safeguard Native cultures and languages. The Inuit also raised the issue of having the right not to receive mainstream media as these were perceived as having potential negative effects on their culture.

The director (of Taqramiut Nipingat Inc.) until 1981, Josepi Padlayat, at a CRTC hearing in 1973, contested the CBC application to provide television service to northern Quebec. Objecting to the lack of regional and Inuit language programming, Padlayat succeeded in stalling the decision until a task force studied and reported on the situation of communication in The Northerners (1974). TNI and CBC later came to collaborate on some projects and

the Corporation presently will not initiate a communications project without a clear mandate from TNI or a community media group. (Ogilvie, 1983, p.32)

Koebberling (1988) provides some background on the Canadian government's response to the Inuit initiatives:

In 1973, the Native Communications Program (NCP) was established by the Canadian government, to be administered by the Native Citizens Directorate of the Department of Secretary of State (DSOS). NCP contributions[9] were meant to provide assistance to Native broadcasters for the following:

... (1) operating costs of native communication societies; (2) special communication projects; (3) training of staff of communication societies; (4) community radio maintenance; (5) media workshops; and (6) the acquisition of capital assets ... The program was based on the assumptions that native citizens could not develop their own communications networks without financial support, and there were significant communication needs to be addressed... (p.285)

Stiles (1988) states that the program's budget, which doubled to about two million dollars from 1973 to 1980, went mainly to Native publications. (p.22) The Cree publication, Cree Ajemoon, which published in the mid-1980's was partially funded through the NCP. (Cree Chiefs, 1986)

It was also in 1973, in February, that the Anik satellite became operational. At that time, many northern communities still relied on shortwave for radio service. Then, in November 1973, CBC increased its services to the North:

... construction of an antenna array especially directed to the North was completed; the power of high frequency transmitters was increased from 50 to 250 kilowatts; and the program service was lengthened from 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours daily to over 18 hours a day in English, French, Inuktitut and Cree. (Background Paper on CBC Northern Service, updated 1978)

25

In 1974, the Accelerated Coverage Plan was implemented through the CBC. The ACP provided radio and television to northern communities with populations of five hundred or more. In Quebec, five Inuit, five Cree, and three Attikamek communities became eligible for CBC assistance to set up radio stations. (Gagné,1985, p.2)

Whereas funding was provided for hardware, none was made available for production. According to Roth & Valaskakis (1989) "much of the programming broadcast under the ACP was of no relevance to northern native peoples." (p.224) The lack of consultation with northern Native peoples on the choice of broadcasting programming and services did not go unchallenged:

> Early broadcasting undertakings in the North, including the Frontier Coverage Package, the development of Anik satellite distribution, and the CBC's Accelerated Coverage Plan, all resulted from federal decisions made without consultation with native people. As a result, in the 1970's, changing the structure and content of northern communications to meet the needs of native northerners became one of the central concerns of Inuit organizations.(Roth & Valaskakis,1989, p.224)

The CBC Northern Quebec Service was set up in the spring of 1979. In 1980, three permanent positions were established for Cree announcer-producers. (Gagné,1985, pp.3-4)

James Bay Cree Communications Society was incorporated in March 1981. The society submitted an application for a research and feasibility study in August 1983, and received funding for such a study which began in the early part of 1984. (JBCCS Report to Cree Chiefs Meeting on Communications, March 11, 1986)

JBCCS began broadcasting radio programming regionally via satellite through a distribution agreement with CBC in June 1985.

The agreement, still in effect, stipulates that CBC reserves the right to pre-empt JBCCS programming at its discretion. Circumstances under which this may occur are specified as follows:

a) to give priority to regular CBC programming;

b) to present special programming of national or regional interest or importance;

c) to provide broadcast time for political parties or candidates in accordance with law or CBC policy;

d) to broadcast emergency announcements;

e) in such other reasonable circumstances as CBC may, from time to time, determine.
(CBC-JBCCS Distribution Agreement, June 1985)

Although pre-empting of Cree programming is rare, it is nonetheless a constraint which would be overcome by the establishment of an independent Cree-owned radio distribution system. JBCCS plans for such a system are discussed in greater detail in Chapter IV, Actual Cree Communications Needs.

Since JBCCS radio programming began in 1985, it has originated from a production centre in Mistissini, has been delivered via dedicated audio signal (telephone) to CBC North in Montreal, then has been rebroadcast by satellite to the Cree communities.

The society's regional programming was initially received in eight Cree communities and in three Algonquin communities. CBC owned the satellite dishes and receivers in six of the Cree communities, while the society installed the receiving equipment in the remaining two communities. (Nemaska and Eastmain were ineligible for CBC satellite installation. They were excluded on the

basis of CBC criteria which stipulated that only communities with populations exceeding five hundred were eligible for such assistance). JBCCS also installed downlinks in the three Algonquin communities since the society's funding was linked to providing services to these communities. (Chiefs, 1st section, 1st page-pages not numbered)

JBCCS initially provided four hours per week of Cree programming and one hour per week of Algonquin programming.

The interactive experiments of the late 1970's which stemmed from Inuit initiatives resulted in local participation and control of media. (Valaskakis, 1983, p.242) These were closely followed by the Therrien Committee in 1980 which recommended that the approved budgets of both the CBC and the NFB should be supplemented by Parliamentary appropriations to develop and support broadcasting services by and for the Native peoples of Canada. The Committee also suggested that there should be a single federal coordinating body for Native communications. The importance of "access", both in the sense of being able to receive and of being able to produce Native programming, was also recognized by the Committee. As a result, the Committee recommended that funding for Native broadcasting be made available and that Native communities should have a choice of channels and programming. (Therrien,1980, pp.22-27)

Access to means of communication is not merely an abstract rights issue to be recognized, but a matter which has needs implications relating to financial, technological, human and educational resources. The lack of such resources for Native communications in the North was underlined by the Therrien Committee in 1980:

> The CBC is widely criticized for spending too much of its little northern budget in the South, for providing too little time in its schedules for native-language programming, and for doing

28

too little to help the production of programs that would make access to transmission facilities a practical reality in native community life. (ibid,p.21)

George Hargrave (1990) quotes Terry Rudden, northern broadcast training consultant, on his assessment of early training efforts for northern Native broadcasters:

The community radio stations which sprang across the north were the first to depend on local natives to staff and operate them. CBC provided sporadic training for staff at community stations which accessed CBC transmitters, and some training was also provided by equipment suppliers and installers. However, most community radio training was on an ad hoc, learn-by-doing basis. (pp.13-14)

In 1981, the CRTC approved a licence for Canadian Satellite Communications Inc. (CANCOM). CANCOM was instructed by the CRTC "to provide the necessary audio and video uplink facilities in northern locations suitable to the independent native production groups." (Caplan & Sauvageau et al, 1986, pp.516)

CRTC Public Notice 1990-12, REVIEW OF NATIVE BROADCASTING - A PROPOSED POLICY, recognizes that the question of 'fair access' goes beyond available airtime:

In the policy the Commission expressed concern about the quality of access time, and stressed that mere access to the airwaves was insufficient if programs were not accessible to the intended audiences at convenient times. The Commission announced that it was establishing an Action Committee to implement the principles of fair access...(p.4)

The public notice also provides further historical background relating to northern Native media development. In March 1983, the government announced its Northern Broadcasting Policy which led to the establishment of a funding mechanism through the Department

of the Secretary of State- the Northern Native Broadcast Access
Program (NNBAP). The program was set up "to assist northern
native communications societies in producing radio and television
programming to serve the specific needs of native audiences and to
counter-balance the influx via satellite of increasing amounts of
southern-originated programming." (ibid, p.3) In December 1984,
the CRTC established the Northern Native Broadcasting Committee
to identify broadcasting-related problems experienced by the
communications societies funded under NNBAP.

A 1984 report prepared for the NNBAP on training estimates by
Lougheed and Associates underlines some of the difficulties faced
by Native broadcasters in relation to training:

> Conducting a training program is not easy for native
> broadcasters. It requires a major effort in terms of financial
> and human resources for what is essentially a non-broadcast
> activity. Expertise available within the broadcast organization
> is frequently diverted to training, thus jeopardizing
> operational commitments. Initiating a comprehensive
> broadcast service including cultural, educational and
> information programming is a serious enough challenge to the
> groups without having to undertake extensive training. Yet
> there is no choice; without sufficient and qualified staff,
> groups will be unable to meet their mandate. (Lougheed, 1984,
> p.8)

Lougheed also indicates other difficulties associated with
training, such as recruitment methods and the ability to support
training through administrative structures, facilities and
equipment. Another constraint mentioned by Lougheed, a key point
in this study, is the lack of existing Native communications training
models:

> Little or no guidance could be offered to training programs
> because there were few models to follow. Comprehensive
> evaluation of training was not undertaken and no appropriate
> teaching method had been developed. Consequences of these

early training efforts were attrition. lack of management training, poor planning of staffing requirements, and the need for re-training. Initial training programs took place in an environment where the future of native broadcasting was unknown and strategic planning was nearly impossible. (ibid,p.8)

Not to paint too bleak a picture of the situation, Lougheed does offer that existing training programs did achieve some degree of success in providing personnel to operate the "highly successful pilot projects which became the model for the present NNBAP-funded projects and future training programs." He also suggests that these training experiences resulted in the development of effective teaching methods, student participation in the design of curricula, method and planning, and the involvement of committees in strategic planning, recruitment and evaluation. Problems remained, however, with regard to the lack of an overall standard for Native broadcast training:

Aside from CEIC criteria for acceptance, possibly the only common vehicle for external review of training plans are the regional and national liaison committees which require native broadcast groups to articulate their training plans as part of initial feasibility studies. Limited planning takes place within each group however, the liaison committees and DSOS have not established clear planning criteria for training. Well-considered training criteria would benefit the broadcast groups, CEIC and DSOS. (ibid,p.9)

The difficulty in establishing such criteria for Native communications training lies in the fact that they can only be effective if they relate to cultural realities and objectives, such as the reinforcement of language and culture, and respect for the collective well-being. These issues are explored in greater detail in Chapter V, Relating Cree Culture to Communications Training.

In March 1985, a call for comments pertaining to northern Native broadcasting was issued, leading to a series of public

31

hearings in the fall that year and a subsequent policy framework. The above-mentioned public notice states that the CRTC expressed concern about the quality of broadcasting access time, and that it recognized there could be no single solution to remedy this situation. Therefore, the CRTC made the following recommendation:

> The Commission encouraged the CBC to formulate a long-range plan that would allow increased integration of quality native-produced programming in its radio and television schedules, and agreed with the CBC that the Northern Service 'could become significantly more meaningful to all residents of the North if it had the benefit of a fully dedicated satellite transponder'. The Commission stated that it was essential that funds be reserved to secure such a transponder. The Commission notes that in June 1988 the government committed $10 million over four years for an independent satellite-delivered programming distribution system to increase the availability of television programs produced by native broadcasters, as well as programs originating from the CBC Northern Service and from provincial and territorial governments, designed specifically for northern audiences. (CRTC Public Notice 1990-12, p.4)

The role of Native broadcasters and their support lobby in obtaining such government support cannot be overemphasized. Roth & Valaskakis (1989) make the following observation in this regard:

> During the past twenty years, aboriginal broadcasters and lobbyists in Canada have worked to pry open and locate themselves within national communication debates. Their efforts have recently met with success as the Canadian government prepares to finance a $10 million satellite transponder dedicated exclusively to the distribution of aboriginal television programming throughout Canada's North. (p.221)

Subsequently, a consortium of Native broadcasters- the National Native Communications Federation (NATCOM)-was formed and Television Northern Canada (TVNC) was established:

This consortium can regulate the shared use of a native-controlled transponder. A dedicated northern channel is the only realistic solution to northern broadcasting problems related to the design of the satellite system. Anik's South-North bias can be alleviated by additional northern up-links. But without a separate transponder, native access to the network channels will remain tentative and limited. (Valaskakis, 1985, p.56)

TVNC went on the air in January 1992.

Northern Native groups, including the Cree, did not have control of the decision-making processes which initially led to the introduction of communications technology in their midst. However, their responses to development initiatives in this area have made clear their determination to use media to support and enhance their cultures and languages. In order to do so, culturally-supportive communications training is needed.

III-b: THE CREE EXPERIENCE OF MASS MEDIA

There is a relatively short timespan between the introduction of mass media in the Cree region, and Cree involvement in communications planning, management, production and training. It is perhaps worthwhile, therefore, to consider initial Cree responses to the introduction of television as possible indicators of actual Cree responses to communications training. A 1976 study on communications in Paint Hills (now called Wemindji) provides valuable insights into Cree cultural responses to the introduction of television.

When television was first introduced in the North, the James Bay Cree appear to have been less concerned than the Inuit about possible negative effects of mainstream media. This is indicated by responses to questions about expectations regarding the possible eventual introduction of television as discussed in the Paint Hills study:

> Responses were universally optimistic, looking forward to television's availability. Almost all the younger people had seen television when outside the community and had enjoyed it. They seemed to feel that since it existed they should not be deprived of it, merely because they lived in the north... Older people who had not watched television outside appeared to place it in much the same category-- a possibly interesting diversion that would be nice to have available. (Elberg & Salisbury, coll. R. Visitor,1976, p.97)

Since a significant segment of the younger generation of Cree had already experienced some degree of acculturation through 'southern' formal education, the introduction of mainstream television programming in the North was also considered a means of bridging the cultural and generational gap which had evolved. Television was considered a means of obtaining knowledge of southern Canada for those Cree who had not experienced it first-hand. (ibid, pp.98-101)

The Cree were equally pragmatic in their view of television advertising, seeing it as an opportunity to learn about the availability and use of goods in southern Canada:

> Any suggestion by us that television advertising might lead northerners to buy things that they did not need was rejected, with the firm statement that whites might be silly enough to be duped in that way, but Indians were not that stupid. (ibid, p.99)

Television was also seen by older Cree as a possible means of re-empowerment:

> Perhaps even more important, where decisions about how to deal with southern Canada are now entirely in the hands of young people who have had experience with whites, in the future older people will be able to contribute to the making of those decisions. The respect and authority which, in Cree eyes, is rightfully the due of older people who have knowledge, could again be in their hands. Television could strengthen both family life and the life of the settlement. (ibid, p.101)

The importance of control over the choice of media programming was recognized by the Cree even before the introduction of television in the James Bay region, but control over the means of production may not yet have been considered:

> Young people quickly responded to questions about what they did not like about television in the south, the negative image presented of native peoples, and went on from that to discussing the need for native control of programming, in the form of vetoing undesirable films. The more positive aspects of native programming-- the choice of desirable films, the production of such materials themselves, and the use of Cree in programmes-- were very rarely raised spontaneously. Their possibility did not occur to people who had not yet had television as part of daily life. (ibid, p.98)

That messages are biased in relation to means of communication, however, apparently was well understood:

> They are aware that the information they receive at 'the end of the line' is partial, and slanted in particular ways by the intermediary who transmits the information. They believe, perhaps over-optimistically, that they can sort out and recognise bias, but that if more information were available, not selected by particular 'gate-keepers' like HBC managers, or DINA officials, they would be able to make better decisions. These decisions would involve choosing what, of southern Canadian technology, to incorporate advantageously into local life, and choosing how, in the face of great local uncertainty in dealings with 'head offices' in the south, to exercise greater control through a fuller understanding of how 'head offices' work. To the extent that television does provide a wide spectrum of information, accurately and without attempting to 'sell a particular viewpoint, it may fulfill northern needs. To the extent that the medium selects (as we know it does select, both consciously and unconsciously) what aspects of southern life to display, then the northern communities will be vulnerable to that selection. (ibid, pp.101-102)

The 1976 Paint Hills study provides some insight into initial Cree responses to media. It indicates that the Cree recognized both the positive and negative potential of media, depending on how they were used. Since actual Cree uses of media pertain primarily to radio, further analysis will focus mainly on radio development and training. Other, more long-term areas of concern are briefly considered in Chapter V, Section 4, Cree Communications Symposium.

III-c: CREE RADIO TRAINING DEVELOPMENTS

Cree uses of radio have been influenced in various ways by training as well as by the lack of it. Cree broadcasters with little or no training, particularly in the smaller community radio stations, have largely limited their functions to those of playing music and making occasional community announcements. Those who have acquired mainstream notions of media uses and applications, through training or exposure to mainstream media, have had to attempt to reconcile these with Cree cultural perceptions and values.

Training and communications development issues need to be addressed not within a vacuum but within a framework of intercultural reality. Mainstream resources are called upon, therefore there is an impact stemming from mainstream organizational approaches and criteria. It is therefore worthwhile to consider what the experience of Cree communications training within such a framework has been.

How Cree culture has influenced Cree approaches to communications practices and training is considered in Chapter V.

Media training in the Cree region was first organized when James Bay Cree Communications Society and community radio stations were first established in the mid-1980's.

When media training was first introduced into the Cree communities, non-Native trainers also provided the "expertise" of what was required for Cree communications development. A 1986 report states:

> ...this training program has engaged a number of experienced and well-known Canadian broadcasters who have travelled to Mistissini for 2-3 weeks each to lead courses.

Cree cultural needs appear to have been given little or no consideration. There is no indication that training objectives related to cultural values or perceptions.

In 1989, a comprehensive training plan was prepared by James Bay Cree Communications Society following a regional meeting on communications (see Chapter IV, section on Regional Communications Meeting: Cree First Nation of Mistissini, July 1989).

In an attempt to plan and provide training aligned to the perceived needs of Cree broadcasters, a questionnaire was prepared. It was circulated by means of the local radio stations with the instruction that anyone in the communities interested in communications training could fill it out. The purpose of the questionnaire was to find out about the importance of accreditation, the willingness of interested individuals to train outside their communities, and the areas of training of greatest interest.

It was not a foregone conclusion at this time, that the CEGEP de Jonquière would be asked to do the training. If accreditation were deemed not to be of major importance, an "in-house" training programme such as instituted by the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation may have been developed.

Forty-five questionnaires were returned with responses from all communities except Oujé-Bougoumou. The responses indicated that accreditation was of major importance to the respondents. The greatest degree of interest was in programming and production, followed by technical training. News/Interviewing and Administration/Finance were next, with the same degree of interest being expressed in each of these categories. The least amount of interest expressed was in the Socio-Cultural Role of Communications with slightly less response than the previous two categories. The preferred choices for length of training, both in and

out of the respondents' respective communities, were 'more than 2 weeks in the community' and '2 weeks outside the community'. Preferred Cree locations for training, outside of the respondents' respective home communities, were Mistissini and Chisasibi respectively. Preferred outside locations were, in order of preference: Montreal, Ottawa, Jonquière, Québec, and 'Other' (Val d'Or, Chibougamau, Chapais, Timmins, Toronto, and Edmonton).

On the basis of the information obtained from the regional meeting, the training questionnaire, discussions with individuals with expertise in the areas of communications development and training in a Native milieu, and verbal and written interactions with people in the Cree communities, a comprehensive communications training plan was prepared. Modifications were made in accordance with suggestions from these various sources. Slight modifications were again made after presentation of the plan to the JBCCS Board of Directors.

Within the plan, long-term and short-term training needs (defined in the next pages) were recognized, as well as the need for customized training to respond to the specific and distinct needs of the Cree communities. Other northern Native broadcasters had previously recognized the need for tailor-made or customized training:

> The testing and revision of curricula over the last six years or so has resulted in the development of comprehensive training manuals that are tailored to the needs of northern native broadcasters. The native broadcasters have also developed a pool of competent training resource people to draw upon. It includes a variety of specialized instructors, curriculum developers, and evaluators. Although there are no formal mechanisms for sharing information about training, a strong informal communication network exists among many native broadcasters for exchanging training resource material and vital information. (Stiles,1988,p.33)

The CEGEP de Jonquière was proposed as the educational institute since it could provide both accredited training and proper facilities for production and technical training. The CEGEP also demonstrated flexibility in adapting its programme to Cree needs while still respecting the curriculum requirements of the provincial Ministry of Education.

The comprehensive training proposal which was the result of attempting to respond to the communications training needs expressed by people in the Cree communities, proposed three training programmes- each with different objectives aimed at different clienteles. The first of these programmes, the Short-Term Training Programme, was designed to address what was considered the most immediate training need- that of current JBCCS and local radio staff. The second programme, the Community Training Programme, was designed to widen the existing human resources pool by providing basic radio skills to a large number of new trainees. The third programme, the CEGEP or Long-Term Training Programme, was designed to provide specialized, career-oriented, accredited training to a select group of trainees.

The Short-Term Regional Training Programme

The Short-Term Regional Training Programme, was proposed as follows in the plan revised December 1989:

- A total of 5 weeks of training in radio management, basic technical skills, and radio writing and production; for 24 trainees working in local or regional radio (including management and staff from JBCCS and community radio stations, and several other interested participants from the Cree communities).

- A 1-week apprenticeship session in established Native radio

stations for ten (10) selected trainees.

- Four 1-day training sessions for members of the JBCCS
Board of Directors.

Management, technical and production training needs for
Aboriginal communications societies is also recognized within the
Stiles report of 1988:

The societies' foremost training priorities are in journalism
and technical production. Management and native language
development are ongoing training requirements, also of high
priority. (p.10)

The Community Training Programme

The Community Training Programme was initially designed to
provide training in basic radio skills to people with no previous
media experience. It was meant to widen the existing human
resources pool in the communications field. The scope of this
programme was subsequently expanded to include three courses:

1- *Research & News Processing:* This course was planned as a
means of providing follow-up training in the Cree communities for
the trainees who were part of the Short-Term Training Programme.
Since trainees were accepted into this course on the basis of the
previous training provided by the college, college-level
accreditation would be granted to those who successfully
completed the course. Approximately fifteen trainees from eight
Cree communities took this course.

2- *Introduction to Radio:* The original content of the Community Training Programme was essentially contained within this course, i.e. training in basic radio announce-operating skills for each[10] of the Cree communities- although the duration of the course was reduced from thirty to twenty hours per community.

3- *Native Communications:* This course was scheduled for February-March, 1993 in each of the nine[11] Cree communities. The course was designed to inform trainees (i.e. both present radio staff and other interested individuals) of relevant issues particularly pertinent to Native people in the communications field- e.g. the fair access issue, the role of the National Aboriginal Communications Society (NACS), etc.

The CEGEP Training Programme (also referred to as the Long-Term Training Programme)

The third training programme within the JBCCS training plan, the CEGEP Training Programme, was proposed as a one-year college-level programme for a select group of career-oriented, academically qualified applicants. The course content would extend beyond the immediate training needs relating to radio and also include such areas as information management, public relations, print media and television.

Network Development Training

In October 1994, a training program refered to as Network Development Training was implemented. This training is discussed in Chapter IV.

Analysis of Cree Communications Training

Approaches to Cree radio training were influenced by a number of factors. These include:

- Notions pertaining to basic requirements relating to management, technical and production skills.

- Training constraints pertaining to timing, coordination, travel and accommodation.

- Responses to needs or preferences expressed by Cree trainees.

- Need to respond to immediate needs of Cree regional and community radio.

- Academic requirements of training institute to provide accreditation.

- Non-Native training resources.

Cultural concerns were not entirely overlooked in the planning and implementation of radio training. However, practical constraints relating to having to address training issues within a framework of intercultural reality, and a lack of clearly articulated Cree communications development goals relating to cultural objectives have left the relationship between media and Cree culture virtually unresolved. The cultural tension between two opposing sets of values is still part of the reality of Cree communications development and training.

IV- ACTUAL CREE COMMUNICATIONS TRAINING NEEDS

Present approaches to communications training provided through the regional communications society, James Bay Cree Communications Society, stem from a training plan developed and implemented in 1989-1990 as a result of communication development concerns raised at a regional communications meeting in the Cree community of Mistissini. Since that time, Cree approaches to communications development and training have been observed and documented through a series of events. Those included in this analysis, in chronological order, are the following:

1. <u>July 1989</u>

A regional communications meeting hosted by JBCCS in the Cree community of Mistissini.

2. <u>August 1991</u>

A human resources development meeting held in Val d'Or, Quebec.

3. <u>April 1992</u>

A JBCCS communications training steering committee meeting held in Montreal.

4. <u>November 30th and December 1st, 1994</u>

A two-day Cree communications symposium joining presenters and participants in Montreal with participants in the Cree communities through video and audio conferencing.

In addition to the analysis of these four events, it is worthwhile to consider plans for communications development for the Cree region to assess future training needs.

A major area of interest for James Bay Cree Communications Society is the development of an independent Cree radio broadcast distribution system.

Presently, the regional society is dependent on CBC to distribute its radio programming to the Cree communities. In the last several years, there have been efforts to put in place equipment, provide training, and gather support from the communities for the realization of this independent network. A first step was the installation of a digital uplink in Mistissini in December 1993. The second step was to be the installation of satellite dishes and receivers in each of the Cree communities.

While funding for the installation of receiving equipment was being pursued, training plans were also being prepared for the eventual start-up of the expanded radio network. Whereas the society was producing fifteen hours of radio programming per week through its distribution agreement with CBC, the Cree independently-owned distribution system would allow for around-the-clock programming.

A training program refered to as "Radio Network Development Training" was planned in anticipation of this development. The expanded network service was initially planned to begin in the fall of 1994.

The main objective of the training was to consider areas of collaboration between JBCCS and the community radio stations. The technician who contractually provided his services to the Cree radio stations had expressed the opinion that the major difficulties associated with the realization of the expanded network would not be of a technical nature, but would pertain to scheduling and programming agreements.

The new network service was not implemented as planned

because of difficulties in securing the necessary funding. Nonetheless, the planned training did go ahead as a means of initiating a process which would eventually lead to the establishment of the service. The training began in October 1994.

As previously mentioned, following is an analysis of four events pertaining to Cree communications training and development. This analysis is meant to provide some insight into Cree concerns and the practical difficulties associated with trying to address these.

1-Regional Communications Meeting: Cree First Nation of Mistissini, July 1989

In July 1989, JBCCS hosted a regional communications meeting in Mistissini, Quebec to assess the communications development needs of the Cree communities.[12]   Representatives of the regional society and of the local telecommunications associations shared ideas and concerns regarding immediate and future needs. This meeting was an important turning point in collaborative efforts between the various media groups. It also led to the establishment of a comprehensive regional media training plan.

Prior to the actual meeting, participants had been asked to propose discussion items for the agenda. Some of the problems raised by the local radio representatives were not identified as training needs per se. However, many of the difficulties they experienced indicated the need for training, either in radio management (including administration and finance), production (including news) and technical maintenance. For example, representatives from one community brought out the matter of band interference in local radio programming. Discussion of this matter led to the suggestion that establishing programming policies through the local telecommunications association would relieve the pressure from individual staff in dealing with requests or demands from band council members. What this discussion underlined was the need to establish clear-cut policies and guidelines in relation to administration and production. Other examples may have also indicated similar needs for financial and journalistic policies. But before such measures could be taken, those responsible for the decision-making would require training.

The regional training plan which was subsequently developed[13] through JBCCS reflects the concerns raised at the regional communications meeting in Mistissini. This is the plan previously analysed in Chapter III-c, Cree Radio Training Developments.

The institute chosen to carry out most of the communications training outlined in the JBCCS proposal, the CEGEP de Jonquiere, had to provide its planned curriculum and implementation costs to the Cree School Board in order to come to an agreement on the terms of the contract. An agreement in principle would be established, contingent on funding. The Cree School Board would then request funding from CEIC and/or CFP, depending which funding programs were accessible for the proposed training on the basis of meeting the criteria. Once a decision was reached by the funding agency, the terms of the contract would be fine-tuned to account for possible refusal of requested training costs. When the terms of the contract were finally agreed upon, arrangements would be made for the hiring of instructors, preparation or acquisition of course materials, travel and accommodation arrangements for instructors and trainees, securing of a teaching locales (classrooms and/or studios), and other details.

The experience of having to go through this process was one of delays and consequent rescheduling and other complications. The delays were primarily related to difficulty on the part of Adult Education Services in processing funding requests according to established procedures within timeframes agreed upon by all members of the communications training steering committee, including Adult Education. These delays, perhaps due to lack of previous experience in dealing with such training, created problems with regard to scheduling. Finding a suitable time for training periods of up to three weeks which was, at the same time, appropriate for JBCCS, each of the nine communities, and the CEGEP de Jonquiere was difficult at the best of times. Last minute delays could mean that individuals who were initially interested in the training would no longer able to take it because of other commitments or because there is not enough time to make appropriate arrangements to leave their job, family or community. Cancellation of trainees meant having to find replacement trainees and obtaining required background information pertaining to funding

48

eligibility and academic standing. Such delays also meant having to cancel or change travel and accommodation arrangements, and perhaps seek new instructors. Over the long term, numerous delays could have affected the credibility of the various parties involved and jeopardize future training plans.

The above-mentioned difficulties demonstrate the complexity of the communications training coordination and implementation process for the Cree communities. There were other complications relating to the implementation of media training for the Cree, not necessarily directly related to the implementation process itself. One example was the lack of accountability of trainees from some of the communities regarding course attendance and effort in implementing what was learned into the workplace. Another example was the communication problem arising from a situation whereby Cree trainees (some with limited second-language skills) were being taught in English by a French-speaking instructor with very limited capabilities in the language of instruction. As for the problem of language capabilities of instructors, both JBCCS and the CEGEP de Jonquiere made efforts to provide instruction in Cree when it was possible to do so. For example, a Cree instructor was hired to teach the 20-hour Introduction to Radio course which was taught in seven of the Cree communities in March 1992.

2. Human Resources Development Meeting: Val d'Or, Quebec,
August 1991

The second event within this analysis is the human resources
development meeting held in Val d'Or, Quebec from August 27th to
the 29th, 1991. Invitations to this conference were extended
conjointly by the Cree Grand Chief and by the Chairman of the Cree
School Board in a memorandum to all Cree bands and entities dated
June 10, 1991. The objectives were stated as follows:

> The central question of the conference will be what do we
> want with respect to our culture, our social situation, our
> overall economic strategy and our political representation
> among ourselves and to the outside world. A clear commitment
> should be made at the conference to that vision of Cree society.
> From discussions, we should then be able to delineate our
> responsibilities among ourselves represented by your
> respective entities. We will work towards providing a
> coordination and networking process. By this mechanism, we
> should have a continuous input on Cree Human Resources Needs
> Analysis to identify and create programs to answer to the
> human resources needs of the Crees.

JBCCS responded to the request for concerns pertaining to
human resources developments stating that its assessment of
communications training needs had indicated that course
accreditation was considered important and that the preferred
duration of training was two weeks or more. The matter of
preferred course duration was important to assess since training
perceived as too short would be both unsatisfactory and costly,
whereas training sessions considered too long would lead to a high
dropout rate and reluctance to take further training. Current
problems relating to human resources with which JBCCS had to
contend were lack of available qualified personnel within JBCCS'
home community of Mistissini, lack of housing in Mistissini to
accommodate potential employees from the outside, difficulty in
finding temporary replacements for staff on training, and difficulty

in maintaining staff on training while continuing day-to-day operations.

Problems pertaining more specifically to media training were indicated as follows:

1- constraints imposed by criteria of various funding sources.

2- lack of funding sources for trainees' travel and accommodation costs.

3- lack of expediency of process which necessitates channeling of all training through Adult Education, Cree School Board.

4- need for training coordination by organization requesting training, as well as start-up funding to cover initial costs (ibid)

Following is a brief discussion of these constraints:

Eligibility criteria for training funds imposed by CEIC (now HRD) were designed to respond to 'southern' needs and conditions and- if applied rigorously- would severely limit training possibilities in the North. Although program administrators within these organizations recognized the particular needs of the North and showed flexibility in the application of criteria, the criteria remained an obstacle. This was particularly true with regard to training eligibility of employees who had been in their position for some time and had to assume responsibilities for which they did not have proper training. This situation was perhaps rare in the South because of the large human resource pool from which to draw for qualified personnel. It was, however, very common in northern Native communities where the average level of formal education and training was much lower than in the South but where specialized skills were greatly needed. Funding criteria favored unemployed applicants who would be guaranteed long-term

51

employment following their training, and people recently employed who needed specialized training.

Funding was not available through governmental funding sources for trainees' travel and accommodation costs. Therefore if centralized training were planned, other sources of funding for this purpose had to be found. This was a great source of concern for JBCCS in the implementation of its training. On several occasions, CEIC and/or CFP funding was granted on the condition that other required training costs not covered by them be secured. The biggest part of these costs related to trainees' travel and accommodation costs. JBCCS was not in a financial position to assume these costs and therefore had to seek other possible sources. The Board of Commissioners of the Cree School Board agreed to cover these costs on several occasions. Without this financial support, JBCCS would not have received the government funding. Such conditions undoubtedly frustrated other efforts to initiate training in the Cree communities.

Many of the concerns raised at the human resources conference with regard to overall Cree development issues are equally applicable to media development. Following presentations by most of the Cree bands and entities over a two-day period, delegates were asked to form groups which were given colour designations[14] and formulate answers to a list of eight questions. These questions reflect the major concerns relating to development, education and training raised by the delegates. The major issues discussed within the groups related to setting priorities as to who should receive training, distinguishing between 'training' and 'education' and assessing their relative need, means of filling positions presently held by non-Natives with Cree employees, conflicting regional and local interests, coordination of human resource development, and Cree autonomy. Each of these major points will be considered; firstly -as discussed at the conference- in relation to overall Cree concerns about development, and secondly, in relation to media development and communications training.

The question of training priorities was also an important consideration for JBCCS when the Society's training proposal was being prepared. There seemed to be no single solution to addressing immediate training needs relating to actual staff working in regional or community radio, as well as long-term developmental goals. This resulted in what could be termed a modular approach to training, i.e the comprehensive training plan consisting of three different programmes to respond to different needs and different clienteles as previously discussed.

The matter of jobs in Cree organizations held by non-Natives is an important issue with regard to many of the larger organizations. It is not an important concern at this time, however, with regard to communications-related jobs since most of these are filled by Cree employees. The fact that all of the regional radio programming and most local radio programming is done in the Cree language ensures that most positions in this field will be occupied by Cree employees.

Conflicting regional and local interests is, arguably, a potentially divisive issue which remains to be resolved. The Cree traditions of consensus seeking and conflict avoidance appear to have been powerful influences so far in keeping this problem in check. Nonetheless, it is a matter which will not likely disappear for some time to come, if at all. In order to understand this situation and its possible ramifications on all aspects of Cree organization and development, a brief historical overview is in order. Prior to the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975, the Cree communities existed for the most part independently of one another and remained mostly isolated from mainstream Canadian society. Adrian Tanner makes this point in relation to the Mistassini (now Mistissini) Cree hunters in his 1979 study of this group, *Bringing Home Animals* :

... at least until the announcement of the James Bay hydro-

electric project, the Mistassini have been very much cut off from surrounding Canadian society. In addition to their physical isolation, the Mistassini's early involvement with the English Hudson's Bay Company, the Anglican Church, the Federal Government, and English language education, has resulted in a position of social isolation within Roman Catholic, French-speaking Quebec society... This situation of relative social and economic isolation from, and irrelevance to, the larger Canadian social and economic formation... is apparently coming to an end as Mistassini land is seen by the province as ripe for development of its mineral, forest and hydro-electric resources... (pp.204-205)

The announcement of the James Bay hydro-electric project not only brought individual Cree communities out of their isolation in relation to mainstream Canadian society but also, in relation to one another. Initially, at least, Cree regional representation drew upon the traditional leadership of the elders in forming a strategy of opposition to the project:

... when the regional leaders sought guidance with respect to the long-term goals of opposition, the elders advised them not to view the project as an isolated instance, but as part of an ongoing conflict over control of the development of the region. This attitude influenced the leaders to seek an agreement with the government rather than oppose the project outright. Whereas this broader goal was consistent with opposing the specific project at the strategic level, the elders' view also reflected a desire to achieve long-term reconciliation rather than ever-increasing confrontation. The important point here is that community elders played a key role in giving direction to the regional leaders' emerging position regarding the long-term goals of political action. (Feit,1985, p.59)

However, mistrust of regional representation on the part of certain community representatives at the Human Resources Development Conference apparently stemmed from the belief that regional organizations did not represent community interests, but rather had adopted a 'top-down' approach in carrying out their respective mandates.

The yellow group response to how local-regional conflicts could be avoided emphasized the need to establish clear mandates for each, and have the regional entities provide assistance to do things locally. Local organizations could also assist the regional entities. The source of such problems was considered to be lack of grassroots involvement in setting up and functioning of regional organizations.

In the JBCCS needs assessment on training, as previously discussed, local concerns were given important consideration since it was felt that a regional training plan could only be successful if it responded to these concerns.

In response to proposed regional coordination of human resources development, the yellow group suggested the following process:

1)   needs assessment locally and regionally
2)   identification of necessary resources and networking
3)   consultation and information process
4)   formulation of plan with implementation schedule
5)   delivery, evaluation and follow-up

The question of Cree autonomy was posed in terms of whether or not there is a 'safe' level pertaining to the ratio of non-Cree to Cree in Cree organizations, and how this matter should be handled. The yellow group responded that there is no 'safe' level, but rather, that it is a matter dependent on circumstances and organization. It was recommended that senior managers should be Cree to provide direction, that mandates should be clarified, and that there should be less dependence on consultants.

Analysing Cree media services on this basis reveals the following. At present, all JBCCS positions except for that of the Community Radio Coordinator are occupied by Cree personnel, and

there are no non-Cree employees at local Cree radio stations. JBCCS has employed consultants for such tasks as establishing administrative, technical and journalism policies, as well as a comprehensive training plan; verifications and proposals on financial matters; special projects such as a market study; and overall advice pertaining to administration and management. Consultants' services were especially needed during periods of management turnover to ensure continued stability in the functioning of the Society. Technical services have also been provided to the Society on a contractual basis since there is no one on staff qualified to do major technical maintenance, installations and repairs.

In future, consultants' services are likely to be utilized mostly for special projects. If day-to-day management and administration are stable, such services should be less needed in these areas. Such stability is to a large extent dependent on training, as is increased Cree autonomy in all areas of organization, management and operations.

3. JBCCS Communications Training Steering Committee: Montreal, Quebec, April 1992

The third event within this analysis is the JBCCS communications training steering committee meeting held in Montreal on April 7, 1992. A brief overview of the matters discussed at this meeting will provide a perspective on current training issues for JBCCS.

At the time of this meeting, the *Introduction to Radio* course (within the revised Community Training Programme), had recently been completed in each of the seven communities for which it had been planned. Nemaska had not been included, for various reasons, but it was considered important to provide this training to Nemaska in the not-too-distant future. Therefore, this was one of the items on the agenda for the meeting. Another matter relating to future training plans to be discussed was that of the *Native Communications* course which was planned for each of the nine Cree communities. Other items up for discussion were: evaluation of the implementation of Introduction to Radio in the seven communities; a review of the overall Training Plan, including the proposed long-term training; implications of the CEIC Pathways program for the Society's training plans; and the role of local communications committees with respect to media development and training.

The purpose and importance of *Introduction to Radio* and *Native Communications* has already been underlined, therefore it is not necessary to further analyse their significance with regard to Cree media development and training. However, some of the points made during discussion of these matters are worthwhile considering. For example, in his assessment of the implementation of *Introduction to Radio* , the Cree trainer further confirmed the importance of scheduling with regard to participation- as previously noted. The question of course duration was also

considered. The aforementioned trainer felt that twenty hours was too short a time to cover the course content. It was also his opinion that Cree people generally prefer training in their own community. The need to evaluate the training was also examined. It was proposed that a questionnaire should be sent to each trainee in the *Introduction to Radio* course to assess their perceived usefulness of the training and to gauge their interest in further training. There was also discussion on the need to do an assessment of the overall training- which the CEGEP proposed to do- and to revise the Society's training plan accordingly.

The evaluation of media training for the Cree is an area which needs to be improved. It is important to assess training needs and interests on an on-going basis and to make changes in approach and content accordingly. The Stiles Report of 1988 indicates that this is the most neglected aspect of Native communications training:

> Based on the case study evidence, our only general criticism of the training is that much of it is not well evaluated. This is not a criticism of the societies as much as an indictment of CEIC and SEC. The two departments that provide most of the funding for northern native broadcasting training neither carry out careful training evaluations of their own, nor do they insist that the societies evaluate their training activities. (p.33)

The CEGEP de Jonquiere representative on the Steering Committee suggested that the Long-Term Training should be done in Jonquiere with on-the-job sessions (known in French as *stages)* in the Cree communities. The Adult Education representative from the Cree School Board informed the other committee members that Adult Education centres were planned for each Cree community, and proposed that specialists could be brought in to prepare particular college programmes. A start-up date of September 1993 was proposed for the Long-Term Training [15].

The committee also discussed the implementation of the new CEIC Pathways programme in the Cree communities. Although not

enough information was available to assess the possible implications of this development on future communications training, it was suggested that the Pathways Local Management Board be informed of the Society's training plans. Since the Society's more immediate training plans relied on CFP rather than CEIC funding, it was felt there was no immediate cause for concern; therefore a wait-and-see approach was suggested.

Increased awareness and involvement of local telecommunications committees was felt to be crucial to the success of future communications development and media training. The main function of these committees is to establish communications goals, policies and procedures and to make those responsible for carrying them out accountable to the committee. A seminar in each Cree community on local media needs was proposed as a possible initial step toward achieving this goal.

4. Cree Communications Symposium: Montreal, Quebec (and other locations through video and audio conferencing) November 30-December 1, 1994

The present trend in communications towards convergence of technologies and services has led to the concept of the "information highway" or "information superhighway". The purpose of the Cree communications symposium, hosted by James Bay Cree Communications Society, was to consider the implications of such developments for the Cree people and the Cree response. The regional society's report on the symposium indicates the areas of concern:

> JBCCS believes that there is a need for communications systems for the Cree region which will meet these goals:
>
> - lower telecommunications costs
> - reduce travel time and costs through conferencing
> - improve availability and access to information
> - improve communications for people in the bush
> - connect Cree offices, schools and homes to the information highway
> - provide for the inclusion of Cree language and culture in communications systems
> - assist job creation and economic development in the Cree communities
> - provide access to improved health services in the Cree communities
> - provide cost effective access to a range of educational and training opportunities in the communities (JBCCS, 1995, p.4)

In his presentation on a preliminary needs assessment of Cree communications needs, symposium advisor Greg Smith is reported as saying:

60

This symposium came about because JBCCS identified a need: *a requirement for greater cooperation and collaboration among all Cree organizations in order to keep pace with new developments in communications technology, and to do so in a cost-effective way.* (ibid, p.9)

Smith suggests that new systems and services should be supportive of Cree language and traditions. He proposes standardization of system design and equipment purchases, the capability of upgrading systems, and staged introduction of new technologies "to avoid over-investment in the wrong thing" (ibid: 12). He also stresses that coordination does not have to mean centralization.

The importance of training is also underlined:

... perhaps most importantly, major emphasis should be placed on the user- training in the use of any new systems and services and continuing support for users are extremely important. (ibid, p.12)

James Bay Cree Communications Society presented a proposal at the symposium which suggested the formation of a Cree telecommunications steering group to help facilitate communications planning for the Cree nation. The major functions of this newly formed group would be as follows:

- to follow up on identifying the needs and priorities started at the Communications Symposium
- to oversee a two year project to prioritize and upgrade telecommunications services in all Cree communities
- to provide a vehicle for information exchange among Cree organizations
- to provide training in the use of new technologies to various users
- to present the Cree position and requirements to service

providers and government

   - to make recommendations on ongoing systems for continuous upgrade of communications services for the Cree nation; and

   - to obtain funding to support these improvements "
   (JBCCS memo, December 15, 1994)

Deputy Grand Chief Kenny Blacksmith expressed his concerns about communications development for the James Bay Cree. He spoke of an elder who had raised the question as to whether the most damaging impact on the Cree had been inflicted by hydro-electric megaprojects or by television.

Blacksmith did not so much express opposition to technology as to caution against the inappropriate use of it. He raised four questions for consideration with regard to whether or not technology will be beneficial to Cree interests:

   1. What is its scale- is it bigger than we need ?
   2. Who controls it ?
   3. Who owns and has access to the technology ?
   4. What will be the impact on the Cree community and values- will these be supported or eroded ? (ibid, p.14)

Blacksmith expressed concern about the negative effects of television on the role of elders in Cree society, and about how technology and communications have flooded Cree society with non-aboriginal values. He also cautioned Cree society against letting itself be led by technology:

There is another element that determines whether a technology is appropriate, and that is need. The Cree lesson from Great Whale is that it is an advanced society that considers, before leaping into a technology, whether it is appropriate and needed, or if it is just a solution in search of a problem to solve. Where technologies are appropriate, the Crees must access and learn to use them.

Each of the four events discussed in this analysis point to the same reality, the difficulty involved in trying to respond to Cree concerns through mainstream approaches. The following chapter provides a perspective on Cree values and attitudes, and Cree approaches to communications and training.

V- Relating Cree Culture to Communications Development and Training

As previously stated, the more Cree cultural responses to mainstream influences in general are understood, the better perceptions and attitudes in relation to communications development and training will be understood. The following pages will therefore provide a brief overview of the Cree lifestyle and culture.

Cree Culture

Although the James Bay Cree of northern Quebec are being considered here as a distinct cultural group, it is important to note that they are historically linked with the Montagnais from central Quebec as well as being distinct from the Cree on the west coast of James Bay. Francis & Morantz (1983) point out that the designation "Cree" is not a historic one:

> The first written reference to the people being Cree speakers was made in 1853 in the correspondence of the missionary E.A. Watkins... No doubt this identification of the eastern James Bay people with the Cree language (a division of Algonquian) began with the missionaries at Rupert House and Fort George who used Cree prayer books translated at Moose Factory in western James Bay. Historically there is little evidence of strong intergroup ties between the east and west coast peoples. Stronger ties seem to have existed between those living on the coast and those inland... since both the Anglican Church and the federal government through their education policies fostered an association between the eastern James Bay people and the Cree to the west, the former people also came to be known as Cree. These same educational policies also aided in separating the James Bay Cree and the Montagnais, for the Cree have received their schooling in English and the Montagnais, in French. (pp.11-12)

Francis & Morantz indicate that a full account of the prehistory of the James Bay people is not possible since archaeological research in the region is quite recent. Such research, however, suggests that portions of James Bay were inhabited a minimum of five thousand years ago. The first recorded meeting between Indian and European in James Bay took place early in 1611 near the mouth of the Rupert River. Archaeological and historical records indicate continuity up to the present in population and in lifestyle of the James Bay Indians. (ibid, pp.13-16)

The subsistence lifestyle which revolves around the traditional pursuits of hunting, trapping and fishing are at the core of Cree self-definition.

The pre-contact Cree lifestyle, like that of other Algonkians, consisted of small hunting groups whose size varied throughout the year:

> Ideally, the hunting group has a core of closely related families. In fact, in its composition there is a normative and a statistical preference for kin- both primary and more distant kin, particularly affines. Great care is taken to avoid overt interpersonal hostility within the group during the winter. Leadership resides formally with the hunting territory owner, but strong deference is also generally paid to age and to reputation for religious power. During the mid-winter period when the group often lives together in one dwelling, and when considerable time is spent there, because of the short daylight period, the hunting group takes on the character of a household unit focused around the women and children. At the beginning and end of the hunting season the unity of the hunting group is based more on male communal labour and on frequent exchanges of food gifts. (Tanner,1979, p.23)

Summer has traditionally been a less productive time, spent in the settlements, with more social activities- such as feasts, dances, and weddings; and possible realignment of families between

hunting groups for the coming winter. Summer leadership also is different from that of winter. Tanner (1979) observed that in winter, leadership was in the hands of a single nominal leader in each hunting group. In summer, several individuals held power over different spheres of activity; e.g. non-Natives such as the Hudson's Bay Company manager, church ministers, the school principal, etc., and Native leaders such as the band chief, the Anglican catechists, and those with permanent jobs who have the power to hire others. (p.24)

Although the situation has changed somewhat from the time of Tanner's observations with regard to those in positions of influence within Cree settlements in summer, the essential seasonal differences still exist.

Religious practice also changes for members of hunting groups from winter to summer. In winter, traditional practices are maintained in the bush, whereas European-based religious practices are followed during summer in the communities. (Tanner,1979, p.26) Tanner views the social changes occuring as a result of European contact within a 'transformational' model:

> ... such a model is to be contrasted to a conventional 'acculturation' approach to the same situation. In the acculturation approach aboriginal traits and cultural patterns are seen as being gradually replaced by new ones introduced from the dominant society over an extended period of time. The transformational approach analyses the post-contact stage or stages as distinct from either that of the aboriginal society or of the dominant group. The post-contact society has a mode of production distinct from the aboriginal society due to technological innovations and trade acquisitions, but it is a mode of production that is also distinct from that of the dominant society. (ibid, p.66)

Tanner's transformational model is akin to Valaskakis' concept of 'cultural synthesis', as discussed in the following chapter. They both perceive the outcome of contact as a form of hybrid cultural

reality which is in itself unique, rather than as a process which gradually makes Natives indistinguishable from non-Natives.

Feit (1982) argues that, in spite of acculturating influences, Cree values have endured:

> This culturally distinctive set of beliefs and rules about the order and meaning of the world and about the rights and responsibilities men have towards each other and towards the land, which they use to distribute men, land and harvests, is clearly not dependent on either the new administrative positions or external institutions. I do not, of course, claim that there have not been changes and cross-cultural influences... but the end product is not a simple individualized possession and ownership of land or resources. There has not been a breakdown of effective group cooperation in these areas, nor has change led to the degree of individualized control of resources predicted with the acculturation model. (p.388)

Feit emphasizes that it would be misleading to consider native groups in Canada as passive victims of external influences:

> It is clear...that hunting societies have not been simply passive in the face of external changes, and that many have sought to set and meet their own objectives. In the Canadian context it is clear that native groups in general have tried specifically to retain their ties to the natural environment, their subsistence production, their social and community ties, their languages, and their belief systems, in the face of those changes whose origin lies totally, or in part, in the macro-institutions. And it is also clear that many native societies have had, under conditions found in developed nation states, a substantial measure of success to date. The data on the James Bay Cree specifically indicate that under certain conditions, hunting people are able to maintain significant parts of the communal fabric of their society and culture in the face of significant externally initiated changes and at least some dependence on international economic institutions and nation-state structures. (ibid, p.388)

67

In their concluding remarks in <u>Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay 1600-1870</u>, Francis & Morantz (1983) also stress Cree social resistance to external influences:

> All these factors altered the nature of the partnership between the Indians and the traders in their midst but it did not drastically transform their culture, as happened in other areas of the Hudson's Bay Company's domain. Greater social change occured in the period after this study ends as missionaries and governments introduced concepts and institutions developed for the southern industrial social setting... However, the James Bay Cree today continue to maintain a distinct culture still very much attuned to and dependent on living off the land. This fact strongly suggests that although events in the nineteenth century altered the Crees' relationship to the traders, they did not radically change or destroy their relationship to the land.

Attachment to the land and nature form the basis of Cree culture:

> At the ideological level the Cree hunting group is oriented towards subsistence hunting and fishing. Rituals and myths are based on an assumption of the primacy of hunting and within the hunting group religious ideology acts to a large degree to determine the social relations of production within the group. (Tanner, 1979, p.12)

The demands of their natural environment have shaped Cree social organization and spiritual beliefs:

> In this scheme of things the man is not dominant; he is a mere survivor, like every other form of life. All animals and plants, all natural forces are personalized in the Cree mind and are spoken of in the Cree language in the personal form. These natural forces make decisions, just as people do; and if their personal qualities are not respected, they can make life impossible for the hunter. (Richardson,1975, p.7)

Feit (1985) echoes this theme:

Each hunting territory is said to be "owned" by an individual "boss," whom I shall call a steward. Although the term for the relationship of stewards to their hunting territories is "ownership" in English, the relationship is not one of ownership by Western standards. The steward appoints his successor, but he cannot dispose of the land by sale or transfer. The Cree say that land was created by God and can neither be owned nor disposed of in the way in which Euro-Canadians are accustomed. The steward is therefore the temporary custodian of a portion of the community and kin-group patrimony. He is under obligation to see that the land is used in ways that sustain its productivity, and to protect the land for posterity. (pp.32-33)

The Cree sense of identity continues to be closely related to the people's relationship with the land:

For many of these Indians, the traditional stresses and adaptive responses are still very much in evidence. The seasonal pursuit of fur, fish and game determine the tenor of their life. (Chance, 1970, p.17)

This reality was one of the major arguments used by the Cree in expressing their opposition to hydro-electric development. The lawyer who led the court case for the Cree, James O'Reilly, had Billy Diamond[16] testify about the yearly cycle of the Cree lifestyle. The cycle of activity which he described included goose hunting in the fall not too far from the settlement, return to the settlement in late October to prepare to go out to the traplines, setting up camp on the traplines in groups of two or three families per camp, hunting of big game and beaver trapping until late March at which time they would return to the settlement to prepare for the spring goose hunt, goose hunting until the ice 'break up' at the end of May when they would return to the settlement, fishing from nearby rivers in July and August, and preparation for the following fall goose hunt by the end of August. (Richardson,1975, pp.33-34) Richardson comments:

Still to this day his people depended on the bush for 90 percent

of their food, since even those families who stayed in the village set snares for small game, and trapped ptarmigan in their nets. (ibid, pp.33-34)

Prior to the introduction of mass media within Cree society, communication within traditional hunting groups was achieved through various means. One means of communication was the marking of trees. This medium was used to indicate the location of the sender, how many people were in his group, where they had been and where they were going, and whether they were encountering any difficulties:

> ... if the top of the tree was somehow broken or defaced, it indicated that there had been a tragedy in the group, either illness, death, or some other misfortune. The prominence of the sign indicated its urgency.

> The person encountering such a message had to interpret its content. To estimate how recent the sign was, meant considering the weathering of the sign, the amount of resin flow, etc. The figures of numbers of persons and their direction of provenance could provide a good guide as to which hunting group was involved, to a reader who knew how large each group was and where it was wintering. To confirm that the message had been read, and to guide future readers, the hunter crossing the trail would make his own mark, of two poles set at an angle, one of them upright. The spread of the poles indicated the angle between the reader's path and the original one. (Elberg & Salisbury, coll. R. Visitor, 1976, pp.105-106)

Inter-group communication was also achieved through the re-allocation of individuals from one hunting group to another, as a result of marriage or otherwise; and through annual reunions at trading posts or fishing areas. (ibid, p.10)

A great deal more could be said about the history, culture and lifestyle of the James Bay Cree. Nonetheless, this brief examination - in addition to further information and discussion on

Cree culture and values interspersed throughout this study- should suffice as a description within which media training for the Cree can be analysed.

Cree media practitioners experience cultural tension from the dichotomy of mainstream media as both benchmark for Cree communications and as a reflection of conflicting social values.

The traditional Cree nomadic, subsistence lifestyle impacts on approaches to communications training and development in a number of ways.

To sum up key points pertaining to the Cree tradition as previously considered, it is a lifestyle consisting of small, close-knit social groups of interdependent individuals whose survival relies on the sharing of resources and avoidance of conflict. Individuals are expected to defer to the consensual will of the group. Individualistic efforts or displays of emotion which are considered disruptive to the collective well-being are discouraged. Means of discouragement traditionally utilized have been ostracization, public humiliation and gossip. Gender roles have been distinct and clearly defined, with the male as hunter-gatherer and the female as keeper of the hearth. Social activity has been based on seasonal changes in nature, particularly the movement of animals which have been the main dietary source. The traditional Cree belief system is based on the concept of respectful interaction between the hunter-gatherer subsistence lifestyle and the natural environment.

Cree Approaches to Communications Practices and Training

Culturally-derived attitudes affect communications practices and training since they are at odds with the more individualistic, competitive and intrusive approaches of mainstream me￢ ⅃. ⌐ven

71

the concept of communications as a separate, specialized field of knowledge is at odds with the more holistic Cree sense of communication as interrelated to spirituality.

Communications training so far available to the Cree has been a reflection and, in many ways, an extension of the existing dichotomy of mainstream media as both benchmark and expression of conflicting values. It has, at the same time, attempted to familiarize Cree trainees with mainstream media issues, development and practices while taking into account existing differences in values and goals. A balance has been sought between the total acceptance of mainstream approaches and the creation of unique Cree models of media concepts and applications. Whereas the former approach would be the less difficult of the two to put into practice, it would also be insensitive and inconsiderate to cultural differences. On the other hand, although the latter approach is appealing as a cultural ideal, it cannot be fully realized presently. In the meantime, communications services must be delivered while simultaneously attempting to define and provide improvement.

Mainstream media organizational and operational standards and practices cannot be integrally adopted by Cree broadcasters if cultural values and interests are to be respected. It therefore follows that a need exists to establish standards and practices which are culturally supportive. Such norms must reflect cultural characteristics such as previously discussed. Many of these cultural concerns have already been recognized by Cree organizations and as a result, standard mainstream practises have been modified to accommodate them.

One observable difference between Cree and mainstream organization relates to the annual workday calendar. The Cree calendar reflects the importance of hunting season. The regional communications society allows ten days of annual leave without pay for traditional pursuits. This leave is usually taken either in

the spring during the "goose break" period or in the fall for the moose hunt. Such periods of leave are allowed for Cree employees of all Cree organizations as well as for Cree students. Scheduling training within these time periods would be self-defeating as there would likely be a high level of absenteeism. It would also be an example of culturally-based conflicting approaches to media practices and training.

The difference in sense of time, which some Native people themselves jokingly refer to as 'Indian time', is a reflection of traditional compliance with the demands of nature. Whereas most Cree employees have adapted to the more arbitrary demands of the workplace in maintaining fixed hours, there appears to be greater flexibility and tolerance by Cree organizations in accommodating this traditional difference. This is perhaps more true of local organizations than regional entities, in broadcasting as in other areas. The regional communications society has rigid time constraints imposed upon it as a result of its distribution agreement with CBC North. On the other hand, many of the local radio stations- particularly in the smaller Cree communities- do not maintain rigid programming schedules and will occasionally suspend operations or adapt them as a result of a significant community event, e.g. 'goose break', Christmas break, regional hockey tournament, or death in the community.

There is less fragmentation of the individual on the basis of different roles, i.e as employee, family member, community member among the Cree. This relates to their more holistic cultural viewpoint compared to Western society. Consequently, there is a greater tolerance of cross-over activity of employees in relation to these other functions.

Job status is not as important among the Cree as in mainstream Canadian society. This reflects the absence of class structure within traditional society. All Cree- including the Grand Chief, Presidents and Directors of Cree organizations- are known on

a first-name basis. Although their accomplishments are recognized and respected, there is not the kind of deference accorded persons of similar status in mainstream society. Although the hierarchical organizational structure has been utilized by the Cree, there remains a greater sense of equality among employees- positions are recognized as having different responsibilities but there is less of a sense of personal importance on the basis of position. Cree leaders and managers therefore often experience some discomfort in attempting to position themselves within such a structure.

There is also cultural resistance among the Cree to the concept of 'professionalism', which also stems from a fundamental belief in class structure. It is a concept based on the belief that professionals, i.e. individuals with recognized accreditation and experience in culturally validated areas of endeavour, form a social elite best qualified to make decisions within their field. Professionalism is often assumed to apply cross-culturally, with little concern for basic differences in perceptions or values. These differences are dismissed as problems to be eradicated in order to improve functioning. This approach is defended in mainstream society on the basis of business or technology making its own demands. Professionalism is sometimes used as a defense by non-Native individuals and organizations with vested interests for denying Native people control over their own affairs. That standards and procedures are established and maintained in the best interest of existing power structures is simply not acknowledged.

The most obvious and important difference between Cree and mainstream organizations relates to language. The reinforcement of the Cree language is one of the key elements in preserving and enhancing the Cree culture. The link between language and perception in relation to the Cree has been well analysed by Harvey Feit:

We can develop an understanding of how the James Bay Cree think about hunting and about themselves and their world by

considering the different meanings conveyed by the Cree word for hunting. We will find that their concept of hunting is very different from the everyday understanding common in our own culture. However odd the Cree conception may appear to be at first, we will find that it not only has logic when understood in the context of Cree thought and action, but also that it has important affinities with the recent discoveries of ecological scientists working within our own culture. These analogies may help us to better understand Cree thought, although they will not make the Cree out to be scientists, nor transform scientists into effective hunters. (Feit,1986, p.173) [10]

This last point is an important reminder that Cree understanding of their environment is based on the actual experience of it and not merely on some abstract metaphysical concept. For the Cree, learning by doing is deeply rooted in their historical and current lifestyle and is usually the most effective means of transfering skills.

Kenneth Banks (1983, p.140), in an article on Inuit communications training, stresses the significance of language:

The greatest single obstacle to effective training is the difference between White languages (English or French) and Inuktitut. Whites have the technical knowledge of equipment operation and installation, but can impart this information only in a language which serves White perceptions.

Cree cultural attitudes toward verbal communication also have implications with regard to training:

When Crees are conversing with each other, lapses of silence are not uncomfortable. Most (but not all) Crees do not talk just for the sake of carrying on a conversation. If they have nothing further to say, they will not keep talking...

Cree communication is not necessarily linear. Sometimes, during a conversation, if someone is asked something which they have to think about carefully, they may not answer right away and may even change the subject. Later on, they may

answer in a roundabout way but both of you know what the
answer is. If there is no answer to your question, that's an
answer too. So, if you ask something and they seem to have
heard but have not responded, don't ask again. That is
considered annoying and rude. (Atkinson & Magonet,1990, p.146)

Differences in perspective affect not only the choice of items
and the extent to which they are to be covered, but also
broadcasting techniques. For example, the dreaded "dead air" of
mainstream media is usually less of a concern in Native media
applications.

As important as language is, it has also been the cause of some
difficulties with regard to functioning within organizational
systems rooted in another culture. The major problem is that those
Cree who are most firmly entrenched within traditional culture and
most fluent in the Cree language tend to be the most disfavored
within these organizations. The main reason for this is the absence
of a Cree writing system which is both functional and widely
known, and can therefore be used in the workplace. Cree syllabics
is not familiar to a large percentage of the Cree population,
particularly those with a higher level of formal education.
Consequently, the ability to communicate in English both verbally
and in writing is an important job requirement in Cree
organizations. This situation, essentially, at the same time favors
those Cree who are most familiar with the English language and
mainstream organizational systems and functioning (including the
values from which they are derived) while largely excluding Cree
who are unilingual or have limited English language knowledge
skills. For the most part, this would mean older members of Cree
society. (Wilson, 1990)

Whether or not extensive training in and use of Cree syllabics
could ever effectively correct this situation in favor of those with
greater knowledge of the language and culture is a matter of
conjecture. There have been efforts, nonetheless, to extend

76

knowledge of Cree syllabics through various courses offered either by the Cree School Board or individual bands.

Within the broadcasting field, the lack of a functional writing system with which to work has presented particular difficulties. Strong verbal skills in Cree and understanding of the Cree culture do not guarantee good programming. "Good Cree programming" could be defined in many ways; but let us simply understand it here as meaning programming which is interesting to its audience because it is entertaining, informative, and culturally-reinforcing. The ability of Cree announcer-producers to prepare and deliver such programming is hampered by the fact that available written resource material is in another language, preparation notes and texts must be written in another language, interview questions must be written in another language eventhough interviews are conducted in Cree, newscasts and announcements must be delivered by means of sight translation of English (or in some cases, French) texts. Since the announcer-producers cannot read directly from Cree texts, preparation time is necessary to find Cree terms for English words or expressions which may be difficult to translate.

Although the necessity to function in another language limits the participation of older members of the Cree population in Cree organizations, the tradition of respect for elders has resulted in efforts being made to allow for their input in directing Cree initiatives. For example, an annual Cree Elders and Youth Conference is held as a forum for the concerns of those two segments of the population. In addition, stories, legends and comments by elders are always an important part of Cree broadcast programming content. Whenever an event of great social significance occurs, Cree broadcasters tend to seek out the opinion of the experts on Cree culture- the elders.

Consulting elders helps counterbalance mainstream interpretations with their own cultural reality. Carpenter (1972) points out that the young in particular regard media environments

77

as patterns which have no separate physical existence. Consequently, like members of preliterate cultures, they find nothing incongruous about the coexistence of contraries. Getting the elders' perspective on social developments helps many younger Cree set these within a framework which allow them a stronger sense of connectedness with historical and cultural realities that define them as Cree.

Attachment to the land, a major component of Cree culture, is reflected within the current content of Cree media. It is the focus of regular radio programmes; the subject of much of their limited television programming; and would undoubtedly be the subject of much of their expanded programming in both media.

Native songs and music, both traditional and contemporary, are considered an important part of culture and heritage. The drum is particularly significant in relation to Cree traditional spirituality.

> Drumming and singing are forms of 'offerings' intended specifically to ensure successful future hunting, and are most often performed at feasts early in the season, such as the First Beaver Feast, and the Winter Feast. (Tanner, 1979, p.165)

Tanner (1979) indicates the link between traditional drumming and singing and Cree spirituality.

> In some rites, particularly the use of the drum and the singing of hunting songs, divination and magic are both present. If we define magic as a rite in which man pretends to intervene in the operation of natural forces, divination is the associated technique of revealing the state of affairs behind this imaginary causal system. The same technique (a message from man to the spirits) may in some circumstances prompt a divinatory message, and in other cases control the outcome of a hunt. (p.130)

Within a modern context, Native music continues to play an important role in reinforcing a Native sense of identity. The

success of such contemporary Native artists as *Kashtin*, the Innu (Montagnais) duo from Maliotenam, and others has been a great source of pride for Native people. At this time, however, there is a very limited quantity of recorded Cree-language songs or music by Cree artists for broadcast use[18]. Access to recording facilities in the South would be a short-term solution to meeting this need, whereas training of Cree recording technicians and/or engineers would provide on-going means of doing so. This is a training need which should be considered for the future[19].

Political Responses to Cultural Issues

The question of how Cree culture dictates communications needs is more central to this case study than political matters. Nonetheless, since access to resources necessary to meet these needs is dependent on politics, a brief perspective on some of the major political considerations in this regard follows.

Government policies on such matters as funding, access, and recognition of Native interests (as defined by Native peoples themselves) impact greatly on media developments as a whole, and subsequently, on media training development. Conflicting views and interests, both Native and non-Native, will continue to shape such future policies. Divergent cultural viewpoints will result in different political objectives.

The CRTC Call for Comments on the Review of Northern Native Broadcasting, Public Notice 1989-53, provided an opportunity for Native broadcasters and other interested parties to voice their opinions and concerns relating to the CRTC's Native Broadcasting Policy. The issues raised by this Call for Comments have a direct bearing on Native media training since policy decisions resulting

79

from such an exercise affect programming structures and content within which trainees work and for which they must prepare.

Several of the submissions to the CRTC on this matter (i.e. Roth, Valaskakis, CRARR) cautioned against implementing policy changes without further consultation throughout the North and in major Canadian centres. In its submission, the Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations (CRARR) also expressed concern over Parliament's inaction in passing proposed Bill C-136 which would entrench a Native broadcasting policy for all of Canada under a new Broadcasting Act. According to CRARR, the Bill contains wording which "signifies a legislative intent that would allow for a distinct and special regulatory framework where Aboriginal broadcasting in 1989 is concerned."

CRARR also stated that the government had committed itself to "consider the need for Aboriginal broadcasting resource development in 'the ongoing review process of existing funding programs and in the development of any new funding programs' for community radio and training." Because of the government's delay in announcing broadcasting goals and priorities, and considering the complexity of existing policy issues relating to Native broadcasting, CRARR argued that the process of calling for written public comments was "inadequate and inappropriate, if not untimely". They further stated:

> CRARR thus prefers a more open and accessible forum for public input that allows for maximal Aboriginal participation and public education. Further, CRARR fears that any results of this review may be used by other policy-makers at a later date to establish new directions and criteria for the NNBAP without other forms of public consultation and input.

CRARR proposed a joint review of Native broadcasting issues by various government departments and programs, including the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Communications, Culture, Citizenship and Multiculturalism. The CRARR submission

then recommended:

> Consequently, CRARR strongly recommends that the CRTC either hold public hearings on this issue in various regions across the country, or that it postpone further actions and decisions on the matter until the new **Broadcasting Act** is introduced in the House of Commons.

Similar views were expressed in the submission by Lorna Roth who argued in favor of "consultations and discussions with aboriginal broadcasters to ensure the entrenchment of aboriginal broadcasting in the new Broadcasting Act and the development of concrete measures to promote a distinct, comprehensive, and flexible aboriginal broadcasting system for the North and South.

JBCCS cautioned that, if the CRTC felt it advisable to develop a more precise regulatory framework for Native broadcasting, " it should only do so in order to simplify, clarify and explain." Concern was expressed about possible changes which would increase the administrative burden on Cree regional and community broadcasters:

> We do not want to see native broadcasters confined within a heavy-handed regulatory framework. We are a first service in our region, the only broadcasters with a specific mandate to broadcast entirely in Cree in order to help preserve our language and culture. Since this is a new and developing service, native broadcasting should be exempt from onerous regulatory and bureaucratic requirements.

How Native media define themselves and their role in relation to mainstream Canadian society and media is also a matter which impacts upon Native media development and training. Some potentially conflicting issues in this regard were raised by Gail Valaskakis in her submission:

> ...NNBAP surveys and northern research... suggest emerging, controversial, problems with the assumptions underlying the Northern Broadcasting Policy, the programme which

implements it, and the commercial Canadian media environment. Central to these problems are competing definitions and roles of native language and culture in regard to northern broadcasting; and the clarification and availability of 'fair access to northern broadcasting distribution systems.'

Valaskakis proposed an approach to defining Native culture and media in relation to mainstream society which would frame the discussion within a context of "rights" rather than "cultural programming":

> The processes of cultural incorporation and adaptation, which have been encouraged by satellite broadcasting of southern programs, are factors in defining current native cultures and the media products that reinforce them. The dominant culture which, in regulatory practice, defines all Canadian programming as 'cultural', must allow native nations to determine the cultural relevance of indigenous media products. Aboriginal broadcasters may go way beyond the pre-contact phenomenon non-natives tend to legitimize as 'native culture' to include the communality of radio Bingo, the creativity of local rock bands, or the involvement of municipal elections... By framing the provision of services within a context of cultural programming rather than the right to receive and provide information defined as native by the native community, broadcasting runs the risk of marginalization. This is, in turn, a more subtle but nonetheless effective support for the continued marginalization of native people themselves.

The JBCCS submission argued that "any definition of native broadcasting must be flexible and... control and ownership by native people is important." JBCCS stated:

> In the end it is the audience which decides whether the programming is 'theirs' or not. Depending on a range of factors - the host, the subject matter, the language, the producers, the distributor - the audience will accept a program as native or not.

The importance of communications policy issues for the James

Bay Cree pertains to the accessibility of resources which are relevant to and supportive of distinct culturally-determined communications goals and objectives. These goals and objectives can only be understood within a framework of cultural reality.

VI- Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Summary

As discussed in this thesis, these are the main poin;s to consider regarding Cree communications development and training needs:

1- The relationship between Cree and mainstream approaches to communications is a microcosm of the Cree-mainstream society relationship.

2- Mainstream approaches to communications development and training reflect mainstream values which conflict with Cree values.

3- The experience of Cree communications development and training efforts has been characterized by cultural tension in the areas of goal-setting, organization, media applications and training.

4- Cree cultural values and perspectives must dictate approaches to communications development and training.

5- An understanding of Cree cultural perspectives, values and attitudes is necessary to understand Cree communications development and training needs.

Conclusions

Although solutions to Cree communications development and training needs presently being offered are at best compromises with pressing reality, a long-term view of global cultural goals is necessary to determine what role communications development ought to play in their realization. Subsequently, identification of culturally-reinforcing communications training needs and required solutions should emerge as a result.

The problem with any kind of long-term planning, including that of media training, is that projections for future needs are generally made on the basis of planned extended growth or movement in the direction being followed at the time. Whereas unforeseen circumstances and developments will almost certainly present a very different situation from that envisaged beforehand, a long-term vision is nonetheless necessary in order to concentrate and coordinate efforts toward specific goals.

Emerging mainstream developments include down-sizing by governments and businesses, and communications trends such as the convergence of technologies or "information superhighway", and computer networking.

For the James Bay Cree of northern Quebec the challenge is to adapt organizational and operational systems developed outside their culture, including the management and functioning of media operations, in ways which reflect their own values and interests. The difficulty in achieving this stems from the fact that established administrative and journalistic practices which stem from conflicting values and interests are the only available models.

If Cree cultural objectives are to dictate future communications development and training, what approaches should be taken ? Following are a few recommendations.

Recommendations

Differences in cultural perspective between Cree and mainstream approaches to communications development and training can be reconciled to a large degree through the following means:

- There should be an increased awareness of the existing cultural tension between Cree and mainstream approaches and attitudes to communications.

- Mainstream developments and resources should not set the agenda fo Cree communications; they should be adapted to serve cultural goals determined by the Cree.

- Lack of familiarity and discomfort with mainstream approaches to communications should not be allowed to create a state of inertia with regard to Cree development and applications; once goals are determined, methods will emerge.

- Elders should be consulted in order to counterbalance mainstream interpretations of Cree reality, and to strengthen the sense of cultural continuity among the younger members of Cree society.

- Regional and local mandates for communications development and training should be clarified.

- There should be an open-minded and creative approach in establishing and adapting training methods, based on extensive consultation between Cree and non-Cree resource people.

- Uses of available Cree human and material resources should be maximized.

- Improvement of Cree language skills should be encouraged in

86

all aspects of Cree society, including media.

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ENDNOTES

1   Communications development for the Cree relates primarily to radio at this time since it is the principal Cree medium.

2   There is no consistency as to the usage of "Cree" or "Cress" as plural noun. "Crees" is often used in reference to a group of individuals, whereas "Cree" is most often used academically within a cultural or anthropological context as a generic term (thanks to Alan Penn for suggesting this distinction). I use "Cree" in the plural form throughout this study, except for direct quotes in which "Crees" was utilized.

3   Cree core values, especially as they relate to communications development and training, are considered in greater detail in Chapter V, Relating Cree Culture to Communications Training.

4   I was initially hired on contract by JBCCS in 1989 to coordinate a regional communications meeting (see Chapter IV), and subsequently kept on to prepare a training plan. Since then, I have become increasingly aware of the cultural tension of Cree responses to communications development and training approaches which are based mainly on mainstream concepts (my own included). I can offer no easy solutions. It is hoped nonetheless that this study will contribute to an increased awareness of the link between Cree culture and Cree communications development and training, and that from such an awareness solutions will begin to emerge

5   See Appendix for 1993 Cree population distribution by community, and map of the province of Quebec highlighting Aboriginal communities.

6   At the time of deposit of this thesis, CINI FM is off the air. No further information is available.

7   It should be kept in mind that the scope of this study is limited by the fact that I am not Cree, and that I do not have a functional knowledge of the language. Condon & Yousef underline the difficulties inherent in such a situation:

>A person who does not know the language of the culture he wishes to

better understand is hindered in two ways. First, he may be missing the source of some very important insights reflected in its language. Second, he is cut off from direct access to much information from and about the culture. There is another limitation, too. Without ability in the language (and participation in the culture), a person can never feel the impact of these cultural patterns on his own behavior, and come to appreciate the complex problems of intercultural communication. (Condon & Yousef, 1975: 256)

Even with the best of intentions and the greatest efforts toward objectivity, it is not possible for someone from one culture to interpret aspects of another culture without some degree of one's own cultural bias.

Since "objectivity" is more of an ideal than an attainable goal (a thesis topic in itself which I will not enter into here), I will provide a brief autobiographical profile to allow the reader to consider some of the factors which have influenced my perceptions of the subject matter.

I am of Franco-Ontarian origin, married to a Cree woman from Waswanipi since 1973. My wife, three children and I have been Quebec residents since 1976 At that time, we moved from Ottawa, Ontario to Hull, Quebec. In 1978, we relocated to the newly established Cree community of Waswanipi (the community was established as a result of the JBNQA of 1975; it reunited former inhabitants of Waswanipi Post, an island which had been abandoned in the early 1960's). In 1984, I left my teaching position in Waswanipi and moved to Montreal with my family.

Since 1989, I have been working for James Bay Cree Communications Society. Except for a six-month period in 1994 as Interim Executive Director, my position has been that of Community Radio Coordinator. The major functions of that position are to be part of the regional society's management team, act as liaison between the society and local Cree telecommunications associations in each of the communities, and provide training, administrative and technical support to regional and local societies.

I have been personally involved in many of the developments considered in this study. Although my experience has influenced my perception, I have attempted to analyse these developments within a sound theoretical framework.

89

8   Now known as CBC North, its Cree programming is managed and produced in Montreal.

9   NCP funding was cut in 1990. Along with the 16% reduction in NNBAP funding, this represented a cut of approximately one-third of of the JBCCS budget.

10   Ouje-Bougoumou was not included because a radio station has not yet been set up in this newly established community.   Nemaska was initially included but the training was postponed because of certain complications.

11   The Native Communications course was implemented in eight of the nine Cree communities. Since there was only one trainee from Oujé-Bougoumou, she took the training in Waswanipi

12   I was initially hired by JBCCS -on a temporary basis- to coordinate this meeting.

13   The regional meeting in Mistissini clearly established training as a priority for Cree media representatives. Consequently, my term of employment was extended as I was asked to begin work on a comprehensive training plan for both the regional society and local telecommunications associations.

        Having previously taught in communication studies in Kanehsatake for the CEGEP de Jonquiere, I was interested in examining the possibility of working out a training arrangement between JBCCS and the institute. I was cautioned by Greg Smith, the communications consultant working with JBCCS, that it would be a mistake to 'parachute' an existing training programme onto the Cree, without looking closely at their specific needs or at training alternatives, for the sake of expediency.

14   Groups were given colour designations.   As part of the 'yellow group' , I was asked to take notes and report for the group. The responses given by the delegates within my group to the question of training priorities were very similar to those of delegates within the other groups. By and large, delegates believed that training of new candidates and upgrading of existing employees were of equal importance. Some of the suggestions made within my

group were that outside organizations doing business with Cree organizations could provide valuable work experience for Cree youth by hiring them, mandatory early retirement within Cree organizations would open up jobs for younger people, and seniority should be recognized as well as education.

The distinction between 'education' and 'training' was also defined much in the same way by most groups, education meaning long-term and general. training meaning short-term, immediate, and geared to specific skills. The 'yellow group' suggested that the most immediate need was for training, and education is needed for more long-term goals. Such a distinction is not reflected within the JBCCS training plan. If the above definition were applied, the Long-Term Training Programme would then have to be considered as an 'educational' programme. The distinction appears relevant insofar as assigning responsibility to different organizations or departments for either education or training programmes is concerned. It may become a more significant issue for JBCCS when the Long-Term Training becomes a more immediate concern. The Society may then have to deal with the Student Services department of the Cree School Board which has the mandate to oversee post-secondary education rather than Adult Education Services which oversees work-related training.

15   Long-Term Training has not been implemented by JBCCS since it was decided that training priorities needed to be reviewed following the 1994 Cree Communications Symposium.

16   Billy Diamond was Chief of Rupert House (now known as Waskaganish) at the time of this court hearing in 1972. He later became the first Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec, or 'Grand Chief'. He is presently... once again... Chief of his community, Waskaganish.

17   Feit (1986: 173-174) elaborates on this point as follows:

Nitao, the root of the Cree term that is roughly translated into English as "hunting, fishing, and trapping in the bush," is found in a series of words related to hunting activities. At least five basic meanings are associated with this root term for hunting: to see something or to look at something; to go to get or to fetch something; to need something; to want something; and to grow or continue to grow.

... To get an animal in the Cree view does not mean to encounter it by chance,

91

but to receive the animal. The animal is given to the hunter. A successful hunt is not simply the result of the intention and the work of the hunter; it is also the outcome of the intention and actions of the animals. Thus the Cree conception of hunting involves a complex and moral relationship in which the outcome of the hunt is a result of the mutual efforts of the hunter and the environment. This is a subtle and accurate ecological perspective.

It may seem odd that animal kills should be conceptualized as gifts, and it is important therefore to note that Cree do not radically separate the concepts of "man" and "animals"...

18   Cree-language recordings include CBC recordings of Morley Loon in the 1970's and of Kenny Mianscum in 1992.

19   A recording studio will be included in the Cree Cultural Centre which is planned for Oujé-Bougoumou.

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APPENDIX

LES/THE NATIONS

Ivujivik
Salluit
Kangiqsujuaq
Akulivik
Quaqtaq
Povungnituk
Kangirsuk
Quaqtaq
Aupaluk
Kangiqsualujjuaq
Tasiujaq
Kuujjuaq
Inukjuak
Umiujaq
Kuujjuarapik
Whapmagoostui
Kawawachikamach
Lac-John
Schefferville
Matimekosh
Chisasibi
Wemindji
Eastmain
Pakua Shipi
Waskaganish
Nemiscau
La Romaine
Uashat &
Maliotenam
Mingan
Havre-
Saint-Pierre
Natashquan
Sept-Îles
Mistissini
Waswanipi
Oujé-Bougoumou
Chibougamau
Pikogan
Amos
Val-d'Or
Sac-
Comeau
Betsiamites
Gaspé
Obedjiwan
Les Escoumins
Gesgapegiag
Timiscaming
Lac-Simon
Chicoutimi
Restigouche
Winneway
Mashteuiatsh
Grand-Lac-Victoria
Cacouna et
Whitworth
Ville-Marie
Weymontachie
Wendake
(Village-des-
Hurons)
Rivière-
du-
Loup
Hunter's
Point
Rapid Lake
Manouane
La Tuque
Québec
Kebaowek
Mont Laurier
Maniwaki
Trois-Rivières
Wôlinak
Hull
Kanesatake
Odanak
Montréal
Kahnawake
Akwesasne

Legend

- ⌂ INUIT
- △ ABÉNAQUIS/ABENAK
- ◹ ALGONQUINS
- ◿ ATTIKAMEKS
- ▲ CRIS/CREES
- ◠ HURONS-WENDAT
- MALÉCITES/MALECIT
- MICMACS
- MOHAWKS
- ◬ MONTAGNAIS
- NASKAPIS

Canada

Population indienne et inuit au Québec
Indian and Inuit Population of Quebec
1993

Nation / Collectivité Nation / Community	Total	Résidents Residents	Non-résidents Non-residents
ABÉNAQUIS/ABENAKIS			
Odanak	1 365	258	1 107
Wôlinak	303	85	218
Total	**1 668**	**343**	**1 325**
ALGONQUINS			
Grand-Lac-Victoria	293	275	18
Hunter's Point	171	6	165
Kebaowek	472	175	297
Lac-Simon	1 043	870	173
Maniwaki	2 014	1 289	725
Pikogan	658	435	223
Rapid Lake	497	397	100
Timiskaming	1 179	456	723
Winneway	515	267	248
Total	**6 842**	**4 170**	**2 672**
ATTIKAMEKS			
Manouane	1 502	1 302	200
Obedjiwan	1 655	1 449	206
Weymontachie	1 002	823	179
Total	**4 159**	**3 574**	**585**
CRIS/CREES			
Chisasibi	2 609	2 493	116
Eastmain	457	447	10
Mistassini	2 919	2 368	551
Nemiscau	297	290	7
Oujé-Bougoumou	n. d.	n. d.	n. d.
Waskaganish	1 765	1 426	339
Waswanipi	1 224	876	348
Wemindji	1 025	911	114
Whapmagoostui	531	516	15
Total	**10 827**	**9 327**	**1 500**
HURONS-WENDAT			
Wendake (Village-des-Hurons)	2 589	966	1 623
Total	**2 589**	**966**	**1 623**
MALÉCITES/MALECITES			
Cacouna et/and Withworth	307	0	307
Total	**307**	**0**	**307**
MICMACS			
Gaspe	424	0	424
Gesgapegiag	876	430	446
Restigouche	2 544	1 611	933
Total	**3 844**	**2 041**	**1 803**
MOHAWKS			
Kahnawake	7 659	6 428	1 231
Kanesatake	1 720	1 116	604
Total	**9 379**	**7 544**	**1 835**

Nation / Collectivité Nation / Community	Total	Résidents Residents	Non-résidents Non-residents
MONTAGNAIS			
Betsiamites	2 657	2 299	358
La Romaine	800	792	8
Les Escoumins	359	175	184
Mashteuiatsh	3 815	1 619	2 196
Matimekosh	625	584	41
Mingan	394	383	11
Natashquan	671	633	38
Pakua Shipi	192	188	4
Uashat et Maliotenam	2 673	2 132	541
Total	**12 186**	**8 805**	**3 381**
NASKAPIS			
Kawawachikamach	488	444	44
Total	**488**	**444**	**44**
Liste generale / General List	273	1	272
(Indiens inscrits et non associes a une nation / Status Indians not associated with a Nation)			
Indiens inscrits / Status Indians [1]	**52 562**	**37 215**	**15 347**
INUIT			
Akulivik	384	355	29
Aupaluk	132	130	2
Chisasibi	65	56	9
Inukjuak	1 075	1 022	53
Ivujivik	154	153	1
Kangiqsualujjuaq	443	435	8
Kangiqsujuaq	360	355	5
Kangirsuk	382	355	27
Kuujjuaq	1 246	1 195	51
Kuujjuarapik	485	453	32
Povungnituk	630	622	8
Quaqtaq	242	236	6
Salluit	799	781	18
Taqpangajuk	63	0	63
Tasiujaq	119	117	2
Umiujaq	335	284	51
Inuit [2]	**6 914**	**6 549**	**365**
Total global / Grand-Total	**59 476**	**43 764**	**15 712**