1   Recap – Frameworks of Participation

- Participation is one of the dominant concepts on which our understanding of community media is founded.

- Media participation, to adapt Herbert Blumer, "seems destined to shape increasingly the framework of human group life" (Blumer, 1990, p. 3), with participative media forms, and the participative media economy, undergoing prodigious growth and spreading into all parts of social life.

- Participation is assumed to be a major agent of social transformation.

- In order to understand what the participative process is, and in what way it is relevant to concepts of community media, we must first be able to identify it **comprehensibly** and make **reliable observations** and **statements** that produce a clear sense of what the concept and the practice of participation actually refer to.

1.1   Adapting Blumer

According to Herbert Blumer (Blumer, 1990), there are two essential considerations to be accounted for when examining social processes such as participation.

- Firstly, we have to understand the scholarly task by studying, analysing and explaining the **social role** of participation.

- While secondly, we have to make clear how the study of **participation as a social process can guide us through the practical problems of social change** that develop in the midst of group life.

This means recasting our fundamental approach to participation as it involves challenging the traditional scholastic approach that views the mechanisms of participation as "a causative agent that produces specific kinds of social consequence" (Blumer, 1990, p. 145).

- Participation is held as a fundamental set of ideas that are the agents and authors of specific social consequences.

- Participation is predominantly studied on the basis that it is possible to identify the representative characteristics of participation, and thus to ground these characteristics into a general set of social conditions and occurrences that take place as the products of the process of participation.

- Research and scholarly concern are more often focussed on the beginning and endpoints of a process of social change, but tend to ignore, or fail to account for, the social processes that lie between.

- Forms of social study give an account of what participation is in principle, and as it can be linked with various end products, but there is little that accounts for, or explains, the features that exist in between.

As Blumer suggests,

> "If positive relations are found… it is believed that the study has established the causal influence of [participation]. The given conditions that are found are regarded as the product of [participation]" (Blumer, 1990, p. 46).

The hazard, according to Blumer, takes the form of two basic deficiencies:

- Firstly, a failure to account for the factors that may provide, by themselves, the social conditions that are attributed to participation.

- And secondly, a failure to understand what happens when the participative media process enters into contact with existing group life.

Blumer suggests that a shift in the research process is necessary, one that **pays attention to the wider range of social factors that might otherwise be contributory to social change**, rather than the determinative idea that it is the factors associated with participation alone that regulate social change.

2   Participatory Ethic

Traditional critical media studies approaches have accounted for community, alternative and collaborative media as:

- **Power:** As the *product* of a social order imbued with distinct, though hidden power relations.

- **Ecology:** The green and ecological framework reminds us of the needs of the biosphere.

- **Civic Engagement:** The potential for community and collaborative media to fulfil a role in supporting the civic realm.

- **Technological Change:** That technology has a significant underpinning to the forms of communication that we use in social interaction;

- **Changes in Structuration:** Leading to potential forms and social structures that move on from the centralised and linear forms of the past,

We should remember, however, that the **ethical** and **political** (i.e. tactical) **lifeworlds** that people operate in are framed in notably different ways (Henderson, 2013).

- The challenge is to make the shift from one lexicon to another.

- This is found in the way that we accommodate the practical functions of organisation and supervision that support and enable public and ethical regimes of practice-based participation, particularly as they emerge and play-out of their environmental or civil dispositions.

We can map out these alternative dispositions and modes of engagement:

Table 1 Participative Framework

Social Arrangement	Form of Participation	Main Media Forms	Aims	Ideal Community Type	Mode of Engagement
Hegemonic	Counter-Force	Oppositional	Emancipation	Discursive	**Activist**
Ecological	Pluralist	Diverse	Sustainability	Holistic	**Steward**
Civic	Representation	Public Sphere	Association	Deliberative	**Representative**
Techno-centric	Generative	Spreadable	Globalisation	Networked	**Collaborator**
Rhizomatic	Ironic	De-Territorialised	Fluidity	Nomadic	**Cipher**
Commercial	Customer	Sticky	Profit	Market	**Consumer**
Administrative	Instrumental	System	Efficiency	Information	**Inspector**
Managerial	Subordinate	Organisation	Perpetuation	Hierarchical	**Devotees**

a) There is no ultimate goal to be aimed for in promoting and articulating community and collaborative media participation that is determined by any of the accounts listed so far, other than the immediate practical concerns of engagement and accomplishment, and coupled with the management of personal, civic and environmental balance and sustainability.

b) This does not mean that a sense of social justice is excluded from the nexus of possibilities that one might want to see enacted through community and collaborative media.

c) Rather, this shift to the ethical and the tactical simply puts participation it in its proper position, recognising that it is only through *continuous conversation* and the *redescription* of the *vocabularies* and *symbolic frames*, i.e. the interplay of congruent and incongruent vocabularies (Rorty, 1982, 1989), that it will be possible to support change.

d) As Richard Rorty reminds us, "the terms used by the founders of a new form of cultured life will consist largely in borrowings from the vocabularies of the culture which they are hoping to replace" (Rorty, 1989 p.56).

e) It is commonplace, according to Rorty, that we will begin to have doubts about what we are doing and the way that we explain to ourselves what it is that we are doing.
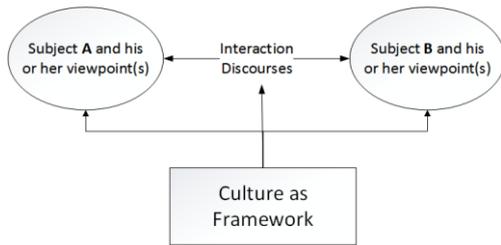
f) So at some point the stories that we tell ourselves about what we do and why we do it will become "incommensurable" with those we have used previously (Rorty, 2009, p. 386).

g) We are bound together by the "common vocabularies and common hopes" that our vocabularies and stories tell about the future, as well as the "outcomes which compensate for present sacrifices" (Rorty, 1989 p.86).

h) So, if we can understand the differences that these vocabularies and stories make, then we may be able to understand how the aims and hopes for the future that we hold are going to be brought about.

i) So, in undertaking these practical observations, it would not be necessary to introduce further concepts of orientation that help to frame the practice of agents acting in their lifeworlds, beyond the participative experiences found and defined by the *agents themselves* acting in those lifeworlds.

j) Therefore, the relevant question remains, is participation an agent of social change? And the only way to answer this question is to observe people taking up and making roles, and thus participating in social life.

3   Group Life

"Cultures, as shared systems of meaning and practice, shape our hopes and beliefs; our ideas about family, identity, and society; our deepest assumptions about being a person in this world" (Boellstorff, Nardi, Pearce, & Taylor, 2012, p. 1).

"From this point of view we can say that [social life can be] distinguished through viewing human actions as elements of wider figurations: mutual dependency (dependency being a state in which the probability that the action will be undertaken and the chance of its success change in relation to what other actors are, do or may do). Sociologists ask what consequences this has for human actors, the relations into which we enter and the societies of which we are a part" (Bauman & May, 2001, p. 5).

"Thinking sociologically is a way of understanding the human world that also opens up the possibility for thinking about the same world in different ways" (Bauman & May, 2001, p. 5).

(Flick, 2009, p. 65).

3.1 Generic Social Processes

"People in all manner of associations find themselves coming to terms with a relatively generic set of processes. These include the matters of:

1. acquiring perspectives;
2. achieving identity;
3. doing activity (performing activities, influencing others, making commitments);
4. developing relationships;
5. experiencing emotionality; and
6. achieving communicative fluency.

We may expect that people participating in any setting may be differentially attentive to these dimensions of association on both an overall, collective basis and over time. However, by attending to each of these sub-processes, researchers may more completely approximate the multiplistic features of particular roles (and relationships) that the participants in those settings experience" (Prus, 1999, p. 144).

"This overview of generic social processes is organised around three very broad concepts:

a) participating in situations,
b) engaging subcultural life-worlds, and
c) forming and coordinating associations.

These three themes should not be seen as stages or sequences but, instead, represent interrelated sets of processes that people implement on more or less simultaneous basis as they do things in the community" (Bauman & May, 2001, p. 142).

"The task before us, therefore, involves:

a) attending to the various **life worlds or subcultural realms that *the participants* distinguish** and

b) establishing **intimate familiarity with those participating in these life-worlds** so that we might be better able to acknowledge and **identify the situated and emergent interlinkages, disjunctures, and irrelevancies** that people experience in the course of conducting their affairs.

Minimally, this requires that social scientists suspend the pursuit for cultural holisms or overarching rationalities, or at least approach these with exceedingly great caution, even in what may seem the most simplistic of human communities" (Prus, 1999, p. 136).

"Hence, even when analysts focus on people's participation in specific settings, it is important that analysts be mindful of these overlapping life-worlds and the ways in which people manage their multiple realms of involvement" (Prus, 1999, p. 143).

4   Blumer's Nine Lines of Entry into Group Life

4.1   Points of Contact with Group Life

- In seeking a realistic and workable understanding of participation as a social process, and how it might potentially act as an agent of social change, it is necessary to identify those features that can be traced as they work in the collective life of specific groups.

- In Blumer's analysis of the process of industrialisation he identifies nine lines of contact and entry along which social change is induced, which can be adapted and used here in developing our understanding of how the process of media participation works.

As Blumer explains, 'these nine dimensions may be thought of as a framework inside which group life must fit" (Blumer, 1990, p. 42). These are:

1. "A structure of occupations and positions…
2. The filling of occupations, jobs and positions…
3. A new ecological arrangement…
4. A regime of industrial work…
5. A new structure of social relations…
6. New interests and new interest groups…
7. Monetary and contractual relations…
8. Goods produced by the manufacturing process…
9. Patterns of income of industrial personnel" (p.42-46).

4.2   Blumer's Nine Lines of Entry

A summary table can help to highlight the distinctions and differences between each line of entry and what its potential impact might be.

Proposition: *The social process of participation remains neutral, and is therefore uncoupled from any determinate logic that coerces particular outcomes.*

4.3 Structure of Occupations and Positions

- Positional relationships give way to new social differentiations.
- Social positions associated with modes of life in the group arise.
- This is a new social arrangement of people.
- Identification of codes of living that grow around these new arrangements.
- Look for differences in definition and expectation.
- There is no uniform structure.
- There is no determinative causality or coercive structure.
- A range of alternative possibilities emerge.
- Outcomes vary.

There is nothing inherent in the particular process that explains the social character of these occupations and positions, because, as Blumer points out, "one cannot find the explanation of these matters by going back to the bare [socialising] process" (Blumer, 1990, p. 62).

4.4 Filling of Occupations, Jobs and Positions

- Assignment of social roles and positions follows established lines of social discrimination.
- New modes of social formation disrupt assumed patterns of social discrimination.
- How new roles are explained, codified and allocated can be a sign of disruption.
- The process of role allocation can be a focal point for conflict and tension.
- The process of role allocation can be rigid or flexible and free flowing.
- Other factors might account for patterns of role recruitment.

Recognising the range of alternative possibilities that are faced by the members of the social group who are defining and making sense of these possibilities for role recruitment and allocation.

4.5 New Ecological Arrangements

- Once role allocation is underway, people have to be situated in places.
- New roles give form to new ecological arrangements.
- These new role allocations require new governance arrangements.
- Different situations will give rise to different types of disputes as they are related to different schemes of situated operation.
- The conditions for role allocation vary in different situations.
- The process of participation cannot be used to explain the conditions of living that are found in social life, the locations that they are enacted in, or the relations between people who adopt its roles and positions.

The question, according to Blumer, is that we should seek to understand how the participative media process affects the "ecological arrangement of people" (Blumer, 1990, p. 65).

4.6 Regime of Participative Work

- Governance and policy arrangements of work can vary between situations.
- Patterns of work will vary in different situations.
- Governance and resolution of disputes over patterns of work will be set by the experiences of the situation.
- Alternative forms of participative work will emerge, and will be enacted and codified given the needs and definitions of the existing situations.

Participation as a social process is itself neutral and therefore has no alignment with any form of social organisation or governance developed by producers and practitioners.

4.7 New Structure of Social Relations

- New groups will be brought into being.
- Relationships will be developed between existing groups and new groups.
- The character of these groups will be divergent and established in their interactions.
- Each group or class of individuals creates images of one another.
- They will develop attitudes and dispositions towards one another.
- They will establish status relationships between one another.
- They will build codes of action towards each other.
- They will lay down lines of demand and expectations on one another.
- Relationships may be stable or unstable.
- A variety of social structures will be developed.

In forming networks of social relations that are integral to the process of enhanced participation in media networks, nothing about these networks is uniform, and in any given instance there will be clear indications of heterogeneity, diversity and differentiation, or they may be marked by homogenous characteristics that support a sense of common community membership. Social differences can be an identifier of common virtues, or they can be a discriminator of cultural difference.

4.8 New Interests and New Interest Groups

- Different forms of interest activity will be at play.
- Forms of interest activity will show the decision-making process in action.
- Interests are defined in negotiation with other agents and interest groups.
- The way positions are lodged in the social world shape and define the relationships between interest groups.
- Interests are defined through evaluative interaction as related to the social setting.
- No interest has complete control either externally or internally of the definitions.
- Membership of interest groups is formed against a background of alternative possibilities.
- Many interest group formations may be developed.

The approach taken here suggests that the interests of those who are interacting in social settings, do so through a process of evaluations of each other's positions as they are related to the social settings. The tendency is to form interest groups that give and show a focus of organisation related to the demands and expectations of those groups, amidst a wide range of alternative and competing interests that operate and interact simultaneously.

4.9 Monetary and Contractual Relations

- Social structuring is both formal and informal.
- Social structuring is both impersonal and quasi-legal.
- The scope of relationships will vary from instance to instance.
- Contractual relationships will vary between forms of participation and forms of settings.
- Contractual relationships are negotiated and vary according to the circumstances.
- Negotiation implies potential alternatives.

There is nothing built-in to the participative process that controls the character of these negotiations, or which will determine the outcomes of these negotiations. Instead, the resolution of these negotiations will be worked out in a series of judgements and acts of will, relative to which a wide variety of alternative solutions may be possible.

4.10   Goods Produced by the Participative Process

- Goods and products enter the world physically and symbolically.
- The lines of social exchange will vary, some will be emergent and open, others will be established and closed.
- The flow of goods and products represent patterns of social organisation.
- New patterns of goods and products might undermine existing patterns, or promote new patterns of social organisation.
- New patterns of distribution will emerge alongside existing patterns and social formations.

New modes of living with different standards of income and exchange may be facilitated in interesting and significant ways, but they will not be finalised or set by them. The negotiations and differentiated positions that are taken up will remain fluid and open as new consumption patterns take different forms in different settings.

4.11   Patterns of Income of Participative Personnel

- Money is a sign of social enablement or disablement.
- Expectations about money, and what it can be used for, and how it can be distributed, vary.
- Money is a mediating concept of changing forms of social organisation.
- Patterns of accumulation and exchange vary greatly.
- People will want to do different things with money, or will want to stop other people from doing things with money.
- Economic expectations are fluid and will change.

Money has a significant role to play in the change that is facilitated by social groups, but there is no determinative feature of money in itself that precludes different financial approaches. As people's expectations of money change, so do the lines of actions and association that are formed.

4.12   Participation Plays Out in Group Life

The greater the opportunities for participation in practice that are offered up, the greater the potential variety for social change that accompanies them. However, the participative practices "do not determine what the specific social changes will be" (Blumer, 1990, p. 74).

- Blumer's outline of the lines of entry into group life affords us the opportunity to establish how the process of participation plays out in social situations, from which it is then possible to define, label and examine the forms of these arrangements, the forms of operation in practice, and subsequently the type of social practices that are enacted between agents who negotiate these different activities and accomplishments.

- The variety of situations that can now be examined as a **dynamic process of interaction**, can subsequently **focus on the codes of living** that people refer to and enact, especially as these are bound with different expectations and dispositions of the potential routines of living.

- The **on-going process of co-option of others** into these new and emerging roles, that are borne in the participative process, with their reinforcements or displacements of existing social arrangements, illustrate how social change is manifest in group life.

- The way that we go about accounting for and explaining the ongoing renewal and sustainability of these roles and relationships, especially as they are understood to be enfranchising or disenfranchising to individuals or groups, is **tied with an emerging and growing sense of entitlement** that can be found in the routines that play out as **permissible codes of action** that are negotiated between groups.

- This playing out can usefully be recorded and seen in the accounts and records that are kept or made of these negotiations. For the most part, these negotiations remain informal and *ad-hoc*, though the records of formal arrangements and agreements between groups can be rich and illustrative, as are the patterns of consumption and use of media that displace the existing social arrangements and practices.

Table 1 Blumer's Lines of Entry

Lines of Entry	Arrangement	Operation	Social Practice
Structure of occupations & positions	Social arrangement – hierarchical or horizontal?	Social structure – differentiation or similarity	Codes of living, expectations & dispositions
Filling of Occupations, jobs & positions	Allocated roles	Recruitment process	Co-option, reinforcement or displacement
New ecological arrangements	Situational arrangements	Consultation	Accountability and sustainability
Regimes of work	Social governance	Dispute resolution	Enfranchisement & disenfranchisement
New structures of social relations	Interpersonal or group relationships	Cultural interactions	Permissible codes of action
New interests & new interest groups	Communities of interest	Sharing and recognition of interests	Negotiations between interest groups.
Monetary & contractual relations	Contractual liabilities & resource distribution	Negotiations and contractual agreements	Records and accounts of agreements
Goods produced by the manufacturing process	Symbolic and physical production	Distributional arrangements	Consumption and use
Patterns of income of industrial personnel	Social exchange	Innovation and realignment	Displacement of established practices

5   Participative Roles Framework

- Can we develop a framework or analytical model that might more easily guide future work in this field as *an off-the-shelf* and *ready-to-go* approach.

- A simple way to anticipate the **ongoing process of community media practice** is to **identify the role-distinctions that participants and advocates in community media use** to frame their experience, define the situations and lifeworlds that they are part of, and account for the lines of action that they wish to pursue, thus achieving their desired accomplishments.

- Specifically, we will better **understand what participants in community media** *do* **in relation to the roles that they adopt and act out**, because a role, and the labelling of a role, represents an actor who is seeking to negotiate potential lines of action that they intend to fulfil and accomplish their goals.

- It is useful, therefore, to **look at other social and behavioural models**. This is open to extensive further investigation and study.

- A useful route for any future study, because it is adaptable and recognises the **process-based nature of social interaction**.

- The **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator** model of personality types and role dispositions, might prove useful as a framework for the contextualisation of the social roles that can be observed in community media situations.

- Consider these ideas on a preliminary basis, as a rule-of-thumb that might indicate how further studies of community media participation practices might be organised.

5.1   Role Types

- The functional principle of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicators [MBTI], which is informed by traditions of Jungian psychology, are based on observations and noticeable traits of comprehension, sensation processing and cognitive processing (Briggs-Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 2003; Hogg & Vaughn, 2008; Keirsey, 1998; Lauer & Handel, 1983; Shibutani, 2000).

- These personality traits are laid out as a set of potential opposites and combinations that work as a *process* to provide a distinct and observable set of dispositions towards *extroversion*/*introversion*, *sensing*/*intuition*, *thinking*/*feeling*, and *perception*/ *judgement*.

- There are sixteen personality types in total, which are represented in four main groups: *The Artisan*, *The Guardian*, *The Rationalist*, and *The Idealist*.

- The distribution of people who share or relate to these characteristics in society is not uniform, with some areas more prevalent than others. For example, 40% of the population are said to exhibit behavioural characteristics that align with *The Artisan* type personality.

- This indicates, to put this distinction crudely, that a significant proportion of the population are focussed on undertaking tasks spatially and temporally through concrete experience, thinking about matters of concern in the present, and ensuring that social groupings work harmoniously in practice.

- Contrast this with *The Rationalist* type, who form less than 5% of the population, and we can observe that those who have a disposition towards abstract thought and planning are a minority in social groups.

- Though these rational-types often find themselves in leadership roles in organisations because of their disposition towards abstract models and schemes that encompass the numerous lines of action that an organisation might pursue.

- It is a truism to say that some people are better at planning and others are better at executing and doing.

Table 2 MBTI Role Types

ARTISAN	GUARDIAN	RATIONAL	IDEALIST
Promoter (ESTP)	Supervisor (ESTJ)	Fieldmarshal (ENTJ)	Teacher (ENFJ)
Crafter (ISTP)	Inspector (ISTJ)	Mastermind (INTJ)	Counsellor (INFJ)
Performer (ESFP)	Provider (ESFJ)	Inventor (ENTP)	Champion (ENFP)
Composer (ISFP)	Protector (ISFJ)	Architect (INTP)	Healer (INFP)

- The attractiveness of the MBTI framework is that it allows us to comprehend the significance of perceptive differences and cognitive diversity that might otherwise go unrecognised, and therefore, the range of expectations and forms of interaction that different social actors might bring to the role that they feel comfortable playing, and indeed to which they are disposed.

- This is not a deterministic view of social behaviour that suggests that our dispositions are iron-fast and pre-structured, rather, they indicate that our sense of agency and intelligence are interactive and socially related.

- We might be informed by these dispositions, but we are not bound by them.

- This fits with the pragmatist proposition that "ideas, words, and language are not mirrors which copy the 'real' or 'objective' world but rather tools with which we can cope with 'our' world" (West, 1989, p. 201).

- Many rational types, for example, might have excellent systems comprehension skills, but they might be poor empathisers with other people in their social networks, and thus unable to understand why others, who are drawn to different forms of social action, do not comprehend the plans and the scheme that *Rationals* have in mind.

- Each type of person will excel in different ways, and as long as their preferred cognitive disposition is understood, acknowledged and recognised in the social processes that facilitate organisations and social practices, then they are comfortable and can undertake tasks proficiently.

- One common example that is often given which demonstrates these issues, relates to the teaching profession. Most teachers are said to be drawn from *The Guardian* type, and indeed, almost wholly from *The Inspector* and *The Supervisor* type roles.

- Consequently, there is a lack of role models and learning activities that *Artisan* types can access and assimilate in schools. Practical and spatial activities that can guide an *Artisan's* learning, in a way that they are disposed to comprehend, are often neglected.

- This is because there is a lack of suitable teachers with *Artisan* characteristics, whose dispositions are focused on action, operation and activity.

- With the supposed focus of schools increasingly on abstract concepts, it is no wonder that so many young people struggle to engage with a curriculum that is supposedly academic focussed, but which in practice is relevant only to a minority portion of the population.

5.2   Community Media Role Types

- The framework of roles in community media that was identified earlier, draws from the general literature relating to community media, and suggested that there are different dispositions in community media practices.

- This included the following roles, which have been further expanded to include a suggestion of what motivates the people undertaking these roles, and how this would be observable in community media situations:

Table 3 Community Media Roles

Role	Motivation	Action
The Activist	Promotes social change	Campaigning & political action
The Steward	Ensures continuity	Support for institutions & guiding social change by degree
The Representative	Encompasses all views	Speaking on behalf of others
The Collaborator	Ensures active participation	Getting people working together
The Cipher	Uses established & accumulated knowledge	Relating a pre-determined message
The Consumer	Uses & incorporates what is at hand	Combines and uses media products at hand
The Inspector	Ensures things are ready to work	Checks that work is undertaken at appropriate standards
Devotees	Plays a role in the existing social order	Follows figureheads and leaders

- Many questions are raised by what is meant by each of these role characteristics, how they work in practice, and what the implications might be for an understanding of community media if the starting point of any future analysis is undertaken in relation to different role frameworks that are identified.

- Attention might be given to the interaction of different social processes, as they are embodied in a set of roles that individuals assume and act out in their social and organisational situations, rather than simply as they might be said to operate discursively in the institutional arrangements, the textual products, the policy arrangements, and the inherited scholarly debates that preceded empirical examination.

- This is why Herbert Blumer insists that an empirical researcher should put preceding concepts and ideas out of their mind before they enter the field, and that they should not attempt to hypothesise or instrumentalise the situation before them.

- Consequently, if we are able to adapt the MBTI framework, or others like it, we may conclude that a different set of social processes are at play in the situations that we examine, and that these processes are relative in their operation.

- We can potentially find out more about what is taking place in practice as they signify the contours of the social field, and as they represent changes in the established or emerging configurations of these fields.

- The symbolically interactionist engagements that people use and adapt to make sense of the world are never fixed, but are subject to an ongoing degree of change that is complex and widespread.

- As John Dewey suggests, intelligence is "both a form of experience, and a facilitator in experience" (West, 1989, p. 74).

- People must be able to negotiate their lines of action for future accomplishments, and one way that this is achieved is in the adoption of embodied social roles.

- If we follow the people who play out these roles, and listen to the definitions and the explanations of how they operate and situate themselves as **role-makers**, as **role-takers**, or as **role-disrupters**, and so on, then we will be able to better understand the processes that are driving social change in action.

Table 4 Community Media MBTI Roles

MBTI Role		Disposition	Action	Social Role
Artisan	Operator Entertainer Playmate Liberator Negotiator	Present – Hedonistic Future – Optimistic Past – Cynical Place – Here Time - Now	Harmonic Tactical Artcraft Artistic	**Promoter** **Crafter** **Composer** **Performer**
Guardian	Administrator Conservator Helpmate Socialiser Stabiliser	Present – Stoical Future – Pessimistic Past – Fatalistic Place – Gateways Time - Yesterday	Associative Logistical Commerce & Material Dependable	**Supervisor** **Inspector** **Provider** **Protector**
Rational	Coordinator Engineer Mindmate Individuator Visionary	Present – Pragmatic Future – Sceptical Past – Relativistic Place – Intersections Time - Intervals	Deductive Strategic Sciences & Systems Ingenious	**Field-Marshall** **Mastermind** **Inventor** **Architect**
Idealist	Mentor Advocate Soulmate Harmoniser Catalyst	Present – Altruistic Future – Credulous Past – Mystical Place – Pathways Time - Tomorrow	Inductive Diplomatic Humanities Empathetic	**Teacher** **Councillor** **Champion** **Healer**

- This table maps out some of these dispositions in general terms (Adapted from Keirsey, 1998, p. 62), though there is a considerable amount of study, investigation and explanation needed to orient and validate this framework in the context of community media.

- It does, however, indicate that this kind of framework might be a productive and informative route on which to guide future studies of community media, especially given the challenge in illustrating and defining any kind of unified or objective social process that might be said to embody or underpin participation in community media.

- To repeat and adapt Blumer's assertion, participation is a neutral social process, and so we are drawn, as a consequence, to the fact that the people who define, adopt and play out these roles, and thereby endorse different lines of action in pursuant of social accomplishment (the very indicator of social change), are not neutral, and that they are themselves the agents and drivers of social change.

- This, then, is the ongoing process that is in need of further study.

> *The social process of participation is neutral, but people's objectives are goal driven and therefore divergent, and this is what qualifies as social change.*

5.3 Reflections on Interviews - Process-Based Outcomes

When we examine the roles that advocates and champions, and others, undertaken in community media life-worlds, we have to keep in mind that:

- Each set of individuals and advocates have a different set of expectations and way of explaining the values that underscored what they are attempting to accomplish.

- They will be mindful of the potential for different alternative routes that might be available, and which they might negotiate with others.

- They will be mindful that subsequent forms of organisation might vary in what is best suited to achieve their desired level of functional sustainability, especially within the resource boundaries they perceived as available to them.

- As a recognised form of organisational practice, then, what advocates will describe cannot be defined in terms of orthodox instrumental planning and modelling, such as a managerial accountability model, or a structured learning model, as defined by linear literacy models.

- Each advocate may represent a model of *temporary*, *informal* and *ad hoc* social organisation that was closer (i.e. more congruent) with the communities of interest they represent.

- These forms of community are primarily focussed on the practices of media production and their associated accomplishments (i.e. as a widening of technical capability); or as communities of identity based around shared cultural accomplishments (i.e. a feeling of them against us).

- In some instances, these groups may act as reciprocal and informal learning community, combining a rich mixture of shared interest, co-developed practice, and identity accomplishments, signifying social belonging.

- The primary form of engagement exhibited by advocates in their accounts of their community media participation practices, then, will be driven with regard to a high level of personal commitment and investment to their chosen community media cause and values (i.e. as a democratic and ethical impulse).

- Any interviews and observations can be read in a number of ways, though the most relevant approach is their alignment with the central feature of symbolic interaction, that the "human person has a self," and thereby "has the capacity to thematise [themselves] reflexively and to act toward [themselves] as toward any other object." (Baugh, 1990, p. 86).

- The demonstration is of an intense and probing reflexivity on the part of each of these advocates that is not only a product of the interview and observation process, but is corroborated through the wider schemes of their activities.

- Advocate are attempting to develop and accomplish something that is outside of the common frame of reference for most people who consume media, or most people who run traditional learning organisations, or most people who participate in the encircling practices of social organisation management.

- It is understandable that they seem to do so without any prescribed or recognizable plan, any set of tested guidelines, outside formal political discourses and routines, or with reference to delineated social theories or models of human motivation.

- Advocates often give intensely personal responses to the circumstances, they are not planned or calculated, and they do not fit a standard set of categories of description or a standard form of operation.

- They are a demonstration of the creative process of thinking, the ambiguous process of definition, and the potentially fraught process of the pursuit of lines of action, as they seek to implement the common ground of values, emotions and beliefs.

- This demonstration takes place in relation to themselves (as selves), in relation to the interest groups that they form (as communities), and in relation to those that they interact with and negotiate with (as social objects).

- Community media advocates are people who are working solidly to grasp the variable and changing nature of the social environment that they are part of;
    - the variable and emerging world of media practices and forms of media representation that they encounter;
    - the shifting and changing sensitivities of the people that they seek to engage with, either from the communities themselves (i.e. the amateurs),
    - or from the organisations that are established and set in their routines of expert practice and administration (i.e. the professionals).

- These are people who are struggling to **intervene in meaningful ways** as mediators in the conceptual frameworks of lived community experience, emerging technical proficiency, and intransigent institutional social organisations.

- What they embody, therefore, are the "interdependent relationships between forms of communication, and the incorporation of media, presentations, and people in a world of moving events that imparts an evolving character to each of them'" (Blumer quoted in Baugh, 1990, pp. 83-84).

6   Community Media Practices

- Community media is a process-based form of participation and engagement, rather than an outcome-based form of production, and so is markedly different from the mainstream commercial or professional media.

- Mainstream media organisations tend to be distinguished by well-defined intentions of programming utility or profit.

- It is a continuing challenge for each of the advocates to remain motivated as proponents of a set of alternative views of how media might be otherwise organised.

- In some instances, this involves advocating for the wider attitude and ethos of community media, what John Coster describes as 'having a go,' and thereby buttressing the beliefs of the advocates, and assuring them that what they were attempting to accomplish was socially relevant and valuable, despite the challenge of *going-against-the-grain* in their effort to demonstrate that the community media approach was valid and had potentially convincing social outcomes.

- This shared experience and empathy for the intentions and accomplishments of the participants can be read, therefore, as a powerful and elucidating tool for gaining insight into the achievements of community media activists operating in their different lifeworlds.

6.1   Models of Engagement

- Each of the advocates is well informed about the different potential models of community engagement that were available to them, however, this awareness might be mainly gained from personal experience, or from attending short courses or development sessions offered within the associated community media sector.

- This commonly involved talking with other community media advocates, and maintaining a presence within community media networks.

- These forms of engagement took the arrangement of a *location* in which people who were affected by specific issues could come together.

- The challenge facing advocates is to articulate an appropriate model of communication and strategic development that can be enacted within the social situations that they work within, while also fitting within the pattern and principles of community engagement and participation that they advocate.

- Community media leaders recognise the need to motivate and manage the expectations of volunteers, partners and collaborators, thus facilitating their ability to participate in the different community media groups on their own terms, rather than by importing an external, artificial or prescriptive framework of involvement and imposing it on them.

- Advocates seek to generate a community of self-interest based on mutual understanding, interaction and collaboration that draw its principles from peer-to-peer learning, assisting those from marginalised communities to find their voice, and to recognise the potential social benefits of using media to represent aspects of community life, both to itself, and to other associated communities.

- We should shift our attention from thinking what it is that participation does, to how different people define, respond, process and negotiate different stances, dispositions, feelings and attention schemes to their sense of engagement and participation (i.e. as they are played out in the form of roles).

- Future studies should ask, therefore, how do we understand or feel about our participation in specific settings, keeping in mind that these are relative (i.e. they are relationally defined) accomplishments?

6.2 Primary Frameworks

- This process of structuration of roles and role-taking, which is accordingly expressed through different 'frameworks,' give substance to the differing conceptual schemes that recur within a culture.

- Organising the rules and the definitions that accompany concepts into primary and subsidiary frameworks might, as Anthony Giddens suggests, indicate that "whatever its level of organisation, a primary framework allows individuals to categorise an indefinite plurality of circumstances or situations so as to be able to respond in an appropriate fashion to whatever is going on" (Giddens, 1984, p. 88).

- Individuals, therefore, who make sense of, sustain and promote a 'primary framework' of meaning are positioned as 'actors' who understand the "rules of language [and] of primary and secondary framing."

- These agents are thus able, at the same time, to conduct themselves over "large areas of social life" (Giddens, 1984, p. 89) in both adaptive and imaginative ways.

- The point here, according to Giddens, is that while frameworks of reference exist for individuals within communities, they are neither *determined* nor *programmed* by those frameworks, but instead act with a *recursive degree of agency*, interdependence and independence, against a background of claim and counter-claim.

- Therefore, it is important to follow Richard Rorty's instruction to seek to identify the *congruent* from the *incongruent* language that we use, because we will always grow out of and tire of the existing frames of reference that we presently take for granted.

- Moreover, and rather than having these definitions imposed and defined for us, we should consider the extent to which it be possible for agents and actors in the social realm to shape and define, what Rorty calls, a *common vocabulary* for themselves.

- As Rorty points out,

- "What binds societies together are common vocabularies and common hopes. The vocabularies are typically parasitic on the hopes – in the sense that the principle function of the vocabularies is to tell stories about future outcomes which compensate for present sacrifices" (Rorty, 1989 p.86).

- We might subsequently ask ourselves the question, as Robert Oakeshott suggests, do we want to do this on the basis that we are a society predominantly organised as a *universitas* or as a *societas*?

- What is a more relevant question than how do we make sense of, and give due importance to, the every-day practices and experiences of the participants who volunteer in community media groups?

- We might be better explaining participation, on the one hand, as a form of social knowledge that is exchanged within a '*societas,*' that is a group of people who share their corresponding life experiences together; or alternatively, as a set of social arrangements that takes the form of a '*universitas*', in which there is a mutual self-interest between a group of people who want to achieve a particular goal or outcome (Oakeshott, 1975).

- Either way, the challenge is to find out what people do from first-hand accounts, as Blumer suggests, as they take place as a form of meaningful accomplishment.

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