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Community Media Practices as Resonant Acts

To what extent are community media still relevant in an age of proliferating media spaces and technologies outside recognizable institutions? This paper explores this question by drawing on research work-in-progress from a project that examines to what extent community media can be seen as important means of ‘listening differently’. Because community media practitioners re-articulate and redistribute stories that have been marginalised or misrepresented in mainstream media, I argue that they listen in a different relationship. As examples of ‘informal’ practices of citizenship – or resonant acts -- in contrast to state-based recognition of identity, the case studies explored in this study demonstrate the potential for community media to 1) intervene in transnational information flows, 2) speak to critiques of dominant media practices in an increasingly diverse technological landscape and 3) speculate on a media landscape beyond a ‘broadcast’ model. I suggest that attention to such stories are important in order to understand the limitations of both a cultural politics of individual expression and a too-narrow focus on citizenship as a normative category, and help us imagine better alternatives.