

Number 2/2016

ISSN 2382-2228

THESES

REVIEW SERIES

**The Role of SANZ, a Migrant
Radio Programme, in Making
Sense of Place for
South African Migrants in
New Zealand**

Reviewed by
Michael Meadows

ePress

 **Unitec**
Institute of Technology
UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

THESES REVIEW SERIES 2/2016

Thesis Review: The Role of SANZ, a Migrant Radio Programme, in Making Sense of Place for South African Migrants in New Zealand by Antoinette Wessels

By Michael Meadows



Thesis Review: *The Role of SANZ, a Migrant Radio Programme, in Making Sense of Place for South African Migrants in New Zealand* by Antoinette Wessels by Michael Meadows, is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

This publication may be cited as:

Meadows, M. (2016). Thesis review: The role of SANZ, a migrant radio programme, in making sense of place for South African migrants in New Zealand by Antoinette Wessels [Review of the Thesis *The role of SANZ, a migrant radio programme, in making sense of place for South African migrants in New Zealand* by Antoinette Wessels]. ePress Theses Review Series (2). Auckland, New Zealand: ePress Unitec. Retrieved from <http://www.unitec.ac.nz/ePress/>

About this series:

Unitec ePress periodically features overviews of recently completed, unpublished postgraduate research in a wide variety of disciplines. Reviews provide a summary of the author's main arguments, the conceptual and theoretical framework in which the author operates, and the main source bases for his or her research. The reviews also assess how the research will advance or challenge our understanding of major issues in the field. All papers are blind reviewed. For more papers in this series please visit: <http://www.unitec.ac.nz/ePress/index.php/category/publications/theses-reviews/>

Cover design by Penny Thomson

Contact:

epress@unitec.ac.nz
www.unitec.ac.nz/ePress/
Unitec Institute of Technology
Private Bag 92025, Victoria Street West
Auckland 1142
New Zealand

ISSN 2382-2228

THESIS REVIEW

The Role of SANZ, a Migrant Radio Programme, in Making Sense of Place for South African Migrants in New Zealand

by Antoinette Wessels

Unpublished thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of International Communication

Permanent link to Research Bank version:
<http://hdl.handle.net/10652/3510>

Reviewer Author

Dr Michael Meadows
School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences
Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia

This study is a detailed, qualitative exploration of the role played by a South African migrant radio programme, SANZ Live, in supporting its audience to create a sense of place in Auckland, New Zealand, through a range of on- and off-air activities. The thesis concludes that SANZ Live contributes to the creation of opportunities for South African migrants to find a sense of place through producing media content, participating in face-to-face communication through the off-air activities of SANZ Live, participating in SANZ Live social media and perpetuating aspects of South African culture through various programme-related activities. This multi-layered participation works to establish a new routine and a hybrid culture that enables South African migrants to establish new individual, group and collective identities – becoming ‘South African Kiwis’ – in their new home of choice. In her exploration of this important topic, the author has used a wide range of relevant academic and industry sources to outline the role of Auckland community radio, and the station SANZ in particular, in creating a new hybrid sense of identity for the city’s South African community. It builds on earlier work elsewhere that has explored similar topics (Downing, 2001, 2003; Downing & Husband, 2005; Forde et al, 2009). But importantly, the study has revealed the critical role being played by the radio programme in smoothing South African immigrants’ transition into New Zealand society – an important dimension of the settlement process. The author offers strong

support for her argument and conclusions in a wide-ranging and appropriate literature review. She relies in the main on the seminal work done in this area by Jo Tacchi and others in developing and employing the concept of ‘communicative ecology’ to encompass the multifaceted roles being played by local radio in varied cultural settings (Tacchi, 2000, 2005, 2006; Hearn & Foth, 2007). She also appropriately enlists notions of discourse as articulated and developed by British sociologist Stuart Hall and his associates (Hall, 1990, 1997; Hall et al, 1996). This powerful analytical tool still retains its relevance and the author has used it carefully and well in including the multifarious elements of community radio production and practice relevant to this particular case study: SANZ Live.

The author provides a high quality, contextual argument based on the data she adduced from a range of sources, and it advances our knowledge and understanding of the role of community radio in yet another cultural setting. In doing so, her research findings build on the growing archive of research across the globe that reinforces the often unacknowledged yet critical role played by local radio in creating and sustaining cultures. In addition – in this case – such cultural practices contribute significantly to enhancing levels of cross cultural respect and knowledge that are lamentably absent from mainstream media (Meadows et al, 2007; Forde et al, 2009). The researcher’s analytical approach is measured and meticulous, demonstrating a superlative ability to synthesise from the array of scholarly literature a coherent and cohesive theoretical framework. It clearly demonstrates her ability to plan, synthesise and to present an argument of high quality, enlisting a range of appropriate scholarly research, and relating this to the data she has gathered in a systematic way. The conclusion she offers, strongly supported by the evidence, is that SANZ plays a highly significant role in ‘bridging the ethnic divide’ experienced by South African immigrants

in their new home country. Community radio in Auckland creates fulfilment for participants in sharing a media space with people from varied ethnic backgrounds in South Africa. This dynamic media environment enables a continuation of the nation-building process amongst diasporic South African audiences.

The study used both quantitative and qualitative research methods to achieve its goal – a questionnaire, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews with station directors and presenters. This produced a wide range of data for the author to explore and enabled her to establish trends, the emergence of particular production processes and practices, and to draw well-supported conclusions from

this array. The project was very well designed, implemented and presented and was ideal for the research questions she sought to explore. Combining qualitative and quantitative data meant she was able to make far stronger arguments in relation to the themes she identified.

The topic was original, appropriate and extremely well presented. The author clearly identified an important research problem and its significance, pursued an approach that was both coherent and cohesive, and produced a compelling argument. She has advanced our knowledge and understanding of the multiple roles that community radio and its associated processes can perform in varied cultural settings.

References

- Downing, J. (2003). Audiences and readers of alternative media: The absent lure of the virtually unknown. *Media, Culture & Society*, 25, 625-645.
- Downing, J., & Husband, C. (2005). *Representing race: Racisms, ethnicity and the media*. London, UK: Sage.
- Downing, J. (2001). *Radical media: Rebellious communication and social movements*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Forde, S., Foxwell, K., & Meadows, M. (2009). *Developing dialogues: Indigenous and ethnic community broadcasting in Australia*. London, UK: Intellect and Chicago, US: University of Chicago Press.
- Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222-237). London, UK: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Hall, S. (1997). Representation. Cultural representations and signifying practices. In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representation. Cultural representations and signifying practices* (pp. 13-74). London, UK: Sage.
- Hall, S., Morley, D., & Chen, K-H. (1996). *Stuart Hall: Critical dialogues in cultural studies*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Hearn, G. N., & Foth, M. (2007). Communicative ecologies: Editorial preface. *Electronic Journal of Communication*, 17(1-2). Retrieved from: <http://www.cios.org/www/ejc/v17n12.htm#introduction>
- Meadows, M., Forde, S., Ewart, J., & Foxwell, K. (2007). *Community media matters: An audience study of the Australian community broadcasting sector*. Brisbane, Australia: Griffith University.
- Tacchi, J. (2000). The need for radio theory in the digital age. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 289(3), 289-298.
- Tacchi, J. (2005). Radio and new media technologies: Making technological change socially effective and culturally empowering. In Healy, Sianan, Berryman, Bruce, & Goodman, David (Eds.) . *Proceedings Radio in the World: Radio Conference 2005*, pages pp. 342-353, Melbourne, Australia.
- Tacchi, J. (2006). *Studying communicative ecologies: An ethnographic approach to information and communication technologies (ITCS)*. Paper presented at the 56th Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, Dresden, 2006.

Review Author bio

Dr Michael Meadows worked as a journalist for 10 years before moving into journalism education in the late 1980s. His research interests include representations of indigenous people and indigenous media audiences, policy and practice along with the history, development and reception of community broadcasting in Australia. He has published numerous journal articles and three books: *Songlines to Satellites* (with Helen Molnar), *Voices in the Wilderness* and *Developing Dialogues* (with Susan Forde and Kerrie Foxwell). He is Adjunct Professor of Journalism with the Centre for Social and Cultural Research, School of Humanities, Languages and Social Sciences, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.

Contact m.meadows@griffith.edu.au

Thesis Author bio

Antoinette Wessels has recently completed her master's degree in International Communication (Unitec) and has a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Political Science and International Politics (University of Pretoria, South Africa) and a Bachelor of Technology (Business Information Systems), (Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria). Her professional and academic career includes lecturing on different software applications and on business and communication programmes. Since arriving in New Zealand, she has developed an interest in migrant matters and hybrid cultures.

Contact awessels@unitec.ac.nz

ePress

