

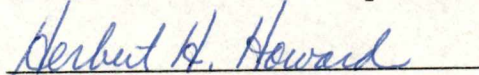
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Stephen M. Powell entitled "Religious Broadcasting in East Tennessee: A Programming Analysis of 10 Religious Radio Stations." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Communications.



M. Kent Sidel, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:



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RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING IN EAST TENNESSEE: A PROGRAMMING
ANALYSIS OF 10 RELIGIOUS RADIO STATIONS

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Stephen M. Powell

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the thesis was to consider the historical rise of religious radio broadcasting and the trends in religious radio programming in East Tennessee. The trends were found through personal interviews and program logs at each of the 10 stations selected. The stations were purposively selected from over 40 religious radio broadcasting stations in East Tennessee to represent all geographical regions.

An historical analysis of the region was necessary first to understand the rise of religious broadcasting in the early 1920's. Soon after the first settlers appeared in the 1700's, religious denominations sprang up as one of their guiding influences. Circuit riders and preachers roamed the hills of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee spreading the faith of the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. These three conservative groups set the moral values in East Tennessee for many decades and placed the region in the middle of the "Bible Belt."

These Protestant denominations continued to have influence into the 1900's. It is no coincidence that the first radio station in the region had a religious emphasis. Other religious radio stations soon followed setting the tone for religious stations in 1980. In many cases, broadcasting has changed little since 1921. Technology has changed, of course. But the conservative message being preached is the same as is the traditional gospel music. Religious broadcasters do not see this lack of change as a problem. Rather, it is viewed at times as proof that the message presented is timeless and capable of reaping monetary benefits, and therefore should not be watered down with modern-day gimmickry.

The future seems to hold much of the same. Religious broadcasters

are not planning to provide an alternate source of information and entertainment such as wholesome programming to children, youth, the middle-aged, and the elderly. Actually, many broadcasters claim to do that very thing. But analysis of program logs and interviews with owners and managers tells a different story. The religious stations broadcast to a select conservative audience content with the traditional fare as it has been for 60 years. The owners and managers cannot be blamed for their lack of alternate programming. Because the audience is content to listen to the same message, the broadcasters are not going to take a chance alienating the very audience they have tried to build by programming something different.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The law represents what people thought right some time ago, because it takes time to enact a law. When circumstances change, what was right ceases to be. What has happened in all societies that have ever existed, creative impulses are cramped by politicians or churches. The man who has a new idea or a new way of feeling is punished, although it would be a solution for a great many of our troubles.

--Lord Bertrand Russell

Certainly one of the most critical scientific developments of the 20th century has been the utilization of radio waves to establish a world-wide and even inter-planetary communications system. Radio waves, which actually consist of electro-magnetic radiations traveling at the speed of light (300,000 meters per second), can be used to transmit voice, picture, and/or electronic impulse from one point to another or from one point to a number of receivers. This latter method, where signals are intended to be received by any member of the general public, is known as broadcasting (The Communications Act of 1934, 1971, Section 3(o)).

Radio communication as we know it represents the product of many minds and individual discoveries. As early as 1864, a British scientist named James C. Maxwell developed the theory that types of electric waves or radiations could be used as a communications source (Head, 1972, p. 91). Some years later, the American inventor, Thomas Edison, set up a simple communications system to be used for signaling between railway stations and moving trains transmitting electric impulses through the air (Head, p. 83). Meanwhile in Europe, Heinrich Hertz, a German scientist, demonstrated that rapid variation of electric current could

actually be projected into space in the form of electric waves similar to those of light and heat. That fundamental discovery in 1887 represents the basic theory upon which modern radio communication is based. It was shown that radio waves could be produced as a form of energy and made to travel in wave-like patterns through space at the speed of light (Head, p. 109). Finally, in 1895, an Italian engineer named Guglielmo Marconi actually transmitted radio signals for a short distance (Barnouw, 1966, p. 11).

While those dates are clear, the origin of the first voice broadcast remains the subject of debate. The earliest claims involve the transmission of the message "hello, Rainey," reported to have been sent by a Nathan B. Stubblefield to his neighbor, Rainey T. Wells, during a radio demonstration held near Murray, Kentucky, in 1892 (Barnouw, 1960, p. 18). In 1906 the inventor Reginald A. Fessenden, while conducting a demonstration from Brandt Rock, Massachusetts, transmitted program material that was picked up by nearby ships (Barnouw, 1966, p. 20). In addition, there were early transatlantic voice tests conducted by Lee de Forest in 1910 and later by the Bell Telephone Company, at Arlington, Virginia, in 1915 (Barnouw, 1966, p. 27). However, it was not until after World War I that regular broadcasting began (Barnouw, 1966, p. 52).

These were great strides. Already men such as David Sarnoff (the late Chairman and President of RCA and NBC) saw great potential in a communication system that could transcend geographical separation to bring men together (Head, pp. 114, 121). In effect, space and time were conquered. The only remaining obstacle to unity and mutual affection lay not in man's physical limitations, but in the limitations of his spirit.

From the outset many believed that broadcasting could become the tool to conquer the "in there" world of man, now that the "out there" was overcome.

Religious broadcasters were some of the first on the scene trying to use the new medium to influence the spiritual side of man. East Tennessee possessed a radio station with a religious emphasis in 1921, WNAV, that took full advantage of the Fundamental Protestant region. It wasn't long before others such as WFBC also beamed its message to the conservative listeners. The area wasn't conservative by choice though. Its conservatism resulted, in part, from a long history of religious organizations at work. The religious background of East Tennessee probably influenced the first stations to choose a religious format. But religious stations were on the air in 1980, not to be influenced by the environment, but to return the environment to its original Fundamental state.

A. EAST TENNESSEE: CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS HISTORY

First occupied by prehistoric Indians, the Tennessee country was later claimed and used by the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek, and Shawnee tribes. During much of the colonial period, these Indians, and the white traders who lived among them, became pawns of European diplomacy; the ultimate success of the English in the intercolonial wars, such as the Great War for Empire in 1763, meant that Tennessee would be English in cultural and economic background rather than French (Folmsbee, 1960, pp. 43-60). Thereafter, the periodic Indian wars, the step-by-step removal of the Indian title and of the Indian himself from the land,

and the conflicting interests of land speculators and pioneering settlers in the development of a land system were signal milestones in Tennessee's early history.

Very soon after the first permanent settlers came into the Tennessee country they were joined by Presbyterian and Baptist preachers (Hamer, 1933, p. 799). The first Presbyterian preachers to serve the future Tennesseans actually lived in southwestern Virginia. Most noted of the early Presbyterian preachers of the Tennessee country was the Reverend Samuel Doak, who moved from North Carolina to the vicinity of Jonesboro in 1780. Doak, along with other Presbyterian ministers, organized the "Salem Congregation" and also established a school that later became Washington College.

Almost simultaneously with the Presbyterians, preachers of the Baptist faith started to minister in the Tennessee country. It is possible they were very active, for the typical Baptist minister of the early days was a farmer-preacher who would leave his plow in the field and travel many kilometers on Sunday to preach to scattered congregations (Hamer, pp. 805-806). Along with the holding of religious services and baptizing converts, the preachers legalized common law marriages.

Another type of preacher who could talk on the level of the illiterate pioneers was the sturdy Methodist circuit rider. The first of these in Tennessee was Jeremiah Lambert, who was assigned by the Annual Conference of 1783 to the newly formed Holston Circuit in what is now southwestern Virginia and northeastern Tennessee (Garrett & Goodpasture, 1903, pp. 155-156). Although the Methodist circuit system was well suited to the frontier, many circuit riders died of consumption or other

lingering diseases resulting from the hardships involved in covering regular circuits extending 800 to 1,000 kilometers in length. Most travel was curtailed in the late 1700's. Because of skirmishes between the British and French troops, it was dangerous to be in rugged terrain during the Revolutionary War.

The period following the war was characterized by extreme moral laxity, and the work of the churches, supplementing that of the courts, had relatively little effect. The period was one of outlawry, which made travel extremely dangerous. The times were ripe for a spiritual awakening, and a "Great Revival" which began in the West about 1799 had a profound influence. The revival spread to Kentucky and on into East Tennessee (Hale & Merritt, 1913, p. 223). The extreme emotionalism characterizing this movement was especially manifested at the extended camp meetings. At these meetings, the intense excitement resulted in mass hysteria and strange bodily exercises such as falling, jerking, barking, and rolling (Hamer, p. 225).

The results of the Great Revival leave no doubt that it greatly stimulated the religious life of the United States. Although the extremes of emotionalism subsided, the camp meeting remained a religious feature of some denominations, particularly the Methodists, well into the 1800's.

The 20th century opened in the liberalism of the Progressive Era; World War I and the conservatism of the late 1920's followed. The 1920's also brought commercial and religious radio broadcasting, with religion prominent in radio broadcasting from the start. At first the predominant form was local religious broadcasts by local churches. Indeed, many

churches in East Tennessee and elsewhere owned their own stations in those early days.

For example, in the 1920's Knoxville had four religious stations on the air, one of which was owned by a local church. It was WFBC (W First Baptist Church). It began in 1921 and continued in Knoxville until 1930 when it was moved to a new place of operation in Greenville, South Carolina (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-197). From the creation of the Federal Radio Commission in 1927 and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 1934 until about 1936, a quota system governed the number of radio stations permitted within each of five zones established for the country. The zone that included Tennessee and the Carolinas was full. There was no way to get a new station other than to buy one from within the zone and move it to a new place. Greenville had no station, and the News-Piedmont organization wanted one there. So it arranged to buy WFBC. The focus of the programming has been changed since 1933 when it first went on the air, but the call letters remain the same.

Not long after WFBC began, several other stations were founded in Knoxville, beginning as Gospel stations or becoming strongly religious in orientation. The longest continuing station in the city is WNOX, also considered to be one of the oldest stations in the United States. It started as WNAV in 1921 and operated under those call letters for several years. Its first on-air date was November 3, 1921, with 50 watts at 560 kiloHertz (kHz) (FCC. Personal communication, February 22, 1979). WNAV's call letters were changed to WNOX under new ownership, and after WFBC moved to Greenville an agreement was made with First Baptist Church to broadcast both the Sunday morning and Sunday evening

services of that church (Deaderick, 1976, p. 298). WNOX was sold again, this time to Scripps-Howard Radio, Inc., on November 19, 1935, with the programming emphasis shifting from religion to Country and Western music (FCC. Personal communication, February 29, 1980).

Another Knoxville radio station that had its beginning in connection with a religious organization was WNBK, which began broadcasting February 12, 1927 (FCC. Personal communication, February 29, 1980). The station was owned by the Lonsdale Baptist Tabernacle. Like the original WFBC, the format was entirely religious. After only two years of operation, the station was purchased by Stuart Adcock, once manager of WNAV and WNOX. Under his ownership, the station began broadcasting on a full-time basis, and the call letters were changed to WROL (Deaderick, p. 305).

B. PROBLEMS

The purpose of this thesis is the consideration of two matters within the broad scope of religious radio broadcasting and programming: (1) the historical rise of religious radio broadcasting in East Tennessee, whether by sectarian or non-sectarian licensees, and (2) the trends in religious radio programming in East Tennessee, found through personal interviews and program logs.

To gain a better perspective on the issues raised by the growth of religious broadcasting, and the potential problems of religious radio stations, it is necessary to consider the historical background of the stations. Commercial radio broadcasting began in the early 1920's. Federal regulation of radio broadcasting began, in any meaningful form, with the Dill-White Radio Act of 1927, which created the Federal Radio

Commission. So, almost 60 years of history is involved.

Following a review of such history, one must ask for a clear consideration of the current trends in programming because they are often clouded by emotion and matters of personal conscience, rather than reason. In order for any future consideration of trends to be meaningful, there must be a clear understanding of the facts involved. Examination of these facts is one purpose of this thesis.

The trends found through interviews and program logs also will be important, not only for this thesis, but as a practical matter of information. Because no research has been done in religious program analysis covering the East Tennessee area, this is an area that needs to be explored. When completed, the information will apply directly only to the East Tennessee area. But it will be useful to religious broadcast station managers in other areas of the country as a sample, providing them with information about religious radio stations in one area of the Bible Belt.

This thesis does not state a proposition to be sustained or disproved by the research. It instead searched for facts that had never been explored.

C. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Primary Sources

The primary source of material regarding programming is the program logs provided by the selected stations. Additionally, a wealth of material is available concerning the religious and secular history of Tennessee from its first inhabitants to the present. Of particular

value are the works by Weston Goodspeed, History of Tennessee, and J. G. M. Ramsey, Annals of Tennessee to the End of the Eighteenth Century.

An index search was undertaken of scholarly journals in the communications field, such as Journal of Broadcasting and Journal of Communications, and of Dissertation Abstracts and Journalism Abstracts. A computer search of Dissertation Abstracts International was done also. The search uncovered research in the field of broadcasting around the world, providing an opportunity to select information pertinent to religious broadcasting.

A thesis relating to religious broadcasting was found through the computer search. Gary Drum's thesis, Religious Broadcasting in America: A Regulatory History and Consideration of Issues (1976), is an important historical work tracing religious broadcasting nationwide from the 1920's to the 1970's. A lot of data are presented from the FCC's files, not about individual stations, but about the government regulations religious broadcasters have encountered.

Secondary Sources

Prior to the exhaustive examination of primary documents, the trade publications, Broadcasting and Religious Broadcasting were examined. The trade publications provided information relevant to secular and religious broadcasters across the country.

A library card file search of books at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville resulted in a small number of volumes concerned with religious broadcasting. Many of them were only how-to-do-it guides for broadcast preaching and were published chiefly by sectarian organizations. Models of Religious Broadcasting, by Harold Ellens (1974), and Religious

Television Programs, by William Bluem (1969), were the only two that gave any historical perspective.

The Electric Church, by Ben Armstrong (1979), focuses on the growing pains of religious broadcasting, particularly commercial television. Armstrong envisions religious broadcasters making a bad name for themselves by squandering the money they get through donations. Malcolm Muggeridge's, Christ and the Media (1977), explores the many ways God is presented in all media forms. Monetary dealings are not important to him as they are to Armstrong. Instead, God's image presented to the public is found to be less than spiritual at times.

Apart from the history of religious broadcasting were the many books on the history of secular broadcasting. Erik Barnouw's trilogy is perhaps the best historical account. Two of Barnouw's works used in this thesis are A Tower in Babel (1966), and A History of Broadcasting in the United States (1970). These books are much more than an overview of broadcasting in the United States. They present broadcasting as a source of entertainment and knowledge that has changed the United States and the world. Scott Robb's, Television/Radio Age (1979), and Sydney Head's, Broadcasting in America: a survey of television and radio (1972), also deal with the early and modern events in broadcasting, but they both could be used as textbooks in high schools or universities. Because they could be used as textbooks they don't appear to be as scholarly as Barnouw's three books. They are important, however, because they discuss current technology developed since Barnouw's writings.

An historical writing pertaining to broadcasting in East Tennessee is Heart of the Valley (1976), edited by Lucile Deaderick. The author

of the chapter on communications was June Adamson, an associate professor of communication at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This work traces the first radio stations on the air in East Tennessee to the future of cablevision for Knoxville. Adamson limited this work to Knoxville, and provided many interesting stories about the stations through personal interviews with historians and old-timers.

The many books available on the history and ethnology of the peoples of East Tennessee are covered in considerable detail to determine the origins of the people in the region. Their origins have an influence on the present program content in a religious broadcasting stations' format.

D. METHODOLOGY

Basic Approach

The objective is to identify programming similarities and differences among religious broadcasting stations throughout the East Tennessee region. Only those stations with at least 15 hours of religious programming a week, as defined by the 1980 Directory of Religious Broadcasting (Armstrong, p. 8), were considered. Even though there were 27 stations in the region programming a minimum of 15 hours a week, 10 stations were selected from these to provide an adequate representation of all stations and to act as a purposive sample. A random sampling of the 27 religious radio stations in East Tennessee would have been a more scientific method to select a proper sample size. But a random sample likely would have provided a poor distribution over the region. A purposive sample allows the programmer to determine the sample size and distribution.

Three main factors were used as guidelines to select the sample. Stations were chosen from (1) both urban and rural areas, (2) geographic locations across East Tennessee, and (3) from the 27 religious stations programming religion, focusing on stations that broadcast religion full-time.

The 10 stations selected are: WDYN-FM, WMBW-FM, and WMOC in Chattanooga; WMCH, Church Hill; WSBM-FM, Jefferson City; WKVQ and WKXV in Knoxville; WBLC, Lenoir City; WBNT-AM-FM, Oneida; and WCHU in Soddy-Daisy. These stations are located in two major cities in East Tennessee and rural settings throughout the area (see Figure 1).

All stations were monitored to obtain a familiarity with the programming content. The program logs were analyzed and all information compiled to provide insights into religious programming trends. Each station's program logs were a primary source of data inasmuch as they comprised a legal and historical account of the days' events. Because all stations in East Tennessee were required to file for license renewal in April 1979, the program logs examined came from the composite week in the station's public access file (Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 73.3526, 1979). The composite week was the same for all stations, and, therefore, all logs were held constant. The only exception was the use of a sample week by WMBW-FM. The sample week is used only by educational, noncommercial stations. It is a week an educational station can select instead of using the composite week chosen by the FCC (47CFR73.3527, 1979, see Appendix A).

The following were the dates chosen by the FCC for the 1979 license renewal composite week, and they run Sunday through Saturday respectively

(47CFR73.1850, 1979): October 23, 1977; March 20, 1978; May 16, 1978; April 5, 1978; November 17, 1977; August 12, 1977; and January 7, 1977.

Because it was difficult at times to determine the type of music played or the content of a program from a program log, personal interviews with general managers, music directors, and program directors were necessary. The FCC is technically unconcerned with the format of a broadcasting station and does not require the program logs to reflect all format decisions (The Communications Act of 1934, 1971, Section 326). Therefore, personal interviews were necessary to fill the voids inherent in any station's program logs. A formal questionnaire will be used in all interviews (see Appendix B).

Definitions

An organization of data requires some basic definitions, some that are defined for the purpose of the work, and others that are generally accepted in meaning. The term religious radio broadcasting applies exclusively to broadcast activities engaged in by licensees of religious broadcasting stations, either individuals or groups. Included as religious radio broadcasters are individual churches, denominational organizations, and church-related institutions. The term religious programming is not to be confused with religious radio broadcasting. Religious programming is any presentation of a religious nature, whether broadcast by a sectarian or secular licensee.

A religious station's format must be defined apart from any secular station's format, unlike religious programming. A religious format attempts to communicate with the audience as a whole. It is concerned not only with the gospel symbolism, but it also hears and takes into

account the response of the persons with whom communication is attempted. All 10 stations are considered religious broadcasting stations, but they all have chosen different format titles to express individuality. Therefore, all station format titles mean the same for purposes of this thesis whether they are entitled Sacred, Inspirational, Gospel, Contemporary Religious, Ministerial, or a host of other names.

An attempt is made to define three terms with potentially broad meanings. The first two are "liberal" and "conservative." One who is conservative opposes change. One who is liberal favors progress. These are intended to have philosophical connotations and not theological, unless specifically stated otherwise. The third definition, "Christian," concerns theology. A Christian, as used in this thesis, is one who professes the religious principles of Jesus Christ. The term is used loosely at times by station owners, and may be construed to mean one who is a conservative Protestant.

One final definition is that of the geographic area described as East Tennessee. Topographically, Tennessee is divided into six major and two minor physiographic regions. There are also natural regions reflected in the political subdivisions of the state known as the three "grand divisions": West, Middle, and East. The grand division of East Tennessee consists of the first two physiographic regions, the Unaka Mountains and the Great Valley of East Tennessee, and about half of the third, the Cumberland Plateau. According to the 1978 Tennessee Code Annotated (Volume 2, 4-110), there are 32 counties in the grand division of East Tennessee with the counties of Scott, Morgan, Roane, Rhea, Bledsoe, Sequatchie, and Marion comprising the western border of East Tennessee.

Limitations

This study is limited by the purposive sample to 10 religious radio stations in East Tennessee that present 15 hours or more of religious programming weekly. The information compiled is applicable directly to the East Tennessee area only.

Basic Outline of the Study

CHAPTER II. To lay appropriate groundwork for consideration of issues, Chapter II comprises an historical overview of the East Tennessee area. This overview begins with a review of the pre-historic settlers to present-day man, providing insights into the ethnology of the region. This chapter also explores the ways religious radio stations expanded and developed with the people of the area, beginning with the first religious stations in the early 1920's, WNAV and WFBC.

CHAPTER III. This chapter is designed to be a guide and introduction to the 10 religious radio stations in the purposive sample. It provides the philosophy and history under which each station operates.

CHAPTER IV. The program logs and interviews from the 10 stations were analyzed mainly for programming decisions such as community involvement, choice of format, and musical selection. In areas that were not program related such as hiring practices and attitudes about the Electric Church, information was obtained through interviews alone. All information then was compiled to provide insights into religious programming trends. Because all stations are programmed differently, a variety of trends was expected.

CHAPTER V. In addition to a brief summation of Chapters II, III, and IV, Chapter V offers observations on the directions religious radio and television stations are heading. The observations came from trends identified in preceding chapters, and from comments provided by general managers, program directors, and music directors who worked in the stations surveyed. Some broad generalizations and characteristics of religious broadcasting are offered.

CHAPTER II

PIONEERS IN EAST TENNESSEE AND IN RELIGIOUS RADIO

The best kind of originality is that which comes after a sound apprenticeship; that which proves to be the blending of a firm construction of all useful precedent and progressive tendencies. For let a man be able and as original as he may, he cannot afford to discard knowledge of what has gone before and succeeded.

--Anonymous

The physical environment in which man lives has a profound influence upon the shape and direction of his culture. Man may dream dreams, but much of what it takes to make his dreams come true is out of his control. The surge of modern technology has provided man with the means to temper his environment, but as yet he has not conquered it. The prehistoric and early historic inhabitants of the East Tennessee region could not escape the influence of environment upon the social, political, and economic foundations they developed. In order to provide a setting for religious broadcasting stations in East Tennessee, this chapter begins with a description of the region's features.

The area lies near the poleward margin of the humid subtropical climate region and is distinguished by hot summers, mild winters, and the distribution of precipitation throughout the year (Espenshade, 1974, pp. 12, 80). Population density is not as great as the more urbanized Northeast, but is somewhat intermediate between those densely settled areas and the sparsely settled areas farther west (Espenshade, p. 84). On a national scale, the region is identified as being part of the "General Farming Region" of the country, and this location places it

between the Feed Grains and Livestock Region to the north and the traditional cotton growing areas to the south (Espenshade, p. 86). The area usually is shown as being a southward projection of the American Manufacturing Belt (Espenshade, p. 86).

The area is readily accessible to all parts of the nation and the world. In an earlier time physical communication with distant places was a problem of major proportions, and travel was often delayed or prohibited by both distance and rugged terrain. However, the area now has ready access to interstate highway systems and modern airports.

During prehistoric and historic times Indian cultures flourished in the region. The Cherokee, whose early culture was Woodland but in late prehistoric times was Mississippian in pattern, lived in some 80 towns located in the eastern part of North Carolina, eastern South Carolina, northern Georgia, and the Overhill settlements in southeastern Tennessee when the first white men came. In Tennessee, their towns were primarily along the Hiwassee, Tellico, and Little Tennessee rivers. For years the Cherokee opposed the advance of the white man with occasional skirmishes, but with time they adopted much of the white man's culture and ceded millions of hectares of land to the British, and later to the United States government (Lewis & Kneberg, 1958, p. 145).

Along with the British, the Spanish also had a desire for land. Between 1539 and 1541 Hernando de Soto led an expedition from Florida northward into the western part of the Carolinas and then into eastern Tennessee on their way to the Mississippi River. From the vicinity of the site of Chattanooga, de Soto sent two men northward looking for gold (Lewis & Kneberg, p. 140; Final Report of the United States de Soto

Expedition Commission, 1939, pp. 182-208). Because the Spanish never established a lasting claim or permanent settlement, their influence on Tennessee history was insignificant. Of far more importance were the explorations in the late 17th century by the French in West and the English in East Tennessee. In time, settlement by both nationalities followed, and the history of the area from that point to the end of the Great War for Empire (1763) was one of Anglo-French rivalry (Folmsbee, 1960, pp. 43-60). As a result of this war, the English gained control of all the territory claimed by France and Spain east of the Mississippi River (except New Orleans). Free from the French, settlers from the English colonies began to move west in large numbers, and the East Tennessee area was one of the first to benefit from the migration (Folmsbee, 1960, p. 95).

The first permanent white settlers in Tennessee came mostly from the back country of Virginia and North Carolina. Two waves of settlement, one from the Virginia and North Carolina regions and one from central Pennsylvania, pushed into Tennessee during the 18th century. While many were English, the majority were composed of various other nationalities. From the Tidewater region came some French Protestants who had settled in the English colonies because of the discrimination practiced by predominantly Catholic France. In far greater numbers were the Scotch-Irish and German who came primarily from Pennsylvania. The Scotch-Irish (mostly Presbyterians) were Scots who had settled in Northern Ireland and then, lured by cheap land, moved on to the Pennsylvania colony and later to the back country of Virginia and North Carolina. From the same area in Pennsylvania came Germans, many originally from

the Palatinate in the Rhine Valley, bringing with them highly developed agricultural and mechanical skills useful in their new homes. Other nationalities, such as Welsh and Irish, populated the back country; but in time the diverse people became one in the person of the American frontiersman. The Holston River, along which many settled, became a route of travel, and such individuals as Stephen Holston (about 1748) followed that stream and the Tennessee River on their way to Natchez in British West Florida (Folmsbee, 1960, pp. 95-96; Williams, 1936, pp. 9-25). Inevitable political organization follows settlement, and so it was with the Tennessee region.

On December 22, 1789, the territory that was to become the state of Tennessee in 1796 was ceded to the federal government by North Carolina. On April 2, 1790, Congress accepted the territory and President George Washington signed the act for the establishment of a government for the "territory of the United States, south of the River Ohio" May 26, 1790 (Carter, 1936, pp. 3-19). Under the precedent set by the Northwest Ordinance, the Territory South of the Ohio River was to go through three stages--an appointed government under a governor, a secretary, and three judges; a representative territorial government when the voting population reached 5,000; and finally, state government when the population reached 60,000 (Folmsbee, 1960, pp. 190, 207-218). The governorship of the Southwest Territory was a prize eagerly sought by several men. None was more anxious for the post than William Blount.

Before Blount became governor at least 5 treaties and 28 years were required to extinguish the Indian claims to the area. The process began in 1785. When North Carolina disposed of most of the Tennessee area with

the "Land Grab Act" of 1783, she proposed to negotiate a treaty of pacification with the Indians at a later date. Cession of Tennessee to the federal government in 1784, the repeal of that cession later that year, and the revolt of the state of Franklin all interfered with settlement of the claims. Delays and unkept promises fostered Indian hostilities against the frontier settlers, resulting in the resolve of Congress in 1785 to negotiate on its own with the Cherokee.

Acting on the suggestions of President Washington and Secretary of War Henry Knox, Congress cleared the way August 11, 1790, for Superintendent William Blount to negotiate a treaty of cession with the Cherokee. Presumably the cession would include the areas where white settlers were living on Indian land, and as much more as the Indians would be willing to cede (Royce, 1887, pp. 158-162; Masterson, 1954, pp. 185-188, 202-203). Blount assembled Cherokee chiefs and warriors at White's Fort. After seven days of difficult bargaining, the Treaty of Holston was completed on July 2, 1791. Forty-one Indian chiefs and warriors signed this treaty, including Hanging Maw, John Watts, Bloody Fellow, Doublehead, and Talootiskee, all of whom were then or were to become important chiefs (Royce, pp. 202-206; Carter, pp. 60-67).

The time and means of surveying the boundaries agreed upon in the Treaty of Holston were left to the discretion of Governor Blount and the Cherokee. May 1, 1792, was the date decided upon for the survey to begin; but before that time, Secretary of War Knox wrote to Blount suggesting the survey be delayed until a campaign (about to begin) against the northern Indians was over. Probably Knox wanted the aid of the Cherokee and feared the results of the boundary survey might be

displeasing to them. This and other delays resulted in the Holston Treaty line not being surveyed by Benjamin Hawkins until 1797 (Royce, pp. 163-165). Because of misunderstandings and delays in establishing an official line between white and red man's lands, many white settlers continued to move into Indian territory. Also when the line was surveyed, it left in Indian country lands occupied by whites under the Treaty of Coyatee of the now defunct state of Franklin. When federal troops arrived to move these settlers out by force, public opinion in Tennessee was highly negative, and a legislative objection was sent to Washington. The results of the confused state of affairs was that another land cession by the Cherokee seemed desirable (Royce, pp. 174-175; Folmsbee, 1960, p. 269).

As time passed and population in nearby areas increased, the desire for more Indian land grew. In 1804 Return Jonathan Meigs, who had been appointed Indian agent in 1801, was instructed by his superiors to carry on a continuous negotiation for Indian lands until a previously stipulated amount had been acquired. In compliance with his orders Meigs and his deputy, Daniel Smith, negotiated the Third Treaty of Tellico October 25, 1805, and two days later the Fourth Treaty of Tellico.

Most of the county names have remained unchanged lasting through these treaties and settlements, but there have been many boundary changes as new counties were created from existing ones. This process continued until 1870 when Hamblen County was established from parts of Hawkins, Jefferson, and Grainger Counties. No new counties have been formed in the East Tennessee area since then, but minor boundary changes have been frequent (McBride, 1966, pp. 3-15). Such changes require the

passage of a local bill in the Tennessee Legislature and acceptance by the county courts of the counties involved. Although such changes may not have much impact upon the persons living in the area, it makes population data prior to 1870 unreliable on a county basis.

A century before the counties were firmly established, permanent settlers were joined by Presbyterian and Baptist preachers who were self-appointed to counteract the debasing influences of the frontier environment (Hamer, p. 799). Along with the holding of religious services and baptizing converts, the preachers legalized common law marriages.

The first Presbyterian preacher in Cumberland settlements was the Reverend Thomas Craighead, who was induced by James Robertson in 1785 to go to Davidson County to establish a church and also a school, Davidson Academy (Hamer, pp. 803-804). Because of the large number of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians on the frontier, the Abingdon Presbytery was formed in 1785 also. The next year it was divided, with the new presbytery, Transylvania, assuming jurisdiction over the churches in the Cumberland Valley and in the Kentucky region. In the East Tennessee country there were 26 congregations by 1797, and Abingdon Presbytery was again divided, with the more western of those congregations being organized as Union Presbytery (Garrett & Goodpasture, 1903, pp. 155-156).

Almost simultaneously with the Presbyterians, preachers of the Baptist faith became active in the Tennessee region. The first two known to have settled there were Matthew Talbot and Jonathan Mulkey who went to the Watauga settlement and Carter's Valley, respectively, as early as 1775. The ministers were busy because they worked six days a

week and preached on the Sabbath. The typical Baptist minister of the early days was a farmer-preacher, who would leave his plow in the field and travel many kilometers on Sundays to preach to scattered congregations (Hamer, pp. 804-805). Some Baptist historians contend that Talbot organized in 1775 or 1776 a Watauga River Church that was the forerunner of the Sinking Creek Church of Washington County. The church was the first established Baptist church in the Tennessee region (Hamer, p. 805).

Seven Baptist churches in the East Tennessee region later were organized into the Holston Association in 1786, the same year that the first Baptist church in the Middle Tennessee area was organized by the Reverend John Grammer. By 1803 there were about 46 Baptist churches in East Tennessee, divided between 2 associations, Holston and Tennessee. There were also an unknown number of churches that were not represented in any association--a result of the Baptist policy of emphasizing the independence of individual congregations (Hamer, p. 805). Another reason for the rapid growth of the Baptists on the frontier was the willingness to ordain ministers who had little formal education. A special "call" to preach, together with the inspiration of the Spirit, was considered an adequate qualification. Actually, the unlettered frontiersmen felt more at home with the uneducated preachers than the learned Presbyterian ministers.

Another type of preacher who could talk on the level of the illiterate pioneers was the sturdy Methodist circuit rider. The first of these in Tennessee was Jeremiah Lambert. He was assigned by the Annual Conference of 1783 to the newly formed Holston Circuit in what is now southwestern Virginia and northeastern Tennessee (Garrett &

Goodpasture, pp. 155-156). The Holston Circuit had about 60 members, and Lambert preached to them--and 17 more by the end of the year--in their scattered homes. In 1786, the first Methodist church in Tennessee, Acuff's Chapel, was built near Blountville. The next year Holston became a district, composed of two circuits, and in 1788 it held the first conference west of the mountains at Keywook in Virginia. For that occasion the famous Methodist leader, Bishop Francis Asbury, made the first of his 62 trips across the Appalachians (Hamer, p. 805). In 1787 a new circuit, as a part of Kentucky District, was created for the Cumberland settlements with Benjamin Ogden as its preacher. Methodism expanded rapidly in that area and in East Tennessee (Hale & Merritt, 1913, p. 223). Although the Methodist circuit system was well suited to the frontier, many circuit riders died of consumption or other lingering diseases resulting from the hardships involved in covering regular circuits extending 800 to 1,000 kilometers in length.

The churches of all three denominations attempted to regulate the conduct of their members, and the records of individual churches are full of references to admonitions and sometimes exclusion of members from fellowship for drunkenness, fighting, dishonesty, and other offenses. But these offenses were not unusual because the period following the Revolutionary War was characterized by extreme moral laxity. The work of the churches, supplementing that of the courts, had relatively little effect.

The times were ripe for a spiritual awakening, and a "Great Revival" that began in the West about 1799 had a profound influence. The revival spread rapidly to Kentucky and on into Tennessee under the leadership

of a Presbyterian preacher named James McGready (Hale & Merritt, p. 223). The extreme emotionalism characterizing this movement was especially manifested at the extended camp meetings, to which the lonely pioneers flocked in immense numbers. At those meetings, the effect of mob psychology and the intense excitement created by the emotional fervor of the preachers resulted in mass hysteria and strange bodily exercises such as falling, jerking, barking, and rolling. According to one eyewitness, a Presbyterian minister, a person afflicted with the "jerks" acted as if he were being goaded "alternately on every side, with a red-hot iron." The head "would fly backward and forward, and from side to side" with quick jolts, and the afflicted would dash violently to the ground and "bounce from place to place like a foot-ball, or hop round with head, limbs and trunk twitching and jolting in every direction, as if it must inevitably fly asunder" (Hamer, p. 808).

The results of the Great Revival leave no doubt that it greatly stimulated the religious life in the United States. Although the extremes of emotionalism subsided, the camp meetings remained a religious feature of some denominations, particularly the Methodists, well into the 1800's.

By 1860 sectarianism had toned down its action in Tennessee, and the various religious bodies had assumed a less controversial nature. The frontier had been won by 1860 by the Methodists and Baptists; Presbyterians finished a poor third. Methodists claimed more members than Baptists, but the margin was slender, and Baptist leaders whittled it away soon after Appomattox (Hamer, p. 817). When the 20th century opened, the Roman Catholic and Judaic faiths, and major Protestant

denominations had become established in Tennessee, but the principal religious groups continued to be the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians (Hamer, pp. 826-827).

Those three groups were also to play a part in a phenomenon soon to be called broadcasting. The church community had for years been an integral part of the pioneers' life. Church leaders were also a force in the sweeping cultural changes in the 1800's. A new century was an opportunity for the Church to again try and affect change in the environment.

The year 1916 brought an unforeseen setback as the eyes of the people were turned to World War I overseas and not to the spiritual life at home. When the 1920's began, the world was changed forever, but the emphasis was returned to the homefront. One of the changes, greatly helped by the war, was broadcasting. Though radio communication was not originally developed as an outreach for any religious body, denominations quickly envisioned ways of using this new medium for their own purposes.

As early as 1906, the first successful broadcast of a human voice was a religious broadcast, on Christmas Eve. Transmitting from a laboratory in Massachusetts, inventor Reginald Fessenden presented an experimental program that included a scripture reading and a violin rendition of "O Holy Night."

The Christmas Eve broadcast was heard by a handful of merchant seamen, who marvelled at hearing a human voice instead of the standard clicks of Morse Code (Barnouw, 1966, p. 9). By 1920 crystal sets were picking up voices and music, and people were listening to radio in their

homes. The nation's first commercially licensed station, KDKA, began broadcasting election day, 1920 (Hilliard, 1967, p. 15). On January 21, 1921, KDKA introduced religious broadcasting with the first broadcast of a church service (Barnouw, 1966, p. 71).

While far-sighted pastors were the first to invade the broadcasting arena, denominations and councils of churches weren't far behind. The Lutheran Hour, sponsored by the Lutheran Laymen's League and the Missouri Synod, paved the way. But most of the major denominations were a bit uncertain how to grab onto the new communication medium. Some of the major denominations disliked the lack of innovation and the blandness in programming so much that they didn't launch anything new until the mid-1940's.

East Tennessee didn't wait until the 1940's to start though. In the early 1920's Knoxville already had a radio station with a religious emphasis broadcasting. Of great historical interest and the longest continuing station in Knoxville is WNOX, which is also one of the oldest stations in the United States. It started as WNAV and operated under those call letters for several years. Although there is some conflict as to the exact on-air date, evidence shows that it began on November 3, 1921, with 50 watts at 560 kHz (FCC. Personal communication, February 22, 1980).

By 1923 the station came under the ownership of People's Telephone and Telegraph Company. It was located in the old St. James Hotel on Wall Avenue. The operator of the station was the late Stuart Adcock, who continued to operate it when its call letters were changed from WNAV to WNOX. Adcock operated the station when it was later sold to

Sterchi Brothers (Deaderick, 1976, p. 298). Ownership by Sterchi's was for a very short time, but they did affiliate with the CBS network, an affiliation which lasted almost 40 years. When Francis Hipp of Liberty Insurance Company bought WNOX from Sterchi's, he made an agreement with First Baptist Church to broadcast both the Sunday morning and evening services of that church (Deaderick, p. 298).

On November 19, 1935, Scripps-Howard Radio, Inc., bought the station from Hipp. They continued varied programming, including the CBS network and a religious emphasis. The sale also began one of the most interesting periods of religious broadcasting on WNOX. The interest centered upon the Reverend J. Harold Smith, a colorful and controversial preacher who used the station for his evangelism.

Smith, who was originally from South Carolina, held revivals in East Tennessee in the late 1930's and early 1940's. In connection with his religious revivals, he used WNOX for daily religious broadcasts, for which he paid the station. With that beginning, he later used WNOX as a base of operations while still traveling about the South holding revival meetings. When Station Manager R. B. Westergaard returned from the Army in 1945, he decided to eliminate the "paid religious programs" that were supported by contributions from the listeners. He said that these solicitations put the station in an awkward and embarrassing position. Smith retaliated by holding a huge protest meeting, leading a parade of followers down Gay Street. WNOX management was afraid of violence at the studios and for a few hours, during the period of the parade, operated from its transmitter (Deaderick, p. 312). The religious emphasis of the station soon fell into the background after that incident, but it

is still of interest mainly because it foreshadowed other religious stations springing up to take its place.

Even though the Reverend Smith had his program dropped from WNOX, he was determined to continue his religious radio broadcasts. Smith got the idea of owning his own station, and in 1947 he obtained a construction permit and started a Christian music station, WIBK.

By 1951 the station was ordered off the air by a United States Appeals Court decision in Washington, D. C., upholding a previous ruling by the FCC. The Station Manager, Marvin Thompson, immediately filed an appeal to the United States Supreme Court. The appeals court upheld the FCC ruling because WIBK had operated only under an FCC construction permit.

The public registered protests with the FCC even before granting Smith a permit, so it designated WIBK for a hearing to answer questions, mainly about hidden ownership which involved loans for the construction money. Apparently Smith had concealed his indebtedness to others. Technically, he didn't lose his license--he never had it.

A new company was formed by Thompson and associates, and it did apply for a new station that started February 14, 1953 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-205). Located at 900 kHz, the 1,000 watt station was set up by the Ra-Tel corporation. It was headed by Roy Carr who leased the transmitter location and the studio after it left the air the previous November. His son, Tom Carr, was named general manager of the new station, WKXV, and Thompson became commercial manager.

WKXV continued to bill itself as a Christian music station, and featured many items of church news. It promoted local gospel groups,

and carried the Reverend J. Bazzel Mull's program. In the 1980's the station was broadcasting daily as a gospel station.

Another religious station in the early 1920's in East Tennessee was WFBC. The call letters stood for W First Baptist Church, and its studio and transmitter were actually located in the church with the antenna on top. The Reverend Fred Brown was pastor of the church at the time and broadcasts were mainly of the Sunday and Wednesday services conducted at the church. WFBC was on the air at the same time as WNOX for several years until WFBC was moved to Greenville, South Carolina, about 1930.

During the period from 1927 to 1936, there was a quota system on the number of radio stations permitted within each of five zones in the country. The zone in which Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina are located was full and there was no way to get a new station into the area other than to buy one from within the zone and move it to a new place of operation. Greenville had no radio station, and the News-Piedmont organization wanted one. They arranged to buy WFBC, moved it to Greenville, and went on the air there in 1933 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-187). WFBC is still Greenville's leading station, and the owners have in recent years expanded under Multimedia, Inc., the owners of the Phil Donahue Show and WBIR-TV, Knoxville. The call letters have not been changed.

Another radio station that had its beginning in connection with a religious organization was WNBJ, which began broadcasting on February 12, 1927, on a part-time basis (FCC. Personal communication, February 29, 1980). Like the original WFBC, the format was entirely religious, and the station was owned by the Lonsdale Baptist Tabernacle.

After only two years of operation the station was purchased by Stuart Adcock, once manager of WNAV and WNOX. Under his ownership the station began broadcasting on a full-time basis, the call letters were changed to WROL, and the station was moved to a second floor studio above a dress shop next to the Farragut Hotel. In 1941 it was moved to the third floor of the Hamilton Bank Building. At this time, the station switched to 620 kHz and increased power from 250 watts to 1,000 watts. In 1947 the station increased power to 5,000 watts.

Before Adcock retired in 1953, the station was sold to Paul Montcastle, Sr., a Knoxville and Nashville insurance executive, in 1950. Official transfer of the radio station to its new owners, Paul Montcastle, Sr., and Associates, took place at the station's midnight signoff, June 30, 1950 (FCC. Personal communication, February 29, 1980). By July 1, 1951, the station was broadcasting from the fifth floor of the Commercial National Bank. At the same time, its owners were predicting television soon for Knoxville, announcing that the station had filed for an FCC license.

In the late 1950's WROL underwent the first of many changes in ownership, call letters, and formats. The 1970's brought the latest changes. The call letters were changed to WRJZ, and the Top 40 format was intended for an 18-24 age group.

The second WROL radio station began operating on September 1, 1960, as a 1,000 watt daytime and 250 watt night station on 1490 kHz (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-205). It began as a Fountain City station in 1953, and later, when Fountain City was annexed, it became a Knoxville station.

Sam Thrower, principal owner, president, and general manager, picked the call letters because they were familiar to Knoxvilleans. WATE had given them up and had no hold on the old call sign. WROL began broadcasting with a Middle-of-the-Road format and in the 1960's changed to Country and Western.

In 1972 the station switched to a Rock format aimed at a university student audience. The change, combined with 24-hour broadcasting, proved successful. Along with progressive music fare, the station adopted a second set of call letters that were illegal, W149. The legal call letters remained WROL.

Thrower sold the station in February 1976, to Radio Knoxville, Inc. The corporation changed the call letters to WKVQ and the format to an automated, easy listening sound. (The call letters were changed in April 1980, to WITA, but to avoid confusion, the letters WKVQ are used throughout this thesis.) The station changed its format again before settling on its present religious format with a contemporary emphasis.

Another religious radio station went on the air in Knoxville, this time in the early 1960's. WSKT, founded May 21, 1961 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-205), by Harry J. Morgan, president and general manager, is best described as a Christian station. Inspirational messages are broadcast through the morning hours and gospel music during the afternoon. WSKT has billed itself as nondenominational, but the material has always been geared more toward fundamentalist believers than conservative ones.

Programming is paid for by local and area Baptist, Church of God, and Presbyterian congregations. News, five minutes every hour-and-a-half,

is furnished by Mutual Broadcasting Company. Gospel music artists, featured since the station began, have included the Haven of Rest Quartet, Doug Oldham, Jack Price, George Beverly Shea, and the Old Fashioned Revival Hour Quartet.

Other religious stations went on the air across East Tennessee and continued the tradition of controversy mixed with inspiration. Today, more people listen to one or more religious programs on radio each week than attend a service in a house of worship (Armstrong, The Electric Church, 1979). It started as a way of reaching people who were unable or unwilling to take part in church services, but radio became a major instrument of evangelism and discipleship. Radio created a new 20th century form of the church--the Electric Church.

For the past several years, religious radio stations have been receiving licenses at the rate of one a week (Religious Broadcasting, October/November 1979, p. 3), and in 1980 more than 1,400 religious oriented radio stations were on the air in the United States (Armstrong, Directory of Religious Broadcasting, 1979, p. 7). In fact, in some areas there are four or five stations with a religious format all competing for a rather limited audience. Ten of these 1,400 stations are examined in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

STATION PHILOSOPHY AND BACKGROUND

East Tennessee is the buckle of the Bible Belt.
--Wayne Williams

It has been said many times that history predicts the future. At first glance, religious stations seem to perpetuate that saying. Religious radio stations in the early 1920's programmed traditional preaching and music in much the same manner as stations in 1980. Technology and experience have improved the stations capabilities and on-air sound, of course, but the philosophies behind the sounds have changed little.

The philosophies found in religious radio broadcasting in 1980 are manifest by two distinct types of stations and can be identified easily. First is the station that exists for a profit and views the religious format as just that, a format. The second type is one concerned necessarily with keeping the station financially solvent, but is interested mainly in presenting a positive life-style to the listening audience. The stations are presented here in the order in which they were interviewed.

A. WBLC

The original on-air date for WBLC was June 15, 1965, by A. B. Corum in Lenoir City (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-205). As with many stations, the call letters stood for something meaningful to the owner; in this case the initials of Corum's daughter, Becky Lynn. In later years, under the direction of Earl Lauderdale and Robert McKeehan, the call letters meant "Broadcasting the Love of Christ."

Lauderdale bought the station from Corum in November 1972, and continued the tradition of format changes ranging from Country and Western to Rock until Thanksgiving Day, 1976, when the religious format won out. Two years before the final change, McKeehan joined with Lauderdale to form the Lauderdale/McKeehan Christian Broadcasting Corporation.

According to McKeehan, vice president and equal partner in the corporation with the president Lauderdale, they met in the 1950's in Tuscon, Arizona. Both men were in the radio business at the time, only meeting briefly, never realizing they would join in a business venture 20 years later. But as broadcasters tend to do, they traveled to various parts of the country following different jobs. Lauderdale then telephoned McKeehan in 1974 to find if he was interested in part ownership of his station. They subsequently ended up together in Lenoir City. Because both men are religious, they decided the station was neither programming the proper music nor programs in the early years and they switched to a full-time Christian station (see Figure 2).

FORMAT-Christian	OPERATING HOURS (OH)-6 a.m. - sunset
SITE-Lenoir City	OWNER/MANAGER (O/M)-Lauderdale/McKeehan
POWER-1,000 Watts Daytime (WD)	NEWS-Tennessee Radio Network (TRN)
FREQUENCY-1360 kHz	MUSIC-Traditional

Figure 2. WBLC-AM

B. WKXV

This station in Knoxville had a shaky beginning in the 1940's as did WIBK, under the ownership of J. Harold Smith. Many sources, such as the National Association of Broadcasters and National Religious Broadcasters, do not recognize the early station, and as far as they are concerned Valentine's Day, 1953, was the original sign-on date for WKXV (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-205).

The station was started by the Ra-Tel Corporation with Roy Carr and his son, Tom, managing the operation. Marvin Thompson was a partner in the transaction with the Carr's. When Tom Carr sold his share in 1956, Thompson took over as owner, still under Ra-Tel.

WKXV did not change its focus during those early years and remained a religious radio station. According to the General Manager, Robert Lawson, it was a religious station for one reason: money. Lawson said that a station with a religious format has a very low overhead because of the reduced sales staff needed. He claimed preaching programs sell themselves and don't require advertisers because the preachers pay for the programs. In fact, much of the day was consumed by programs rather than music because music requires advertising to support it.

Other benefits were realized as well, according to Lawson. The pay scale for the eight full- and part-time employees was higher than average because of the low overhead, and national advertisers ranked the station as one of the top 20 in the country because of the quality of programs on the air (Lawson, R. Personal communication, January 11, 1980).

Not only is WKXV praised as one of the better religious stations, but it takes pride in areas such as community involvement, too. Lawson's

liberal philosophic attitude is reflected through a typical statement of his: "We'll allow anyone on our station as long as they have the money to pay. We don't care what they preach either. They can say the world flies backward. This has never happened, but if the Satan Church in Knoxville asked for time on the air, we would provide it if they could pay for it" (Personal communication, January 11, 1980).

Some of the attitudes at WKXV were progressive. In the early 1960's WKXV hired one of the first black announcers in the country (Lawson, R. Personal communication, January 11, 1980). He is Walter P. Kennedy, Floor Assistant to the Minority in the House of Representatives (first Carter Administration). One of the first female black announcers, Jackie Wynn, also started there in 1969 (Lawson, R. Personal communication, January 11, 1980).

WKXV is no longer considered a Christian music station, as it was titled in the 1950's and 1960's. It is now billed as a gospel station so it can be directed at all persons, not just Christians (see Figure 3).

FORMAT-Gospel	OH-6 a.m. - sunset
SITE-Knoxville	O/M-Robert Mayer/Robert Lawson
POWER-1,000 WD	NEWS-Associated Press (AP) wire
FREQUENCY-900 kHz	MUSIC-Traditional/Contemporary

Figure 3. WKXV-AM

C. WMCH

This station in Church Hill also had shaky beginnings. Thales Wallace bought the station property and later acquired the license May 8, 1954, with little, if any, knowledge of the broadcasting industry (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-202). Experience was needed initially to get the station running, so Harry Morgan, a young radio announcer in Knoxville, was brought in to work with Wallace and contribute any knowledge he had of broadcasting. Morgan never put money into the station and was essentially a silent partner. Questionable financial dealings at the station soon overtook Morgan, and he was subsequently bought out by Wallace in a stormy legal battle (Creasy, B. Personal communication, January 14, 1980). The court decision oddly resulted in Morgan receiving enough money to start a station in Etowah and later a religious station in Knoxville. Wallace survived the problems and continued operating the station as a dual Country/Gospel format until his death November 2, 1963.

The station never left the Wallace family though. Wallace had two daughters, Shirley and Bettie Jo, who continued the station operation. Actually Shirley had little interest in operating the station, so the responsibilities shifted solely to Bettie Jo. Shirley married and soon left the area. Bettie Jo, on the other hand, remained in Church Hill.

Bettie Jo said she always relies on the experience her father provided to guide many of her decisions. She said that if her father ran the station a particular way in the 1950's and 1960's, she sees no reason to change now. One of those policies, started in the 1950's and running to 1980, was the Country/Gospel format (see Figure 4). Even though the

bawdy lyrics of most Country and Western songs would seem to contradict the gospel message, Bettye Jo felt tradition should keep the paradox going. She said that many of the more suggestive songs are censored from the airwaves so the public doesn't become outraged. Besides, she claimed the lyrics depict a reality which cannot be separated from the gospel message.

FORMAT-Country/Gospel	OH-6 a.m. - sunset
SITE-Church Hill	O/M-Bettye Jo Creasy
POWER-1,000 WD	NEWS-United Press International (UPI)
FREQUENCY-1260 kHz	MUSIC-Traditional/Country & Western
Figure 4. WMCH-AM	

D. WMBW-FM

WMBW-FM, Chattanooga, is one of the few noncommercial, religious stations in the country only partly affiliated with an educational institution. The remainder of its monetary support and programming comes from persons in the Chattanooga area. Nonetheless, it is religiously affiliated with the Moody Bible Institute (MBI) in Chicago. George Sweeting is the president of MBI and oversees the operation of all 11 stations MBI owns throughout the country from Spokane, Washington, to St. Petersburg, Florida. One of the 11 stations is WMBI in Chicago which pioneered religious radio in 1926 at which time the Midwest first heard the Gospel broadcast. It is the flagship station in 1980 and produces programs of Bible content for its sister stations.

WMBW-FM is basically the same as the other stations in the chain receiving half its on-air programs from WMBI. The Station Manager in Chattanooga, Dean Sippel, said he does have some autonomy from Chicago, though, because the other 50 percent of the programming is produced locally. There is also autonomy provided through the structure of a noncommercial station. Requests for money are not made over the air, and, of course, there are no commercial advertisers to control any of the programming policies.

The relatively new station wasn't always owned by MBI. It was purchased from Southern Keswick, Inc., who had owned it since its beginning, August 1, 1969 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-202). With the help of MBI, a local Christian Radio Fellowship established the station as WMBW-FM on May 18, 1973 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-202). Since that time it has been known as a Christian, family-oriented station, as shown in Figure 5.

The 100,000 watt stereo station participates with its Chicago base in another interesting way. The institute's philosophy is to reach the world through the broadcast medium. Nearly 350 radio stations, translators, and cable television outlets around the world now carry Moody-produced programs, provided by MBI's specialized division, Broadcast Services. The Southeastern United States has many of those translators (FM repeaters) in use, all hooked into WMBW-FM (see Appendix C). Bristol and Johnson City have many of the translators in East Tennessee because they are in a mountainous area where FM signals cannot be received easily. Sippel said translators are planned for Atlanta, Birmingham, and other cities to provide a quality, family format to those areas.

FORMAT-Christian

OH-24 Hours

SITE-Chattanooga

O/M-Dean Sippel

POWER-100,000 W

NEWS-Mutual Radio Network/ABC Radio

FREQUENCY-88.9 MHz

MUSIC-Traditional/Contemporary

Figure 5. WMBW-FM

E. WDYN-FM

Another noncommercial, religious station in Chattanooga is WDYN-FM. This 62,000 watt station (see Figure 6) has the distinction of being affiliated with Tennessee Temple University, a religious institution. It is not affiliated only with the University; it is also an extension of Highland Park Baptist Church located across the street from the school. Since it started June 1, 1968 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-202), as a 10 watt station, it has been a training center for students. Its programming mainly serves the church and school and emphasizes a conservative theme. A person not only has to be a Christian to work at the station, one also must sign a confession of faith stating his or her beliefs in a manner consistent with the station's and school's policies.

The station is further church-school involved through the pastor, Dr. Lee Roberson. He heads the church, owns the station's license, and is chancellor of the University. He rests on other laurels as well. Highland Park boasts over 9,000 people in attendance each Sunday morning, with over 70 chapels in the Chattanooga area connected with the church. According to the Assistant Manager of WDYN-FM, Joe Ray, and National

Religious Broadcasters, Dr. Roberson has the longest running, live, daily church program on radio. It spans over 37 years with no end in sight (Ray, J. Personal communication, January 18, 1980).

FORMAT-Christian	OH-6 a.m. - 1 a.m.
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SITE-Chattanooga	O/M-Marvin Easley
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POWER-62,000 W	NEWS-ABC Radio
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FREQUENCY-89.7 MHz	MUSIC-Traditional
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Figure 6. WDYN-FM

F. WMOC

WMOC's history in Chattanooga can be traced back almost 20 years. Since its first on-air date, October 5, 1961 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-202), the station evolved through every format possible before finally settling on its gospel theme July 29, 1974. The president of Mayer Broadcasting Company, Robert Mayer, decided in 1974 that the station should have consistency in its programming content. Chattanooga, in the heart of the Bible Belt, seemed to offer a good opportunity to try a religious format full-time. Actually, in 1973 the previous owners started an automated religious station. Mayer felt, like other station owners, that automation didn't personally reach the audience so he returned the station to a live sound.

Over the last six years the station climbed to the top among religious stations in Chattanooga (Williams, W. Personal communication,

January 18, 1980). The Assistant General Manager, Wayne Williams, said the ranking came about because of their approach, which is different from other religious stations in the area. WMOC aims for a younger age group, 24-49, with contemporary music and a sound called Southern Gospel (see Figure 7). Certainly fundamental preaching programs are on the air drawing the older segments of the population, but the music is geared to the youth. And because 70 percent of the daily program is recorded music, the advertising revenue from that large segment pays most of the bills. Their success is mirrored also in the large number of persons employed at the station. WMOC employs 15 persons, from 2 to 5 times more than most other religious stations in the East Tennessee area.

After rising to the top, Mayer Broadcasting Company was scheduled to be sold to another corporation in April 1980. The new company is to be Quality Media Corporation in Columbus, Georgia, operated by William Kitchen. Kitchen is to be the new president and owner of WMOC.

FORMAT-Gospel	OH-24 Hours
SITE-Chattanooga	O/M-Tommy Sneed
POWER-1,000 WD/250 WN	NEWS-UPI/AP wire
FREQUENCY-1450 kHz	MUSIC-Southern Gospel/Contemporary

Figure 7. WMOC-AM

G. WCHU

The Reverend Robert Mayer was involved in the operation of this

station, too. Mayer was the original owner, placing WCHU on the air with a Gospel format on May 23, 1970, with 250 watts (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-208). Mayer tried to house the station in a railroad passenger car in the redecorated Chattanooga train terminal. It didn't work out as planned, but he already had established the call letters that stood for Choo-Choo radio, even though the FCC had allocated the station for Soddy-Daisy. Mayer sold the station to Al Dick in August 1974, one month after buying WMOC from Dick.

Dick kept the Gospel format for awhile, tired of it, and changed to Country and Western. He then sold the station on March 10, 1978 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-208), to Ben Hicks, a broadcaster for more than 27 years. WCHU is Hicks' first attempt at owning and managing a station, and in broadcasting jargon his station in Soddy-Daisy is a textbook example of the "Mom and Pop" organization. His wife is the program director and his daughter is in charge of the music. Hicks said he had all the employees he needed to run a small 1,000 watt station. Besides, he claimed all the employees he hired in the past were untrustworthy. With many bad experiences, especially on-air announcers, Hicks sees no need to hire anyone in 1980. Whatever the reason for a small staff, it certainly is less expensive.

Money was also a factor in returning the station to a religious sound; a format called Family Radio (see Figure 8). Hicks was committed to a religious station and the Country and Western format under Dick lost money. But Hicks found that advertisers wouldn't buy time on a station billed as Religious or Gospel because the businessmen thought people didn't listen to a gospel station. Family Radio is considered a safer approach which it is hoped will bring positive results.

FORMAT-Family Radio

OH-Sunrise - Sunset

SITE-Soddy-Daisy

O/M-Ben Hicks

POWER-1,000 WD

NEWS-None

FREQUENCY-1550 kHz

MUSIC-Southern Gospel

Figure 8. WCHU-AM

H. WSBM-FM

This 3,000 watt station in Jefferson City has a short three-year history with a long string of format changes. The owner of WSBM-FM, Hugh Cato, and Mossy Creek Broadcasting Corporation started the station on February 1, 1977 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-204). Cato also owns an insurance agency in the same building that houses the station. Profits from the agency allowed Cato to invest in his new station and to keep it solvent during lean times. Unfortunately, Cato's knowledge of insurance didn't prepare him for the broadcasting industry. In 10 months WSBM-FM went through the paces of Adult Contemporary, Easy Listening, Easy Country, and then solid block programming of national preachers in a religious format with no music.

Religion finally started to pay off, but lack of music was a drawback. Doug Koontz was hired as sales manager (see Figure 9) after being the sales manager at WKGN in Knoxville. Koontz knew the broadcasting business and made the station profitable in less than two years. Many different types of religious music were programmed into the format throughout the day to reduce the amount of preaching and increase

advertising revenue. The music also was designed to provide alternative religious programming. Koontz said the previous formats failed because the station is located too close to Knoxville's religious stations and WJFC, a conservative, religious station that had been in Jefferson City for 20 years.

The gospel station uses an exclusively Christian staff to run the station. Koontz said the young station is running well and he has high hopes for the future. Part of that outlook for the future includes the use of basic radio strategy. Music is played in morning and afternoon drive-times with preaching sandwiched between the two. He said the changes should help WSBM-FM grow.

FORMAT-Gospel	OH-5:30 a.m. - 12 a.m.
SITE-Jefferson City	O/M-Hugh Cato/Doug Koontz
POWER-3,000 W	NEWS-AP wire
FREQUENCY-99.3 MHz	MUSIC-Traditional/Contemporary

Figure 9. WSBM-FM

I. WKVQ

WKVQ dates back to 1953 when it started in Fountain City as WROL. At the time, Knoxville was growing quickly and soon absorbed Fountain City, bringing the station with it. Sam Thrower bought the station on September 1, 1960 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-205), and was the owner and president of the station. Thrower kept the call letters WROL

thinking that they would be familiar to Knoxville because they had been used for more than two decades by the station that is now WATE. The station changed its format a number of times under Thrower, until he decided to leave radio and venture into the presidency of a locally based cablevision company in 1976.

In February of that year, Radio Knoxville, Inc., bought the station from Thrower. The new owners were from Jackson, Tennessee, and included Robert Blow. The group decided it was time for a new station image. The call letters were changed to WKVQ and the music format went from a university, youth-oriented, Top 40 sound to an automated, Middle-of-the-Road (MOR) sound.

But MOR lasted little more than a year. A religious format was undertaken in July 1977, in the hope of financial stability. Blow felt that religion would boost profits, but the conservative programming just didn't compete well with the older established religious stations in Knoxville. Two years later, in June 1979, Blow changed again, but this time to a light, contemporary religious format appealing to youth, primarily anyone under 35 years of age.

In the religious radio broadcasting field, a change of format focused upon youth is considered to be a risky venture for a number of reasons. First, a continual change of formats alienates the audience. This is more noticeable in the field of religion because listeners tend to be in the upper age bracket and conservative. A youth-oriented, contemporary approach is considered economically unsound for religious broadcasting. Second, this type of format had never been tried in the Bible Belt. In fact WKVQ was the second station in the country to

attempt such a change (Van Hart, T. Personal communication, January 23, 1980). The only other station with such an image is on the West Coast, an area traditionally thought to be progressive in style.

To complement its new image, a young Tom Van Hart was hired as general manager. Van Hart said the format gave a professional sound to the station. Van Hart conceded, though, that the professional, youthful sound brought many negative responses from the previously established audience. He claimed a new audience emerged after the summer of 1979.

Barely six months later, in January 1980, Blow sold the station to a corporation based in Florida. The corporation is Forus Communications (see Figure 10) managed by Lynde Voth and Simon Rosa who paid \$410,000 for the station.

FORMAT-Ministerial	OH-24 Hours
SITE-Knoxville	O/M-Forus Communications/Tom Van Hart
POWER-1,000 WD/250 WN	NEWS-AP wire/NBC Radio
FREQUENCY-1490 kHz	MUSIC-Contemporary

Figure 10. WKVQ-AM

J. WBNT-AM-FM

WBNT-AM started as a 1,000 watt daytime station in Oneida more than 20 years ago on August 1, 1959 (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-208). It was then owned by Scott Broadcasting of which Russ Troxel was the president. Troxel owned the local Ford dealership in Oneida and

was another gentleman who had financial resources, but no knowledge of the broadcasting industry. He hired one general manager after another, but each would take his turn cheating Troxel out of money and goods (Mattie, H. Personal communication, February 1, 1980). To compound problems he established WBNT-FM June 10, 1965, and duplicated all AM programming. Troxel soon discovered he couldn't financially support two ailing stations, and on May 1, 1969, he sold the stations to Oneida Broadcasters, Inc. (Broadcasting Yearbook, 1979, p. C-208).

The new owners were better suited for the task of running two radio stations: James F. Stair owns WYSH in Clinton; George Guertin owns and operates WMTN in Morristown; and Hillard Mattie, the general manager of WBNT-AM-FM (see Figure 11), has been broadcasting for years. Changes slowly took place at WBNT. The station was moved from the old Ford Motor Company building in downtown Oneida to a remote location on one of the neighboring mountains. Best of all, for the owners, the station was starting to show a profit.

The music format had been an automated, easy listening sound that continued until April 1972. In 1972 the AM and FM discontinued almost all of the duplication. The AM then went to a split music format, alternating between Country and Western and Top 40. The FM went further afield with its emphasis on a Gospel format. Mattie said it went gospel for strictly programming reasons. He wanted to get the gospel off the AM and place it solely on FM.

The station regressed a little in the years following 1972. It slowly increased its automation again with a small amount of duplication of gospel preaching and music. In July 1979, the practice of automation

ended entirely after additional employees were hired. There remains some duplication between the AM and the 3,000 watt FM stations, especially on Sundays and in the mornings and afternoons before the AM station signs on and after it signs off the air.

The FM station is billed now as the "Gospel Voice of the Cumberland Plateau." Fully half its programming is Gospel and the other 50 percent Country and Western. Mattie said the format is termed Bluegrass/Gospel because the quartets and family singers are a big attraction in the hills of Oneida.

FORMAT-Gospel	OH-AM-6 a.m. - sunset/FM-6 a.m. - 10 p.m.
SITE-Oneida	O/M-Oneida Broadcasters/Hillard Mattie
POWER-AM-1,000 WD/FM-3,000 W	NEWS-AP wire/AP radio
FREQUENCY-1310 kHz/105.5 MHz	MUSIC-Bluegrass/Gospel

Figure 11. WBNT-AM-FM

These 10 stations, from WBLC to WBNT-AM-FM, have provided an overview of religious stations in East Tennessee. Much of what was said dealt with historical facts along an evolutionary trail. But to provide additional information it is necessary to analyze the present and project the future. Chapter IV explores in detail issues facing religious broadcasters in 1980. The responses to the issues provide a clearer picture of the many ways broadcasters deal with their medium.

CHAPTER IV

INTERVIEWS AND PROGRAM LOG DATA ANALYSIS

And as in uffish thought he stood,
The jabberwock, with eyes of flame,
Came whiffling through the tulgey wood,
And burbled as it came!

--Lewis Carroll, Jabberwocky

This chapter examines information gained from personal interviews with management personnel at the 10 stations selected, and data compiled and tabulated from station program logs. The resulting information provided a framework for identifying trends, common and uncommon, among the stations. The focus of the interviews and program log examinations was to gain information that applied to the internal operations and procedures of each station. The audience hears the sound from a receiver, but usually never knows how the sound started. Decisions such as programming policy, community involvement, and hiring practices are almost daily considerations before the station goes on the air. And those are only three factors guiding every station's operations.

Some stations' policies overlap those of another station by coincidence. Others show no similarities when compared to other stations. But each station, compared to each of the other nine, exhibits its own characteristics and adds to the community of religious radio broadcasting by its existence alone.

A. STATION'S PURPOSE

The Communications Act of 1934 clearly states in Section 307(a) (1971) that a licensed station is to perform its duties in the "public's

convenience, interest, or necessity." The intent is to force a licensee to place programming on his or her station that will benefit the community in which that station is located. Because everyone cannot own a license, the responsibility entrusted to a few groups and individuals can be great.

All 10 station owners voiced their desire to comply with the FCC regulations. For one thing, even to get local advertising, they must program in response to the communities needs. But every station owner has a personal interpretation of Section 307(a).

WBLC built a Tabernacle behind the station in Lenoir City for open-air community revivals. It is inter-denominational and, best of all for those who want to use it, it is free of charge. WKXV, WMCH, and WBNT-FM try to draw listeners and money through a diversity of programming. WKVQ, WCHU, and WSBM-FM on the other hand try to program what the other stations in the area do not provide. Tom Van Hart at WKVQ said, "most stations head toward a traditional sound and the low income people. WKVQ is trying to involve the middle and upper classes to balance it (sic) out."

The three remaining stations, WDYN-FM, WMBW-FM, and WMOC, emphasize their religious programming as a benefit to the community. Dean Sippel, the general manager of WMBW-FM, summarized all of their philosophies. He said, "their intent is to present a wholesome, positive, and Christ-exalting broadcast ministry. This is accomplished by providing programs of a spiritual, educational, and informational nature."

Interestingly, many general managers did not have a previously considered philosophy for their station's existence. Of course, a general

manager cannot be expected to have ready answers to all questions asked. But before the community was taken into consideration, increasing profits was cited by general managers and station owners as the prime reason for the station retaining its license.

B. FORMAT

A radio broadcast station is concerned about many things, such as the needs of advertising clientele. But the major concern is the right choice of format. If a community has reached the saturation point in Country and Western music, it probably would not be wise to bring another Country and Western format into the area, unless there was a unique selling point. So it is with a religious format.

The format will determine who listens to the station and who will advertise on the station. Inversely, it determines who will not listen and who will not advertise. It follows that if there are no advertisers or listeners, the station will come up short when the time comes to pay the bills.

Apart from money, there is a special factor to be dealt with when choosing a religious format. Unlike Country and Western, Top 40, Easy Listening, and others, where the station programs certain types of music to appeal to the tastes of a particular audience, the religious format programs to influence the lifestyle of the audience. Certainly music and programs are placed on the air the same as any other station. But the music and programs are designed to influence the audience. They are directed toward changing people and their environment, and the influence is normally not subtly administered. The religious broadcaster

then feels he has a responsibility to the audience to program instruction, not entertainment.

This is not to imply that all religious formats are the same. The broadcasters responsibility also should not imply that all religious format stations are on the air for purely spiritual and unselfish purposes. Throughout East Tennessee, in fact, some stations have chosen a religious format as a last resort. WMOC, WSBM-FM, and WKVQ have all participated in a wide range of formats before settling on religion. Doug Koontz, sales manager at WSBM-FM, said the Gospel format was decided upon by default. He claimed there weren't any other viable formats from which to choose. WMOC used hindsight to its advantage. After Robert Mayer, owner of WMOC, exhausted the other formats, he decided to use the location of the Bible Belt as a reason for choosing religion. He felt it was the path of least resistance and a better way to make money.

Not everyone agrees that a religious format is an easier or better way to make money, but certainly money is one reason to choose or continue a religious format. WKXV in Knoxville has been a gospel station since its beginning and even now does not have a sales staff. Robert Lawson, WKXV's general manager, simply said that a sales staff isn't necessary because the preaching programs bring enough revenue into the station to keep it running. Some broadcasters feel solid blocks of preaching for eight hours or more will alienate an audience. Lawson claimed there are enough preachers demanding time on WKXV that he must keep eight hours available. He also said that people aren't expected to listen to a religious station for the entire eight hour period. They

listen to the preachers they agree with, and turn the radio off during the remaining part of the day.

WMCH and WBNT-FM have not found that solid preaching blocks can support them. These two rural stations supplement their day with Country and Western music that appeals to a large audience in East Tennessee. Stations in rural areas either find that there are not enough preachers to fill the programming time, or that there are not enough advertisers that believe in religious radio to support it.

WCHU and WBLC are two rural stations that don't take the monetary approach and have always been religious. The men running the stations simply believe in what they are doing and want to continue no matter the loss or gain.

Finally, the most fortunate of any religious station in terms of monetary considerations, is the noncommercial station. Even though a noncommercial station has to rely on private donations, the money usually comes from either an educational institution with which it is affiliated, a church organization, or a network of other religious stations. This is true for both WDYN-FM and WMBW-FM in Chattanooga. These stations will continue with a religious format as long as the stations' retain their affiliation because their main support comes from that affiliation.

C. PAID RELIGION

Since religious radio broadcasting started in the early 1920's, a controversy has raged over the practice of paying for religious programs. Tom Van Hart, general manager at WKVQ, said every advertiser on his

station pays for his programs because "if it's worth having, it should be paid for." Van Hart voiced the majority viewpoint. The broadcasters agree that if they begin doling out program time at no charge, or cut their usual rates, there will be no end. It would be impractical to discriminate by charging one group less than another. Soon free time might have to be provided for everyone, and the station would fail because of the resulting absence of funds.

WMOC and WMCH are the only two stations in East Tennessee that give some free program time. Although there is no rate cutting, there is free time supplied to selected groups or preachers. Wayne Williams, WMOC's general manager, said some national preachers are played free of charge to fill time slots that are not sold to anyone else. Local preachers are not given free time, though, to avoid local complaints of favoritism. WMCH's General Manager, Bettye Jo Creasy, said there is some free time given to churches for public relations. She said the churches can buy one commercial spot and get one free. Miss Creasy claimed that it is very hard to sell her gospel station because the businessmen don't trust it. She stated, "they don't want to give God the credit for anything. Since he (the businessman) doesn't believe in it, the businessmen don't (sic) think anyone else will believe in it either."

In one sense the noncommercial stations are excluded from the battleground of paid religion by the very nature of their noncommercial status. But they do get funding from many sectors, such as private donations, schools, and corporations. These gifts can have an influence on the programming, because the donors can withdraw their support if they do not care for what is aired.

D. STATION ACCESS

Along with the dilemma of paid religion, a station owner has to answer an overriding question of who or which programs he or she will allow on the station. This allowance, or station access, can be a very difficult question to answer. The thin line between personal preference and discrimination tends to become blurred. Discrimination, in the eyes of the FCC, is viewed as a grave error, and can result in the termination of a station's license.

In East Tennessee, only two policies were found to exist in determining who gets time on the station. The first is adhered to by 50 percent of the stations, and it is simply discrimination. WBLC, WMCH, WDYN-FM, WMOC, and WCHU set standards that permit only conservative programs and music. Joe Ray of WDYN-FM probably stated the stations' feelings most accurately. He said, the "station does not want to be all things to all people. Everything on the air has to go along with the station's beliefs." Some owners believe there is little inherently wrong in that line of reasoning. A station owner has a difficult time placing something on his station that he does not personally believe. Also the station owners don't want to alienate the very audience they have tried to build. If they program a liberal preacher to a conservative audience, the audience and advertisers may be offended. The owners are discriminating illegally, but they are doing what they believe is right.

The second policy allows anyone or any group to be on the station as long as there is money to pay for the programs and there is time available during program hours. Many stations don't have to worry about

groups such as cults, Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, or others trying to gain access because they simply do not exist in parts of East Tennessee. If these groups should request time, the owners from the five stations with this policy said they would allow them time if they paid for it. The only groups that normally request broadcast time are Baptists, Church of God, and Church of Christ. Some religious broadcasters might say Robert Lawson of WKXV is theologically liberal though. Lawson said, "the Satan Church of Knoxville would be accepted on this station (WKXV) because varying opinions provide for a broadening experience" (Personal communication, January 11, 1980).

E. PROGRAM FORMATTING

The primary responsibility of the program director and general manager, after deciding on the religious format, is to determine the best way to mix preaching programs and religious music during the programming day. There is no available research to guide a religious radio broadcaster toward a sound decision. As a result, the broadcaster must make a decision based on previous experience. If he or she has no experience from which to draw, common practice is to copy someone else's style along with their mistakes, or develop a unique programming mix hoping to capitalize on an area no one else has touched.

It seems no two station owners in East Tennessee hold the same opinion about what works when it comes to a programming decision. This can be attributed to many factors. Every broadcasting station is an entity unto itself. Autonomy is a cherished prize in a world of government involvement, and no one wants to be told what to do with their

format. It becomes a source of pride to be distinctive. Also every community is different, requiring varied approaches to a problem that can be solved only within that community.

There are similarities that can be identified though. All stations increase the amount of preaching programs on Saturday and Sunday. That fact in itself is not surprising because a religious station would be expected to cater to an audience interested in religious programming on Sunday, the traditional Christian day of worship. Too, many businesses are closed on Saturday or Sunday, so advertisers feel they might be unable to reap the full benefit of their advertisements during the weekend. The preaching programs help to offset that advertising loss for the broadcaster. Much of the audience as well does not work at their regular business on weekends, so they have more time available to listen to radio programs.

Another similarity is common to 8 of the 10 stations. These stations have live, in-studio preaching programs. While some of the programs are live remote programs from area churches, the majority of the programs involve a pulpit, piano, microphone, preacher, and a congregation inside a sound-proof studio at the station. The object is to produce a radio church. In many cases the audience tuning in to the religious station would have a hard time distinguishing a radio church from a remote broadcast at an area church. These in-studio programs are such a major part of the station that many broadcasters have two or three rooms available for live services. This provides uninterrupted preaching. This not only is profitable financially for the station owners, but for the community also. General managers claimed their stations were full with

area residents from sign-on to sign-off on the weekends. The all day affairs resemble a festival, with a large mass of people moving from one studio to the next and back again for at least eight hours with refreshments provided at some stations. This seems to be the modern version of the camp-meeting revivals experienced in the 1800's.

Weekdays the stations return to normalcy and more religious music, rather than preaching, is programmed. Instead of 80 to 90 percent preaching, as on Saturday and Sunday, the sermons comprise anywhere from 20 to 75 percent of the broadcast day. All of the stations reduce the preaching programs to 20 percent or less during the late afternoon and evening to allow for more music. The preaching programs on the air during the day are made up of local and national preachers. The owners said they tried to sandwich local programs between the national programs to get the audience to continue listening. The audience gained from a national program will carry over to the local program and keep the audience interested until the next national program. Station managers, such as Robert Lawson, emphasized that the local programs usually do not have the same effect. He said the audience for a local preacher is too small to carry over to a national preacher by itself, and that it would be nearly impossible for a local program to stand on its own. Lawson said WKXV has been very successful with its national-local-national method, and he claimed it does so well that he has a list of 400 to 500 national and local preachers waiting to buy program time on the station (Lawson, R. Personal communication, January 11, 1980).

Not all stations can, or would care to, boast such a figure of waiting preachers. Doug Koontz at WSBM-FM said if a station has that

kind of backlog, there must be a large turnover of programs. He adds that a large turnover alienates the audience from the station because they never can be sure who will be heard on the station each day. Continuity, after all, is an important goal for a station to seek. Because every station has a specific type of audience it attracts, whether by age, race, sex, or religion, it is limited as to the number of potential listeners it can attract. With the intense competition in the broadcasting field, a radio station cannot afford financially to lose much of its audience. If the audience is trained to expect programming at a specific time, and it is not provided, disappointment and frustration result. If the frustration is reinforced through inconsistency, the audience will seek a more stable station. Without an audience, a station soon has no advertising, which leads to bankruptcy.

F. COMMUNITY NEEDS

Returning to Section 307(a), a station owner has a responsibility to determine the communities' needs and arrange the station's programs to meet those needs (The Communications Act of 1934, p. 39). Section 73.526 in the Code of Federal Regulations for Telecommunication (47CFR73.526, 1979) outlines specific ways to survey the community and determine its needs. The outline is called an Ascertainment Survey in which the general public and community leaders are contacted to get their views on the needs in the community. Because every community is different, an Ascertainment Survey one station completes should be different from any other station's survey outside the same community. Therefore, no station should duplicate completely another station's programming.

WBLC gets involved in the community by holding revivals in its backyard Tabernacle. They also feature local music groups and occasionally have local sports on the air. Half the stations interviewed (WMOC, WBLC, WKXV, WMCH, and WDYN-FM) also program local recorded music to attract local listeners. There are so many local groups in each community that there is never a shortage of music to play. Some is of questionable quality, and most stations choose to censor any music that is deemed to be inappropriate. The same is true of local preachers, although, as has been mentioned, it is more difficult to screen the preaching programs.

WMBW-FM has another approach, along with the Ascertainment Survey, to determine the needs of the community. There is a group of businessmen in Chattanooga called the Christian Radio Fellowship. They meet three times a year to chart a course for the station that will best serve the city. They contact all area churches and invite them to use the station's facilities to promote the churches work. In addition, WMBW-FM has reserved Saturday mornings for children's programs. WDYN-FM and WSBM-FM have similar programs, and all are designed to counteract the cartoons on television. The station managers claimed the Saturday morning programs draw large audiences.

One other audience that stations claim to serve is the physically and mentally ill, the disabled, and the elderly. These persons are commonly referred to by the station managers as shut-ins. All station owners used the shut-ins as a justification for some of the station's programming. The owners implied that shut-ins require religious programming and the stations then exist, in part, to supply their needs.

While it may be true that there are those in the radio audience who cannot attend church, the stations have little, if any, programming geared specifically to an elderly or handicapped persons needs. The programs are designed by the preachers to follow a shotgun approach. The topics covered by preachers are usually broad and vague so as not to offend anyone. A limited amount of time on the air also encourages this vague approach. Normally the preacher is on for such a short period of time, for example 15 minutes, that preaching, music, and a money appeal must be squeezed together. Assuming each of the three parts get five minutes, very little material of substance can be covered. The national preachers are especially subject to this approach. They want to reach a large number of people in a short period of time, and get as much money as possible to keep their program on the air.

G. STATION IMAGE

The image a station projects to the community usually determines the audience. For example, if the station has a traditional approach, the audience is inclined to hold traditional values. Part of a religious radio station's audience is the church community including pastors and evangelists. The church community tries to associate with the station owner to find out the type of audience the station attracts. If the church leader agrees with the station's operating philosophy, program time may be bought on the station to draw part of the audience to his church. So the church leaders consult with the station owner to find ways in which the station can best serve the leaders and their churches.

All of the station managers said they enjoy a good relationship

with the various churches in their communities. They all claimed to get a lot of feedback from the churches. Wayne Williams said, WMOC tries to "help the churches by programming what the churches want. They gauge this response from the church pastors" (Personal communication, January 18, 1980). Other stations such as WKVQ and WBNT-FM operate solely to provide what over stations do not have. WKVQ takes a more contemporary approach to broadcasting and allows pastors on the station who aren't traditional and cannot gain access on any other station. WBNT-FM is the only religious station near the town of Oneida so it provides the local churches with an outlet.

WMBW-FM has a basically secular format, but it tries to promote what the churches do. It attempts to give each area church time on the air on Sundays by placing them on a rotating basis. The 10 stations in East Tennessee also emphasized that they encourage listeners to attend church instead of staying home with the radio. The general managers said their audiences are not lowered by the listeners attending church. Rather, during the week the audience level rises because they want to hear the pastor they saw on Sunday.

WKXV has more church response than most other stations, merely by the large number of preachers on the air each week. Robert Lawson said there were 200 preachers on his station each week of the first month in 1980. A person might well wonder where all of these preachers are located to maintain such an intense programming week. Of course, some of the preachers are national, such as Jimmy Swaggart. These national preachers account for 30 percent of the programming week. The remaining 70 percent are from the immediate Knoxville area. Lawson claimed there

is 1 church for every 150 persons in Knoxville, which is greater than the national average (Lawson, R. Personal communication, January 11, 1980). With that many churches, and preachers to go with them, there seems to be no shortage. Lawson also said there are more churches per person in Knoxville than anywhere else in the world (Lawson, R. Personal communication, January 11, 1980) and he is attempting to serve as many of those churches as possible.

H. MUSICAL SELECTION

A religious station's music is the second most important dimension of a broadcasters day. The music is usually second only to the preaching programs, because the programs bring in the station's revenue. The choice of music a station selects has much more potential for variety than the programs do. Because East Tennessee is a traditionally religious part of the United States, almost all of the preachers on a station are traditional also. Often, the music is traditional to complement the preachers. In fact, 7 of the 10 stations play traditional music especially during the daytime hours. The nights are reserved for a more contemporary upbeat sound to appeal to a younger audience.

WDYN-FM is a rare station that plays traditional music only. Assistant General Manager Joe Ray said the music must present a conservative image. He doesn't allow any music on the air until it has been cleared by him or General Manager Marvin Easley. WBLC and WKXV also make sure the music is traditional before it is heard over the air.

WMCH plays "wholesome" country music along with traditional religious music. All country music is cleared before it is used to screen any

offensive or suggestive language. Bettye Jo Creasy of WMCH said, "it's a good old, down-home brand." Hillard Mattie, WBNT-AM-FM's general manager, called his music a blend of Bluegrass and Gospel because religious quartets and family singers are popular in the hills surrounding Oneida. Doug Koontz said WSBM-FM has a unique name for its daily fare of traditional music. He said the music played during the day is Long-Hair Gospel. Koontz said the name originally came from the Classical Masters such as Beethoven and Bach, and now the name implies a sound similar to funeral parlor music. In simpler terms, it is very traditional.

WMBW-FM also features traditional religious music during the day, but has other music programmed in the early morning, late afternoon, and all night. At those times when preaching programs or conservative music is not heard, there is a wide variety of contemporary music played. Contemporary music can be distinguished easily from traditional music by its modern day message presented in the lyrics and by its upbeat sound. The upbeat sound usually includes drums, guitars, and other electronic instruments.

WKVQ is nearer to an all-contemporary station than the other nine. Tom Van Hart is aiming for an audience under 35, and said, the "light, contemporary format appeals to a youthful crowd. The contemporary music sounds more professional and provides a sound no one else has in the area." When asked what the format is called, Van Hart said it was so new to WKVQ that there was no title for it. After thinking for a moment, Van Hart coined a new religious format by titling WKVQ a Ministerial radio station.

WCHU and WMOC also program contemporary music. They both have a Middle-of-the-Road style with Southern Gospel. Southern Gospel identifies a group of singers from the southeastern part of the United States with an upbeat sound. It is very popular around the Chattanooga area and is geared to the people who do not listen to traditional preaching. Both stations decided on their contemporary sound in much the same manner. The general managers and owners listened to other stations in the area and played the type of music no one else offered.

There is an interesting highlight to programming contemporary music. It usually means that there will be less preaching on the station. While some see less preaching as a positive aspect, the broadcaster sees it as a loss in revenue. A sales staff is required at a contemporary station to sell advertising during the broadcast day because the preaching programs on a traditional station bring in the bulk of the money. If the major source of income is reduced, spot advertising must bring in the rest.

A religious radio station has another feature that is rarely found in any secular station. Five of the 10 stations (WKXV, WDYN-FM, WCHU, WMCH, and WBNT-AM-FM) rely on local groups for some of their music. Each community has a number of local religious groups trying to get recognition. The groups give an audition tape or record to the station hoping for some free advertising. WKXV and WMCH heavily program local groups. Robert Lawson at WKXV said, "that if you've got a record, especially local," it will be played. Lawson even has an hour a day set aside to play just local groups. These five stations play the groups to involve the community.

WDYN-FM, WBNT-AM-FM, and WCHU play music performed by local groups but there are reservations. WBNT-FM plays local groups, but only to break the routine of national groups. WDYN-FM restricts itself more than WBNT-FM. Joe Ray said the only local groups allowed on the station are from Tennessee Temple University. Finally, Ben Hicks said a few local groups are played on WCHU, but "only if they are requested, because the locals aren't very good." Hicks said the local groups get frustrated when they cannot get their music on the air by request, so sometimes they buy program time to play their entire album.

I. SALES PHILOSOPHY

In the years to come, radio revenue is predicted to experience sizable growth, and religious radio will not be left behind. In 1979, Television/Radio Age (Robb, pp. 3-31) concluded that the rising cost of television is forcing some advertisers to seek supplementary media. The most likely choice is radio because it represents a natural complement to television. They also found that adults spend nearly 3½ hours daily listening to the radio. In addition, the average rating figures show that 81 percent of all adults listen to radio daily and 95 percent of adults listen to radio each week (Robb, 1979, pp. 3-31).

A religious radio station should be making a good profit with those statistics. But the station owners in East Tennessee said those statistics must not apply to them because many are barely surviving financially. The owners said their lack of financial success cannot be attributed to the lack of community acceptance. The main problem is that the stations are primarily small with only 1,000 watts during the

day. If they broadcast at night, their power is limited to 250 watts. It is very difficult to sell advertising time to a businessman who knows the station's signal doesn't reach very far and is producing a product in which he may not believe.

As a point of interest, the four commercial station managers of WCHU, WMCH, WKVQ, and WBLC said they would like to sell advertising to the Christian business community, but there are so few Christian businessmen willing to buy time that it generally does not pay to seek those individuals out. Ben Hicks at WCHU said the Christian businessmen occasionally advertise but they get defensive at times because of the many religious stations singling them out and contacting them repeatedly.

The station owners sometimes make it difficult on themselves by placing restrictions on what can be advertised. The owners were unanimous in banning alcoholic beverage advertisements. Eighty percent also said no restaurants or pizza houses could advertise if they served alcohol in any form. Bettye Jo Creasy went one step further by banning theater advertisement on WMCH. Certainly banning alcohol, restaurants, and theaters wouldn't bankrupt a station, but it does limit advertising clientele.

It also is interesting to note that out of the 10 stations surveyed, only WMOC has a sales staff. Wayne Williams at WMOC said, "that unless there is a strong sales department, you're struggling. The sales staff is there to get results." Many of the other stations sell advertising, but it is done by the owners or general managers.

Once again, though, religious radio stations can gain much of their revenue from the preaching programs. The stations are on the air for

such a short time, especially during the winter months, that there is very little else on some stations except preaching. The small amount of music left to fill the gaps doesn't need advertising if the programs can provide enough revenue. In fact, WKXV, WSBM-FM, WKVQ, and WBNT-FM do not actively try to sell advertising time to area businessmen. They rely strictly on word-of-mouth. Tom Van Hart said when an advertiser contacts WKVQ, it turns into a soft-sell approach. Nonetheless, he sets the price high locally and nationally. Van Hart said, "the rates are high to weed out any preachers or advertiser who isn't serious."

The owners also said businessmen don't believe a religious radio station can bring results. Miss Creasy said, "it's hard to sell Gospel because businessmen don't trust the format. They don't want to give God the credit for anything. Because the businessmen don't believe in it, he feels no one else believes in it, and therefore no one will be listening to the station." Ben Hicks at WCHU said he had encountered the same problem.

The paradox in religious radio broadcasting is that some stations do not have any formal sales staff and don't place advertising on the station, but still do well. WKXV is one of those stations and Robert Lawson claimed the station is ranked monetarily as one of the top 20 religious radio stations in the United States by advertisers (Lawson, R. Personal communication, January 11, 1980). WMOC, on the other hand, has a sales staff and Wayne Williams said the station is ranked number one among other religious stations in Chattanooga (Williams, W. Personal communication, January 18, 1980).

J. PROGRAMMING STRATEGY

Skillful planning and good management are the two elements necessary for a radio station to have a solid base. These elements are used behind the scenes, but ultimately they determine the sound of the station. Most radio stations, secular or religious, have as part of their strategy a morning and afternoon drive-time. In the morning from 6 to 8 a.m., news and information is provided in large quantities, along with upbeat music. The intent is to get the audience awake and feeling prepared to face another day. The afternoon is similar in approach. During the drive-times, traffic reports probably will be given frequently for motorists traveling to or from work, hence the name.

Six of the 10 stations interviewed (WBLC, WKXV, WMBW-FM, WDYN-FM, WMOC, and WSBM-FM) follow the traditional drive-time strategy (see Table I). Because most religious radio stations do not have a news department, information will be missing during the drive-times except for a quick headline or a rare break for a network news program. The drive-times are used as an opportunity for the station to play light, contemporary music "to make people smile," as Joe Ray of WDYN-FM said.

Between the morning and afternoon drive-times, preaching programs primarily are on the air. Robert Lawson of WKXV said stations bunch their programs together for a good reason. He said, the "audience has to know you're consistent by tuning in the same time every day and knowing you'll hear the program you want." Robert McKeehan said there is 50 percent preaching and 50 percent music during the day on WBLC. It is designed to prevent the audience from turning the station off and becoming disinterested. WCHU follows McKeehan's 50/50 formula to a certain

TABLE I
Synopsis of Station Practices

Practices	WBNT-FM	WISN-FM	WMBW-FM	WDYN-FM	WMOC	WCHU	WMCH	WKXV	WKVQ	WBLC
Christian Staff	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Agree with Electric Church	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Conflicts with FCC	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
News	AP/APR	AP	ABC/Mutual	ABC Radio	UPI/AP	None	UPI	AP	AP/NBC	TRN
Local Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Station Access to All	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Format	Gospel	Gospel	Christian	Christian	Gospel	Family Radio	Gospel/Country	Gospel	Ministerial	Christian
Sales Philosophy	No alcohol No staff	No alcohol Low-key	No alcohol No staff	No alcohol No staff	No alcohol	No alcohol No staff	No alcohol No staff	No alcohol No staff	No alcohol Low-key	No alcohol No staff
Free Time	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Program Spacing	50% M-50%P	65% M-35%P	60% M-40%P	65% M-35%P	70% M-30%P	60% M-40%P	40% M-60%P	20% M-80%P	60% M-40%P	D-T 50% M-50%P
Church, Area Relationship	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Music	Bluegrass/ Gospel	Traditional/ Contemporary	Traditional/ Contemporary	Traditional	Southern Gospel/ Contemporary	Southern Gospel	Traditional/ C & W	Traditional/ Contemporary	Contemporary	Traditional

TRN-Tennessee Radio Network

APR-Associated Press Radio

UPI-United Press International

M-Music
P-Preaching

extent. Ben Hicks said there is no contemporary music or drive-time hours at his station. He places conservative preaching programs and music on the station at all hours throughout the day.

Tom Van Hart takes a different approach. He said WKVQ places preaching programs on the air during the morning drive-time hours to get people thinking spiritual thoughts. Van Hart said that clears the station of programs early in the day to make room for a large amount of contemporary music. WBNT-FM developed a strategy through its affiliation with WBNT-AM. The drive-time hours are used to play country music with preaching programs sandwiched between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Because the AM station doesn't gain full power until 7:45 a.m., Hillard Mattie saw no reason to start programming gospel on FM until both stations were at full power. During the winter months the AM station goes off the air in the late afternoon, so Mattie decided to take gospel programming off the FM at 3 p.m. all year to keep the stations consistent.

Strategy also is used to determine the number of programs on the air and the amount of music played during the day. Programs make up the bulk of the daytime hours to gain listeners and revenue. During the nighttime hours, it is dominated by music and is intended as background entertainment.

Program directors and general managers also must determine the number of programs that will be provided by local and national preachers. All of the stations use local preachers to a large degree during the day, partly because there are fewer national preachers in the United States from which to draw. Using local preachers also provides community involvement, personal association by the audience, and local flavor.

K. HIRING PRACTICES

A fundamental problem in broadcasting, specifically religious radio, is employment. The number of college students majoring in communications and seeking work in the field has increased dramatically in the last few years (Ellis, 1977, p. 111). However, there has been no great increase in the number of entry-level jobs during the same period. Employment problems are particularly acute at a religious radio station. Every skill required to function in a secular station is needed in a religious station, but special requirements are sometimes asked of a prospective employee. A job hunter may well be required to be a conservative, Protestant Christian to gain employment.

As in most controversial problems there are at least two sides to the argument, and the problem of employment at religious radio stations is no exception. One side is the law. All stations are bound by law to be Equal Opportunity Employers and to hire minorities and women to fill quotas set by either the FCC or by stations themselves (Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, Pub. L. 92-261, March 24, 1972. 86 Stat. 103, Title 42, 2000e-2(a); 47CFR73.125, 1979). In fact, the station must actively recruit minorities and women and provide training programs for them if the station cannot locate qualified minorities and women (47CFR73.125, 1979).

These requirements seem patently discriminatory to many broadcasters and attempts are always made to get around the rules. This is where the other side of the argument enters. Religious radio broadcasters feel their stations present a positive philosophic lifestyle parallel to the teachings of the Bible. If a non-Christian was hired,

the station owners fear the employee would not be comfortable in a religious environment. Tom Van Hart said, "a non-Christian could not be hired at WKVQ and work well" (Van Hart, T. Personal communication, January 23, 1980).

Another reason for snubbing the law stems from the people encountered in a religious radio station. Employees could answer the telephones and learn that the caller wants to pray or ask guidance. Many preachers also enter the station looking for a prayer partner or to share a Bible verse with an employee. An employee could not run from these people forever.

Doug Koontz at WSBM-FM and Dean Sippel at WMBW-FM both hedged on this enigma a little. Koontz said, "the station has an exclusively Christian staff, but anyone could be hired if they were qualified." Koontz felt that only a Christian would be comfortable at the station. When WSBM-FM switched to a religious format, Koontz said an employee was fired because of his "wild lifestyle, and therefore wouldn't exhibit a popular image" (Koontz, D. Personal communication, January 22, 1980).

WCHU and WBLC both have a small staff of three employees and see no reason to hire anyone in the future. The station owners did say that if there were openings, only a Christian would be hired. WDYN-FM perhaps has the most strict guidelines of all the stations surveyed. Joe Ray said, "you have to be a Christian, a student of the University, and sign a confession of faith stating your religious beliefs" (Ray J. Personal communication, January 18, 1980).

The remaining four station owners were only interested in the prospective employees qualifications. Robert Lawson explained the hiring

practice at WKXV in a colorful manner. Lawson said, "anyone can be hired if there is a need. The only requirement is to be able to do the job. We don't care if you're pink or purple, or if you believe in nothing (sic)" (Personal communication, January 11, 1980).

L. CONTROL BY THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

The Federal Communications Commission began operations on July 11, 1934, as an independent federal regulatory agency. The Commission was allotted seven commissioners (two more than the disbanded Federal Radio Commission) to offset a large work-load resulting from its consolidated authority over all electronic communications (The Communications Act of 1934, p. 6). Broadcasters, in the years following 1934, feel the FCC's control over all electronic communications needs to be bridled because of the stifling rules and regulations they claim never cease.

Some broadcasters are afraid the FCC will listen to complaints by people such as Madalyn Murray O'Hair who are fighting for a complete separation of church and state. But Dean Sippel of WMBW-FM said O'Hair has never applied pressure to stop religious broadcasters from using their publicly entrusted license. Sippel said it is a falsehood circulated by broadcasters to discredit her name. Rather, he said, "a petition was started in 1974 by two men in California who wanted to remove all religious broadcasting stations from the commercial band. The petition to the FCC included an attempt to throw all educational religious stations off the air, too. But the FCC put it down 7-0 in 1975" (Sippel, D. Personal communication, January 17, 1980).

Sippel said the real problem is the unconstitutional government

control the FCC tries to press upon all broadcasters. He said the FCC has started policing stations by checking into their financial affairs and especially the programming format, an area the FCC is forbidden to enter (The Communications Act of 1934, Section 326; U.S. CONST. amend. I). Only WCHU and WSBM-FM felt an interference from the FCC on strictly religious matters. Ben Hicks and Doug Koontz said the FCC may be pressuring some broadcasters because of the bad name a few preachers have given religion. According to Time magazine (February 4, 1980, 115, pp. 64-65), the FCC is investigating charges that preachers sometimes raise money on the air for one purpose and then use it for another.

Religious broadcasters do agree on one thing, though. Even if the charges are dropped and the FCC relaxes its hold, the religious broadcasting image will be tarnished by the accusations.

M. ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ELECTRIC CHURCH

The Electric Church is a new phrase with an old meaning. It even cropped up on the front page of The New York Times (December 2, 1979, CXXIX). Simply stated, it is any religious broadcaster who asks for funds on the air and pays for local prime time. The time is bought mainly by fundamental protestants, and with an ever increasing number of religious broadcasting stations starting up every week there seems to be no end in sight. The executive director of National Religious Broadcasters, Ben Armstrong, stated in his book, The Electric Church (1979), that religious broadcasting is easily a billion-dollar industry. He also claimed that at least 115 million Americans listen to a religious radio program each week, many more than attend church.

The battle lines are drawn on that note. Some local pastors say the Electric Church erodes church attendance and contributions mailed to the preachers are taking the place of Sunday offerings, especially among the elderly who can't afford it. They also question the effectiveness of preaching across the airwaves.

In East Tennessee, broadcasters said the theory of the Electric Church hurting the community churches isn't true. Robert McKeehan of WBLC expressed most of the broadcasters feelings when he stated, "if a person stays home to listen to television or radio, they wouldn't go to church anyway. Religious broadcasting stations are in business to help the church and not to replace it." The management at WCHU and WKXV go even further. Ben Hicks said, "the Electric Church problem is a farce. If anything, the broadcasters help the churches by making people aware of them. Attendance rises when they listen to the radio. Plus it gives those who are shut-in and those who would never go to church a chance to listen."

Two different viewpoints were given by Doug Koontz and Tom Van Hart. Koontz said, "90 percent of the pastors on the air are local and they are helping the community. If anyone complains about the Electric Church, they are looking for an excuse for declining church rolls." Van Hart, the only broadcaster interviewed who supported the complaints of the Electric Church, said, "too many low income people listen to a traditional sound and give money from their social security benefits they can't afford to give." Van Hart claimed WKVQ's programming wouldn't fall under that umbrella because preachers are placed on the air who have a contemporary approach. He said the music is an upbeat contemporary

style that is aimed at the middle and upper income brackets that can afford to pay money in the form of gifts to the radio preachers.

N. THE FUTURE

It is never easy to predict what tomorrow will bring. But it is exceedingly difficult to look into the future of a fast changing area of technology such as modern-day communications. Some stations are content to maintain the status quo in the 1980's and beyond, hoping that the ideas used in the 1970's will continue to be successful. Others are planning to restructure their entire format.

Robert McKeehan and Earl Lauderdale said they want to get nighttime AM capabilities eventually. McKeehan said it would allow WBLC to broadcast an unending number of live revivals and tent meetings during the summer months. They also hope to increase their local sports commitment on weekends, and if they get a nighttime AM license, to program sports on nights when revivals aren't taking place.

WKXV moved in early 1980 from their old studios on Central Avenue in Knoxville to the intersection of Broadway and Interstate 40. The new building provides about one-third more space. Robert Lawson also wants to increase the morning music block from 45 minutes to 60 minutes.

Bettye Jo Creasy said WMCH may become a Gospel station full-time. She said there are still a couple of reasons to hold on to the Country/Gospel format though. Mainly, Miss Creasy doesn't want to change because her father never changed the format while he was alive (Creasy, B. Personal communication, January 14, 1980). Secondly, there is a Gospel station in Kingsport that might cause too much competition if she were to go full-time.

WMOC and WKVQ already are making plans for the future through format modifications and new ownership. Wayne Williams said the new management at WMOC will increase the music commitment slowly to 70 percent of the day, leaving the remaining 30 percent for preaching programs. He said the changes should come more rapidly when the new owners take control in April 1980. Tom Van Hart said WKVQ also is increasing its youth-oriented music output to reach the middle and upper income audience.

Hillard Mattie said WBNT-AM-FM will remain the same as far as he knows. He does believe, though, that religious broadcasting will get very competitive soon and result in saturation of the religious radio market to the point that all but the financially strong stations will perish.

To conclude, all 10 stations are committed to the goals they set for themselves when the stations began their religious format. Those goals may be to make a sizable profit, make enough money to remain on the air, broadcast the gospel message, or any combination of the three. No matter which of the three goals is used, each owner and manager is fully committed to their station.

In terms of revenue and listenership, religious broadcasting is a force in society. To compete with other commercial stations for the elusive advertising dollar and fragmented audience, the overall quality of religious broadcasting will probably increase. If for no other reason than the increasing quality of religious broadcasting, religious radio will become, as Hillard Mattie predicted, an electronic jungle where only the strong stations survive.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND PREDICTIONS

Let a man learn to look for the permanent
in the mutable and fleeting;
let him learn to bear the disappearance of things
he was wont to reverence
without losing his reverence.

--Emerson

The purpose of the thesis was to consider the historical rise of religious radio broadcasting and the trends in religious radio programming in East Tennessee. An historical analysis of the region was necessary first to understand the rise of religious broadcasting in the early 1920's. Soon after the first settlers appeared in the 1700's, religious denominations sprang up as one of their guiding influences. These Protestant denominations continued to have influence into the 1900's, even into radio broadcasting in 1921. That year WNOX went on the air as the first station in East Tennessee, and it was broadcasting a religious message. Other religious radio stations soon followed setting the tone for religious stations in 1980. In many cases, religious broadcasting has changed little since 1921. The conservative message being preached is the same, as is the traditional gospel music, indicating little progress, except in technology. This lack of change is not seen as a problem by religious broadcasters, though. In fact, the owners and managers view their stations as an area of stability within a society that is consistently changing, many times for the worse.

Economic forecasters generally expect the coming decade to be a period of retrenchment. Public opinion surveys indicate that many

people anticipate a period of severe dislocation in society. The President of the United States identified the nation's most pressing problem as a loss of confidence as the country entered another decade. Clearly, the voices of gloom and doom have influenced people's expectations for the 1980's and beyond.

Although there are negative signs for the economy and for society, tremendous opportunities could open for religious broadcasting in the 1980's. As religious radio broadcasters look to the future, an internal dimension to broadcasting can be seen. The industry does not exist in a vacuum. It is an integral part of the American society, as were circuit riders 200 years ago. Jeremiah Lambert of the Methodists, Matthew Talbot, a Baptist preacher, and the Presbyterian preacher Thomas Craighead were all prominent figures to the settlers in the late 1700's. To many, they were leaders in the community. Even after the Revolutionary War when the area was said to have deteriorated to a state of disorder, these and other preachers tried to hold the moral fiber of the country together. In that society, the public relied on the preachers as communicators. The broadcasting field is relied upon by the public today, too. Their reliance provides the internal responsibility to do the very best job that is capable of being done, striving always to do the job a little better than it was done before.

There is an external responsibility too. Broadcasters are under increasing attack from all sectors of the society, and they are confronted with an exceptionally broad range of legislative and regulatory proposals today. Some are general enough to arouse public concern. Others are technical enough to frustrate even the technicians. Added

together they challenge many of the basic principles on which broadcasting was founded. The challenge and the response can be seen in the current thinking about rewriting The Communications Act of 1934, the basic law governing the broadcasting industry. One school of thought says the Act is out of date and ineffective, and the time has come to completely revamp the national communications policy. The other school says there are things which new legislation ought to address, but that the industry must be very careful to safeguard the essence of the system that now serves it.

What is the essence of the system? It is several things. It is service to the public, both in information and entertainment. It is the availability of choice on the part of the public, and diversity on the part of broadcasters in order to provide that choice. It is localism, with each broadcaster responsible to his own specific community. It is freedom from direct cost to the public, with advertiser support to make it possible. And it does include a role for government to ensure that everyone who holds a broadcasting license responsibly meets the goals of service, diversity, and localism.

Another critical question to be considered is the fate of the nation's future mass electronic communications systems. The subject is complex. It merges business and technological considerations with fundamental personal rights and freedoms. The United States is served by a combination of advertiser supported and "public" radio and television systems producing a mix of mass appeal and special interest programs. A choice for tomorrow is whether this dual system of audio and video services should be replaced, modified, or left free to

compete in the marketplace with new technologies using a number of transmission systems ranging from cable to direct satellite-to-home broadcasts. And regardless of the technological capabilities of the new systems, there remains the governmental policy question of personal rights--both the right to disseminate material to others, and the right to receive access to such material.

In 1980 access to the mass communications system is limited. There are only so many frequencies for both radio and television stations and only a select few can receive the privilege to use the frequencies. Beyond the allocation problem is an economic one. Regardless of the number of frequencies actually available, under the economic realities of television and radio broadcasting, there are only so many advertising dollars to support operating stations. Where too many stations seek support from too few advertisers, licensees fail. However, as long as the spectrum imposes an artificial limitation on the number of channels able to operate in any given area, the government must remain to direct the traffic.

Government must also safeguard the rights of the public to continue to receive service. To date, the public has made a substantial investment in equipment to receive the existing radio and television stations. Indeed it has been estimated that there are somewhere between 450 and 500 million radio receivers in the United States alone (Statistical Yearbook, UNESCO, 1978, p. 1004).

These millions of television and radio receivers have allowed the American public to see and hear the changes taking place within broadcasting. The random changes in just 10 stations in East Tennessee,

from their meager beginnings to the present, are testimony to the evolving nature of the industry. And it is this very potential for the development of new technologies and strategies that has resulted in the lack of any general consensus as to the likely course of telecommunications throughout the remainder of this century and on into the next.

Even though the industry has evolved, many parallels can be found between early religious life on the frontier and religious radio broadcasting in the 1980's. Many preachers of the 1800's were not highly educated, they merely needed the call of the Spirit to spread the gospel, and they often stressed the need for church independence. Members were often excluded from churches when they were found guilty of fighting and drinking alcohol. The members also were often stirred by their emotions during the revival movement in the camp meeting.

Preachers today, in general, still need only the Spirit, and they continue to push for independence among the various churches and denominations. Advertising alcohol is forbidden on all 10 stations in East Tennessee that were surveyed, and even the evils of the motion picture industry are banned from WMCH in Church Hill. The only change in the camp meeting is the status of the people in attendance. They may be lonely, but they are not pioneers. The people attracted to a radio station in the 1980's do not go to see a wandering preacher, rather they see many preachers for hours on end.

Even the denominational structure in Tennessee has changed little. The Baptists (especially Southern) continue to lead the Protestant faiths in numbers of people and churches. Their headquarters in Nashville, not far from their roots in eastern Tennessee and Virginia,

carries a lot of political and religious strength. This strength has been great enough to keep the Methodists and Presbyterians lagging behind. But together, these three denominations have a near monopoly on religious life in East Tennessee. Except for an occasional Jewish or Greek Synagogue or Catholic church, the Protestant faith captures most every churchgoer.

This lock-out of all faiths, except for the Protestants, is very helpful to a religious station owner because the owner doesn't have to worry about discriminating against a particular group. Some owners have never even had the opportunity to deny a Catholic church access to their station, simply because the only churches in listening range of the station are Protestant. The only time a denial of access arises is when a choice has to be made between a conservative Baptist preacher and a liberal one, and there are few of those choices to be made.

This is not to say that the area has completely stagnated religiously for 175 years and that the radio is merely a modern-day version of the early tent revivals. But the methods of presenting a religion, such as Christianity, will be changed little by electronic manipulation in the short span of 60 years. The radio is a tool to broadcast the gospel message to many thousands, possibly millions, instead of hundreds in the open-air meetings of the past. The message is the same, as are the type of people who give the message and those who receive it.

Even the people who own religious radio stations are in many ways no different from businessmen who manage and own secular industries. Some owners sincerely believe in the product they present and are not overly concerned with monetary affairs, while others are engrossed with

higher profit figures and view their product as a means to an end. The message they deliver is a conservative one, espoused by conservative people. The programs don't lend themselves to much variety in the way they are structured either. A few minutes are sold to a preacher and he says what he feels. Another preacher goes on the air and he says what he feels, and so on. A person who has no interest in the messages presented by a religious station would find that routine too dull to stay tuned to the station.

Essentially, religious radio stations generally capture an audience already in agreement with the Christian viewpoint, but do not normally attract listeners who just happen to tune in. The stations have not set themselves up to be a source of entertainment. They are instructional, and cannot compete with the myriad of entertainment programming on other radio stations. Many owners, in fact, claim they do not want to compete with other stations. The owners see their stations as an alternative choice.

That is certainly a worthy goal, but the stations sometimes are not doing as much public good as they like to feel they are. For example, children's programming exists on only 2 of the 10 stations examined in East Tennessee. This is an audience upon which religious radio could capitalize. Too, every station owner claims to program to the down-and-out: the poor, underprivileged, the mentally and physically ill, the shut-in. This is also a worthy goal, but not one of the stations has programming that specifically addresses them. There is great potential to fit the definition of an instructional station, but it is not being developed. In the middle, between children's programming and the

shut-ins, is a lack of youth-oriented programming. It is financially risky to program to youth because they do not possess a lot of buying power. Out of the 10 stations surveyed in East Tennessee only WKVQ is attempting to reach that untapped market in any significant way. The vision broadcasters lacked in the 1920's needs to be manifested by broadcasters in the 1980's.

History shows that very few early broadcasters had the imagination and vision to foresee the eventual rise of a television and radio era. Understandably, no industry expert can say with certainty which media system or combination of systems will supply the country's population in future years. And it is this uncertainty that creates both excitement and apprehension--excitement related to the possible new technical and creative advances, and apprehension over the possibility that the system will change too quickly to permit existing operators to react as the current system becomes outmoded.

Beyond the possible dramatic expansion of instantaneous communication systems, other electronic entertainment offerings from electronic video games to video discs will compete for the leisure time of Americans. This increasing competition will have an effect on the total marketplace determining such questions as where producers will take their product and where advertisers will seek to reach the audience.

This diversion of interests will have an effect on all media, not just religious radio. As Americans watch more video sources they have less time to read printed material and listen to radio. Such an evolution will not be swift and dramatic, but slow and almost imperceptible as tastes and interests of the consumer grow more varied and independent.

The use for communications skills is already expanding far beyond the radio and television studios. The goal of this expansion of communications must be to meet the diverse and specialized needs of the audience, for it is the prospect for development and change that makes communications such a vibrant and vital industry.

The ability to communicate with another individual is, of course, a precious freedom, because it provides for human social development. Moreover, the capability to transmit a message to more than one individual either instantaneously or through a common means of communication holds the key to social order, and the very meaning of civilization. It is for this reason that government policy must, to the extent possible and practicable, create a regulatory structure permitting the widest possible individual access to the communications system. The right of access will ideally include both the right to originate material and to receive it.

Finally, future service capabilities of existing and experimental technologies are of infinite variety and scope. However, the real promise of what tomorrow may hold must be seen not strictly in how many networks, local stations, or local channels can be programmed, but rather the type, nature, variety, and creativity of the programming presented.

In truth the Founding Fathers believed that the First Amendment guarantees of free speech and religion preserved to all Americans the right to carry an idea to their fellow citizens. In reality then, it is not the government that has decreed the existence of a limited number of television networks, radio stations, and unused radio and television

allocations. Rather it is a far more serious, and often a stronger power--economics. It is hoped that future communications advances will overcome these economic barriers permitting the introduction of new sources of input to compete for the attention of listeners and viewers in the United States, and in a greater sense throughout the world community.

Will the 1980's and beyond be a time of continued growth for religious radio and television? Or will it be a time of consolidation, shoring up the significant gains made over the past 60 years? Or will these gains dwindle away in the years ahead? Those questions will lie in the hands of religious broadcasters for years to come.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE WEEK

An educational, noncommercial station has the unique opportunity to use either the composite week or a sample week selected by the station management to fulfill requirements set out by the FCC. The reason for use of a sample week is logical, but the sample week can be abused easily.

Many educational stations do not broadcast during the summer months when its supporting educational institution is not in session. The odds are great that a date drawn at random for the composite week would fall within those summer months. For example, August 12, 1977, falls within the 1979 composite week range. A sample week can be any week the management chooses, providing it is taken from the logs within the nine months (one school year) preceding a license renewal date. For example, stations in East Tennessee were required to file for license renewal in April 1979. Any week drawn from August 1978, through March 1979, would have been acceptable. WMBW-FM, in fact, chose the week of November 5, 1978, through November 11, 1978.

As one might guess, use of the sample week could be abused by choosing one week to heavily program public affairs, public service announcements, and other programs to give a biased picture of the station's community involvement. The FCC places a premium on those types of programs and would be very impressed, granting the renewal with little hesitation, assuming all else was in order. Even though WMBW-FM is on the air all year, this description of questionable practices does not imply, one way or the other, that the station abused the sample

week privilege. WDYN-FM, also on the air year-round as a noncommercial station, chose not to use the sample week and used the composite week.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How was this station's religious format chosen?
2. How much free time is provided to groups such as local churches?
3. Are all portions of the religious and political spectrum allowed on your station?
4. What is the mission of the station?
5. Is there any locally originated programming?
6. How does the station serve the communities' needs?
7. What is the station's relationship with members of the church community?
8. With all the different types of religious music on the market, how did you choose the right sound for this station?
9. Does an employee need to be a Christian to function effectively here?
10. What is the philosophy of the sales staff?
11. Does the FCC help or hinder religious radio broadcasters, specifically your station?
12. What do you think of the "Electric Church?"
13. How do you space the programs and music throughout the day?
14. What is the future of religious radio broadcasting?

APPENDIX C

TRANSLATORS

In 1956 the FCC authorized use of a subsidiary transmitter to extend service to remote communities. This type of transmitting device is called a translator. Translators receive the signal of a primary station, convert it to a different frequency, amplify it, and then re-broadcast it for reception by the general public in the particular area. These supplementary stations may be operated by the primary station or by an independent company. Where the translator is operated by an independent company, as is the case with WMBW-FM, the consent of the primary stations must be obtained before its signals are re-broadcast. Translators may be authorized by the FCC for any VHF, UHF, or FM channel where the transmissions do not interfere with signals of regular broadcast facilities and conform to other Commission rules (47 CFR Part 1.533 and 1.527, 1979).

The development of translators was preceded in the 1950's by an extra-legal transmitting device. It was called a booster. These stations were constructed by local, private, or governmental groups without FCC approval. They received the weak signals of primary stations and re-broadcast them on the same frequency with amplified strength. These stations were unlawful, but it took over a decade for the FCC to achieve a transition from the illegal booster operations to the lawful translator operations.

VITA

Stephen Mark Powell was born in Nashville, Tennessee, on July 27, 1956. He moved with his parents to Kansas City, Missouri, two years later and attended elementary schools in that city and was graduated from Hickman Mills High School in June 1974. The following August he entered William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, and studied Physics and Communications for two years. During the Bicentennial summer he studied German for two semesters in Vienna, Austria. After returning to the United States in August 1976, he transferred to the University of Missouri-Columbia, and in May 1978, he received a Bachelor of Journalism degree in Radio/TV News Broadcasting. In the fall of 1978 he was admitted to The University of Tennessee, Knoxville and began study toward a Master of Science degree in Communication. This degree was awarded in June 1980.

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