

A Political Economy of Radical Media

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctoral of Philosophy is entirely my own work, that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

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Abstract

This thesis offers a Marxist humanist political economic analysis of radical media. Radical media has been under-researched and underappreciated as a subject. Modern theorists have positioned it either as a fringe subject or as a diffuse topic without definitional clarity used interchangeably with concepts such as alternative and independent to describe non-mainstream media, communications and digital society.

This thesis aims to clarify the conceptualisation of radical media and consider the concrete publications and platforms, shaped by radical media actors, that have developed in the digital age. This analysis is grounded by an understanding of the historic development of theories of and practices of radical media. A multi-methods research design is used as a basis for three analyses of three radical media samples: a typology analysis of concepts of radical media in the digital age (1995–2019), a content analysis of radical media publications and platforms in the UK, USA and Ireland (2016–2019) and thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with radical media actors in the UK, USA and Ireland (2016–2019).

Radical media is re-defined and a typology containing radical critical, community, activist and institutional media is proposed. Shifts in radical media production are explored and the emergence of semi-professionalised, intellectual publications and platforms, interlinked politically to the revival of Marxism and Social Democracy is noted. These radical media publications and platforms from above are in tension with a 'periphery' with emphasis on reporting from everyday experiences and struggles, from below and outside the state. These are significant advances in our understanding of radical media as part of the field of critical communication and politics within digital society.

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Introduction

i.1 Background

A new era of radical media and publishing has emerged after the 2008 financial crisis in the Anglosphere: *Jacobin* magazine, the new leading voice of the revived US left, *Novara Media* with its socialist, pro-Corbyn studio debates and think pieces and the *Canary* in Britain with their anti-Tory exposés, *The Young Turks*, *Real News Network* and *It's Going Down*, all with hundreds of thousands and even millions of unique readers per month make up a new radical media sphere. Older publications, many from the New Left era, including *Dissent* and *In These Times*, *Red Pepper* and the *New Left Review*, have all seen their readership grow as critiques of capitalism have re-emerged post 2008 and new social movements and socialists parties have become active. Others, such as *Viewpoint*, *Notes from Below*, *Rebel*, *DDR* and *Labor Notes*, operate on a smaller scale but provide important insights excluded from the mainstream.

The radical media field, in particular the publications and platforms themselves, has been under-researched and underappreciated. Shifts in digital media and communications as a whole, the battles within capital, between legacy corporate and public-sector broadcasters on the one hand and digital media corporations on the other (Fuchs 2010), and the challenge from radical protest, social and political movements from the outside and in contradiction to capital, have in contrast been examined in a vibrant revival of critical communication research in the 21st century (Curran 2002; Castells 2008; Fuchs & Mosco 2012; Fuchs & Sandoval 2015; Fenton 2016b). This thesis sets out to extend the field of critical communication research, in particular political economic analysis as a means of re-conceptualising radical media and expanding our understanding of the radical media publications and platforms of today.

Changes in the 21st century are important to consider. In the early 2000s, *Indymedia* emerged as a series of interconnected mass radical digital platforms, with hundreds of writers and millions of readers in the United Kingdom, Ireland and the United States of America. Newspaper and television

corporate media dominant in the 1990s (Mackay & O'Sullivan 1999; Curran 2002) were suddenly under threat. Alternative production models, based on the web, were able not only to circumvent the mainstream media corporations, but to critique the neo-liberal and military-industrial consensus which such media corporations were perceived to support.

A crisis of global financial capital in 2008 (Altvater 2009; Kotz 2009; Lapavistas 2009; Harvey 2011) accelerated tensions of media production and politics. In this crisis legacy media faced a triple threat: its own production model was undermined by austerity and cuts; public sector broadcasters and corporate publishing alike cut jobs; and accelerated reductions in labour-intensive work such as investigative reporting and long-form analysis damaged the quality of mainstream journalism. Simultaneously digital corporate media sites, in particular social media sites such as Facebook and sites such as Google News, created a new route through which information could flow in the digital age, as well as undermining the revenue streams, in particular from advertising, for corporate and public sector broadcasters. A new generation of anti-austerity social movements emerged, increasingly distrustful of the perceived bias of reporting and the ideological role of the media in crisis: its support for unpopular public policy, its positioning that there was no alternative to austerity, its framing of dissent as extremist, and its exclusion of news stories of public interest such as protests and strikes (Newton 2017). In the new era of anti-austerity movements and corporate digital media power, the legacy of Indymedia carried through in publications such as the *Occupy Times*, *Occupy Wall Street Journal* and *Rabble* in Ireland.

From 2014 on, following the years of anti-austerity, a period of political polarisation has emerged. Social movements and radicals now respond to two forces: the power of neo-liberal states and the threat of the far right with neo-Nazi and fascist parties growing across Europe, and regressive reaction and violence following the Arab Spring. This has been cemented by victories for nationalist conservatism most sharply evident under Theresa May's and Boris Johnson's Conservative Party in the United Kingdom, Donald Trump's Republican presidency in the United States (Neiwert 2017), Modi in India

(Chacko 2018), Bolsonaro in Brazil, and challenges from the right to the Pink Tide in Latin America (Bentes 2018). At the same time the period from 2014 to 2019 has been a rich one for progressive radical social movements, which includes feminist strikes, #blacklivesmatter, housing campaigns, and street protest movements from France to Chile, Lebanon and Hong Kong, as well as the reinvigoration of social democracy and democratic socialism in Ireland, the UK and the USA. New radical publications, from *Jacobin* magazine in the USA, *Novara Media* and the *Canary* in the UK and *Rebel* media in Ireland, have emerged in this politically polarised context.

i.2 Theoretical Framework, Definitions and Arguments

This thesis will use a Marxist humanist political economic theoretical framework. Mosco (2009, p.1) considers a political economy of communication in terms of 'the social relations, particularly the power relations that mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of resources.' Mosco (2009), moreover, identified four defining characteristics of the political economy as an analytical approach. Firstly, it should be grounded in a comprehension of history, and historical context should be central in terms of method and outlook; secondly, it should focus on the totality of analysis (multilevelled, multilayered and multidisciplinary); thirdly, it should be based on a moral philosophy, in that a concept of social justice or a better world defines inquiry, analysis and solutions; finally, praxis should be central, meaning that analysis and application go hand in hand.

This thesis takes Mosco's (2009) definition of a political economy of communication and places it within the Marxist humanist tradition in order to analyse radical media. The core consideration of a political economic analysis of radical media is the analysis of radical media production grounded in historical materialism. Production develops over time based on the relationship and conflict between capital and labour and between and within classes. There are no abstract ideas; all ideas or ideologies and, in the case of radical media, content come from and are bound by the conditions of material production. Marxist humanism, taking on board the constraints imposed by material history, places emphasis on human agency and the specific dynamics of

alienation and exploitation and the counter-force of liberation and freedom as driving social, political and economic shifts as well as the centrality of understanding human value as part of a materialist analysis (Sayers 2013; Anderson 2016). Marxist humanism contrasts with structuralism, which opposes an emphasis on agency and subjectivity within a historic materialist analysis in favour of an understanding of abstracted structures of power (Anderson 2016). In the analysis of radical media, a Marxist humanist approach places the emphasis on radical media actors, journalists, workers and producers, and their subjective agency as part of a wider class, in the development of radical media production and politics.

In this thesis radical media is defined in terms of three underlying principles: radical pertaining to change at the roots (Davis 1990, 2011; Williams 2013; McGuigan 2014), radical as politically progressive (Fenton 2016b) and radical in terms of the concept of emancipation. In addition to a definition of radical media within a progressive politics and theoretical grounding in a historical material analysis, radical media will be considered in terms of McQuail's (2010) and Mosco's (2009) understanding of mass information and communication platforms. Radical media is positioned as having mass character rather than a fringe, marginal or subcultural basis. Finally, radical media will be considered narrowly, only including consciously and collectively organised structures, publications and platforms (media which takes an organisational form), rather than the wider network of content production across social media platforms, blogs and other individual forms of content production.

This thesis argues that radical media, over the course of the digital media era (1995–2019), has shifted from an emphasis on volunteerism, horizontal decision-making structures and anti-professionalism with an emphasis on radical politics from below and outside the state exemplified by *Indymedia* to a subscription-based and semi-professionalised production model which integrates journalism and has mixed decision-making models exemplified by *Jacobin* magazine. These new radical media publications and platforms place political emphasis on radical politics from above and on operating both inside and outside the state.

This change is due to major shifts in radical media production and politics between 2005 and 2015. *Indymedia* and prefigurative horizontal radical media(s) declined after 2005, leaving a radical media vacuum. Distrust in mainstream media, downward mobility due to class recomposition, mass anti-austerity and new social movements, the intellectual revival of Marxism and the rebirth of mass social democracy together created the conditions for new radical media actors to emerge. These actors, young journalists, intellectuals and precarious young workers, built new radical media publications and reinvigorated existing sites of radical media production.

i. 3 Significance of the Research

This thesis will make a number of original contributions to academic knowledge, in particular in the field of critical communications and media studies. The use of political economic analysis within communication and media studies is advanced. Political economic analysis is used in a novel way: turning from an analysis (and critique) of capitalism and structural crisis towards an understanding of anti-capitalist production and power. The use of Marxist humanism within this political economic analysis advances the use and study of social dynamics and subjective agency within a totalising materialist framework.

The second and primary original contribution is to our conceptual understanding of radical media as a subject. There is a lack of clear definition of radical media. Instead, across the digital age a range of theorists from Downing (2001) to Jeppesen (2016), and journals such as the *Journal of Alternative and Community Media*, use concepts such as alternative, radical, progressive, community, dissident, resistance, participatory and independent interchangeably. The concept of radical media is re-defined, positioned within a long history of theory and practice, considered normatively and considered as a multi-dimensional phenomenon.

The third contribution is to the evidence base of radical media publication and platforms. With the exception of Jeppesen (2016), radical media has been scarcely documented in the post-2008 context in communication, media and

journalism studies. Political economic studies in the field have focused on developing abstract models (Fuchs & Sandoval 2012), considered radical social media use (Fuchs 2017), hacking and hacktivism, radical social media and education (Emejulu & McGregor 2019), or focused on movements (Locke, Lawthom & Lyons, 2018; Askanius & Uldam 2011; Ince, Rojas & Davis 2017) and radical content produced by left political parties (Fenton 2016b; Casero-Ripollés, Feenstra & Tormey 2016; Penney 2017; Pickard 2018). This has left out the specific study of publications and platforms themselves. The documentation of radical media publication today, the consideration of their key features and their development, is useful both to capture the dynamics of radical media but also to start building a framework for historic and geographic comparative analysis.

The analysis of radical media from a Marxist humanist political economic perspective additionally develops the wider understanding of radical politics, the social and political context of radical media and the concrete relationships between radical political organisation and subjects such as the media, political parties, trade unions, communities and social movements.

Finally, this thesis offers a contribution to radical practice, based on a commitment to the development of social justice and equality. Radical media, as a form of mass media focused on change at the roots of society, emancipation and progressive politics, has a normative value in fostering social justice and social change. Radical media is an important bulwark against and challenge to far-right politics that fosters discrimination, hate and violence and the dominant extractive capitalist digital media today. There is value in clarifying the relationship between the dynamics of capital, class, radical political and radical media and putting this analysis into practice. This in turn can help in the development and growth of sustainable radical media publications and platforms and a vibrant field more generally.

i.4 Chapter Outline

This thesis sets out re-conceptualise radical media and understand the shifts in radical media publications and platforms in the digital age. A review of the

history of radical media theorising in chapter one and the history of radical media practice in chapter two form the basis for an analysis of conceptualisations, platforms and publications in the digital age. In chapter three the methodology is outlined. Using a multi-methods design within a political economic framework three sources are drawn from: models of non-mainstream media, radical media publications and platforms and semi-structured interviews with radical media actors between 2016 and 2019 in the UK, USA and Ireland. Three sets of findings are examined in chapters four, five and six: a typology analysis of non-mainstream and radical media models, a qualitative content analysis of radical publications from 2016 and 2019 in the UK, Ireland and USA and finally a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with five radical media actors (journalists, producers and workers) within five radical media publications.

Chapter 1: Reviewing Political Economic Theories of Radical Media reviews the history of political economic theories and theorists of radical media. The history of political economic analysis, Marxist humanism and radicalism are first outlined. From here early radical media theorists who place emphasis on the question of political power are considered. Marx's theory of capitalism (1973), ideology and working-class emancipation (Marx & Engels 1983; Marx 2008), Gramsci's concept of hegemony, counter-hegemony and organic intellectualism (Gramsci 1971; Thompson 2009; Anderson 2017) and Lukacs's conceptualisation of reification and class consciousness (Lukacs 1972; Lukacs 2017; Fuchs 2016) are explored. Cold War theorists placed emphasis on the question of culture and co-option. The Frankfurt School (Adorno & Horkheimer 2007) and Benjamin (2008), Hall (1980; 1982) and culture studies and Bourdieu (1986a; 1986b) are analysed. Finally, digital radical media theorists are considered. Castells's theory of network society (2007; 2011) and the potential for radical change within it (Castells 2012), Fuchs and Mosco's (2012) and Fuchs and Sandoval's (2014; 2015; 2016) study of alternative media under digital capital and labour dynamics and Fenton's (2016a; 2016b) consideration of radical politics in the digital age and media are outlined.

Chapter 2: Reviewing the History of Radical Media Practice gives an overview of the history of radical media practice in the three countries sampled: the USA, UK and Ireland. It is argued that early modern radical media was defined by its role in helping to form working-class and emancipatory consciousness between 1800 and 1860. The radical media of the First and Second International brought socialism and anarchism in as the dominant to the fore from 1860 to 1914. In the world wars and interwar period (1914–45) radical media was an agitation-propaganda and organising tool in the context of revolution, class conflict, civil war and anti-fascism. With the eruptions of the New Left (1960–1980) radical media was part of the process of radical identity and political recomposition, and in the early digital age (1995–2005) in the context of a radical anti-globalisation movement, radical media became an instant reporter, and point of lateral discussion and democratic prefigurative experimentation. Gaps in the political economic analysis of radical media and the analysis of practice, form the basis for three research questions, concerning how radical media is conceptualised, what publications and platforms exist, and exploring the political economic dynamics and context of radical media today.

Chapter 3: Methodology of a Political Economy of Radical Media outlines a multi-methods political economic analysis of radical media. It is argued that multi-methods is a good fit for a Marxist humanist political economic framework and a critical reflection of my position as a researcher in relation to the research is undertaken. The relationship between political economic analysis and multi-methods design is firstly considered. Three radical media data selection processes are outlined: a selection of models of radical media in the digital era (1995–2019), a selection of radical media publications from 2016 to 2019, which includes a rationale and the implication of the selection of three countries the UK, USA and Ireland and a selection of semi-structured interviews with radical media actors (2016–2019). Three analyses – a typology of radical media, radical media content analysis, and thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with radical media actors – are outlined. In addition, the limits of the methodology and the ethics of the study are considered, including

internet-based study best practice, semi-structured interview protocol and emancipatory research methods.

Chapter 4: A Typology of Radical Media considers the outcome of the typology analysis. For this, key models of non-mainstream media, the works of Downing (2001), Atton (2002), Curran (2002), Fuchs and Sandoval (2009; 2012) and Jeppesen (2016) are analysed. These are compiled into a typology considering commonalities and contradictions, and a comparison is made between concepts of the early digital era (1995–2005) and the mid and later era (2008–2018). At this point the use of alternative and radical as concepts which define non-mainstream media is considered. Four radical media types – radical critical, community, institutional and activist media – make up a new radical media typology, each with its content, production and political relational characteristics. These types are considered as categories, used to examine distinctions among radical media types and as part of x–y scales in which interactions among radical media types can be examined.

Chapter 5: A Content Analysis of Radical Media Publications and Platforms presents an analysis of a dataset of 59 radical media publications 'about sections', mission statements and statements of principle. Frequency and relational analysis, using QSR NVivo, is used to examine radical media content, comparing it to the typology of radical media. From here publication-level analysis is carried out which considers how each specific publication conceptualises radical media content, production and politics. The results of this are scored and mapped on an x–y scatter plot and analysed. Political, geographic and historical composition of the publications are considered.

Chapter 6: Thematic Analysis of Semi-structured Interviews with Radical Media Actors presents interviews with five radical media actors (journalists, workers, producers) within five radical media publications. Micah Uetracht from *Jacobin* magazine (critical), Rebecca Burns from *In These Times* (institutional), Jennifer Nelson from *Red Pepper* (mixed), Sean Finnan from *Dublin Digital Radio* (community) and Andrew Flood from *Solidarity Times* (activist) are interviewed and the results examined.

Important themes which emerge include: common financial insecurity and the impact of the austerity years, a convergence around questions of sustainable production and flexible practice and political tensions between an accumulation and cooperation, between radical media as movement leader and movement support, and between electoral and movement-focused political strategies.

Chapter One: Reviewing Political Economic Theories of Radical Media

1.1 Introduction

The 21st century has seen significant developments in the analysis of radical media. Downing's *Radical Media: Rebellious Communication and Social Movements* (2000) established alternative, community and radical media as a viable field of study and Fuchs and Mosco's *Marx is Back* (2012) established political economic analysis as a key theoretical framework from which the development of 21st-century digital communication and the specific dynamics of anti-capitalist media can be positioned. This literature review in two chapters examines key political economic theorising pertaining to radical media and the history of radical media practice. This analysis is historical, examining theories and practice from the 1800s through to the present. It sets out to establish an analysis of the long history of radical media theorising and radical media practice in order to understand gaps in the research and the direction that should be taken in the analysis of today's radical media.

In this chapter, the historical conceptual development of political economic analysis, Marxist humanism and the concept 'radical' are briefly outlined. From here the long history of political economic theorists analysing dominant and radical media is considered. Curran (2002) and Mosco (2009) identify a gradual development of media historically as part of a process of technological developments from print to radio, from television to digital media, and this is interconnected with and subject to the development of capitalism and the bourgeois nation state and its structures of power. Political economic theorists have attempted to understand media, both in terms of how dominant media is positioned within and of capitalism and how the media has operated simultaneously as a force of opposition and as an alternative and radical voice

It is argued in this chapter that political economic theorists of radical media framed their analysis in terms of specific historically contingent questions. This chapter divides into three sections on this basis. Early radical media theorists placed at the heart of their analysis the question of political power. Marx's

theory of capital and ideology (Marx & Engels 1983; Marx 2008), Gramsci's consideration of hegemony (Gramsci 1971; Thompson 2009; Anderson 2017) and Lukacs's consideration of reification (Lukacs 1972; Lukacs 2017; Fuchs 2016) are argued to have established a common framework from which to understand dominant media power. Marx's consideration of working-class emancipation (Marx & Engels 1983; Marx 2008), Gramsci's consideration of counter-hegemony and radical political strategy (Gramsci 1971; Thompson 2009; Anderson 2017) and Lukacs's consideration of class consciousness (Lukacs 1972; Lukacs 2017; Fuchs 2016) are understood as articulations of the forms and processes of radical oppositional media in terms of working-class power.

After World War II, theorists of the Cold War placed at the heart of their analysis questions of cultural production, co-option and resistance. The Frankfurt school considered mass culture, consumerism and co-option, and Benjamin (2008) in particular developed a consideration of radical media in terms of cultural resistance. Hall (1982a; 1982b) – in particular his consideration of coding, representation, assimilation and cultural resistance – and Bourdieu's consideration of symbolic power, field and habit (1986a; 1986b) and radical practice are analysed in this vein.

The 21st century brought major shifts in the political economic analysis of radical media, as digital media emerged. Castells' (2011; 2012) consideration of digital networks within capitalism and the potential for resistance; Fuchs, Mosco (2012) and Fuchs and Sandoval's (2009; 2014; 2016) consideration of digital capitalism, labour and alternative media ownership; and Fenton's (2016a; 2016b) consideration of radical politics in the digital age and media brings the analysis of dominant and radical media into the 21st century.

An enriched analysis of dominant media and the role and characteristics of radical media emerges from this chapter. Dominant media can be considered in terms of the range of capital's hegemonic power: containing cultural, material and political processes of dominance. Radical media forms in

opposition to this, characterised by independent ownership, the development of radical political consciousness and culture and a supporting role in wider radical political organisation.

1.2 Political Economic Analysis and the Radical

1.2.1 Political Economic Analysis

Political economic analysis as a theoretical framework emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries. Theorists such as Smith (1987) and Ricardo (Ricardo & McCulloch 1984) are considered the classical political economists. They attempted to derive laws of both political and economic processes in order to understand the early development of capitalism. Other classical political economists such as Mills (2009) placed emphasis on utility as a means of explaining both economic and political developments.

Political economic analysis shifts in important ways in the late 1800s and in the early 1900s. On the one hand, political economic analysis developed towards neoclassical economics. Marshall's textbook, *Principles of Economics* (1890), and the marginal revolution of William Stanley Jevons's *Theory of Political Economy* (1871), Carl Menger's *Principles of Economics* (1871), and Leon Walrus's *Elements of Pure Economics* (1874–1877) pushed the analysis of utility and demand within economic thought, forming the basis of microeconomics. The inter-war work of Keynes (Keynes, Mogridge & Johnson 1971) saw the development of macroeconomics, with systematic models of consumption, distribution, economic development and considerations of value, wages, inflation and labour. Since Keynes, economists have placed emphasis on economic aspect of markets, capital and the state in how resources can be managed and how enterprise can develop. Political debates have been confined to the role of the state in furthering the development of free trade and enterprise underpinned by the guiding hand of the free market (Lewellen 2006; Robbins 1978) and considerations of ways in which the state can intervene in the free market to stimulate investment and employment (Keynes, Mogridge & Johnson 1971).

In the late 1800s and early 1900s political economic analysis also took a different path, away from the utility revolution, micro- and macroeconomics and towards a totalised analysis of material production, politics and power. Marx's (1972) political economic analysis developed a theory of labour value (Marx 1972/73; Rubin 1978), a historical materialist framework and an economic and social analysis that focused on questions of exploitation and equality. To Marx the fundamental driving force of history was the material forces of production and the social forces of class. Instead of an abstracted understanding of the economy as a container defined by universal laws, this analysis grounded politics in the material realities of production, and in a process where social forces (through class conflict) transformed society.

Political economy since Marx has developed in a number of directions. The theory of the rate of profit to fall, crisis theory (Heinrich, 2013), models of cultural production (Kellner 2013), structuralism (Onimode 1985; Benton 1984), Marxist humanist theories (Fromm & Bottomore 2004), and Marxist theories of law and the state (Pashukanis 2017) have infused new areas of analysis and competing conceptualisations of epistemology, ontology and practice (Anderson 2016). In addition, historical sociology places emphasis on historically contingent developments (Davidson 2015), political Marxism focuses on the relationship between capital and class (Brenner 1977; Wood & Kennedy 1999) and social reproduction theory has extended political economic analysis to include the analysis of the forces of reproduction as integral components of the development and continuity of capitalism and the political order (Bhattacharya 2017). Finally, a long-standing consideration within political economic analysis is focused on how material forces of production (the base) develop social relations among people (identities, rituals, customs, cultures) and ideological structures (superstructures), such as states, churches and other institutions (Harman 1986; Garnham 1995).

A number of traditions have attempted to fuse elements of political economic analysis and neoclassical economics, as well as widen the scope of economic theory. Heterodox economists break from economic and free market fundamentals, offering a diverse range of theories and widened scope of

analysis. Modern monetary theorists, influenced by Keynes and Minsky, place emphasis on market regulation and the power of money systems (Wray 2015). Feminist and Green economists place emphasis on an analysis of the economy as part of a consideration of power dynamics and social relations, ecology and finite resources (Lee 2009). Analytic Marxism places emphasis on laws of economic and social relations and the quantification of class and social systems (Roemer 1986).

As outlined in the introduction, a political economic approach has become an important framework for the analysis of communication and media, particularly re-emerging in the late 1990s and 2000s (Golding & Murdock 1997; Curran 2002; Mansell 2004; Wasko, Murdock & Sousa 2011). Mosco (2009 p. 24) considers a political economic analysis of communication in terms of 'the social relations, particularly the power relations that mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of resources'. Mosco (2009) moreover identified four defining characteristics of the political economy as an analytical approach. Firstly, it should be grounded in a comprehension of history and historical context should be central in terms of method and outlook; secondly, it should focus on the totality of analysis (multilevelled, multi-layered and multidisciplinary); thirdly, it should be based on a moral philosophy, in that a concept of social justice or a better world defines inquiry, analysis and solutions; finally, praxis should be central, that is that analysis and application go hand in hand.

1.2.2. Marxist Humanism

Marx (2008. p. 1) wrote in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* that 'men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past'. This thesis positions political economic analysis within the tradition of Marxist humanist inquiry, considering the interaction between the grand historical development of

production and the agency of collective class forces within this development, additionally centring human value and normative inquiry (Fuchs 2019).

Marxist humanism is a contested subject in the study of Marx's work. Scholars have debated whether humanism is present in at least three ways within Marx's work: firstly, whether it represents an early interest of Marx in Hegelian ethics (Sayer 2007) and in particular in relation to Marx's analysis of Feuerbach (Thompson 1959) and reflected in the 1844 manuscripts (Grant 2005); secondly, whether there is an epistemological break in Marx's early works from humanist to scientific socialist (Dunayevskaya 1965; 2003); finally, to what extent agency and liberation can be read into Marx's political writing or whether overall capital and production are deterministic forces (Dunayevskaya 1965; 2003).

Fuchs (2019) argues that Marx interrogated the relationship between agency and structure dialectically. Despite this, subsequent Marxist theorists have continued to create a theoretical fault-line between agency and structure, and within that humanism within Marxist theory: 'in the history of Marxian-inspired social theory approaches emerged that are either structuralist in character (structural Marxism) or agency-based (workerism, class struggle-oriented Marxism). A third type tries to dialectically integrate structure and agency approaches.' (Fuchs 2019, p. 4)

In the interwar period, communist theorists debated the presence of humanism within Marx's work. Lenin returned to an analysis of Hegel (Anderson 1995), but more controversial were the debates that Lukacs and Kosch had with orthodox Soviet Marxism within the Second International (Edwards 2007). Both considered the history of class consciousness, and engaged Hegel to examine the normative underpinning and liberatory process of proletariat consciousness formation, in contrary to scientific socialism and Soviet orthodoxy. In this context, Marxist humanism primarily became a debate on humanism within Marx and the particular considerations of consciousness formation and agency rather than a school of thought in itself.

Marxist humanism emerges most prominently as a loose school of thought in the post-World War II context. Western and Eastern European Marxists found

common philosophical ground with the engagement between critical theorists such as Fromm (Fromm 1967; Fromm & Bottomore 2004), the Praxis school in Yugoslavia (Kanzleiter 2009) and in particular the works of the Hungarian Marxist humanist Dunayevskaya (1965; 1988; 2003). The Praxis school placed emphasis on the reading of a humanist early Marx (Kanzleiter 2009), while Dunayevskaya placed emphasis on a unitary liberatory drive within Marxist theory and practice, rejecting the idea of an epistemological break between early and late Marx (1988). In both, there was a rejection of Soviet theoretical and political orthodoxy, in favour of an exploration of the liberatory potential of Marxist thought.

Since the mid-1960s Marxist humanism has sat in the background, influencing cultural theories and cultural Marxism and acting as a negation of structuralism and post-structuralist thought. Influenced by Marxist humanism, theorists such as E.P. Thompson (1959), Perry Anderson and Raymond Williams (Davis 2013) have rejected both Althusserian structuralism, in particular the abstraction of civil and ideological processes and attempts to locate power independent of political agency, as well as rejecting a moral relativism in some post-structuralist and post-modernist thought, such as Foucault. Considering the relationship between the agency and structure debate and Marxist humanism in Thompson and Williams's work, Fuchs (2019 p. 5) argues that

The approaches of E.P. Thompson and Raymond Williams can be characterized as humanist because they start from human experiences and human consciousness that are situated in class relations. But these are not purely agency-based approaches that fetishize the individual and social struggles. Rather, Williams and Thompson base their analysis of society and culture on a dialectic of structure and agency, as evidenced for example by Williams' concept of the structure of feelings and Thompson's notion of class experience that both operate at the two mediated levels of individual consciousness and collective consciousness as represented by organizations and institutions.

A Marxist humanist political economic framework applied to the analysis of radical media takes into account the limits set by capital and capitalist media and the weight of historical development of production and ideology, with these limits setting the *conditions* for radical media production. At the same time it is considered that radical media actors (journalists, workers and producers) will act on and make their own history, strategically organising and building radical media and reshaping history in the process, bridging the agency and structure debates within Marxist theory. In addition, from the history of Marxist humanist thought, at least three specific features can be considered for the political economic analysis of radical media: firstly, that Marxist theory has an underlying normative and ethical dimension in the development of knowledge and political organisation; secondly, that Marxist humanism centres discussion and understanding of exploitation and alienation; and thirdly, that considerations of liberation and freedom are positioned centrally within research and practice.

1.2.3 Radicalism

In the introduction radical media was additionally considered in terms of three radicals: 'radical' pertaining to roots, 'radical' pertaining to progressive politics and 'radical' pertaining to emancipation. These concepts of 'radical' have specific histories of use. Williams (2013) argues that the etymology of radicalism as 'roots' began primarily as a physical conceptualisation, to express an inherent or fundamental quality. This physical science interpretation has continued to some degree with, for example, 'free radicals' in physics and with 'radical' used in terms of roots in reference to invasive or experimental drug treatments and procedures within medical science (Spencer 2001). Davis (1990) locates 'radical' as that which positions far-reaching change at the roots of *society*. In *Digital, Political, Radical* Fenton (2016b, p. 9) considers 'radical' in relation to its Latin origins in terms of roots, with radical, 'of the grass-roots'

and 'nurturing and sustaining of an ecosystem', referring to ecology, but used within social and political thought and to refer to political organisation.

'Radical' considered in terms of progressive politics is argued by Williams (2013) to have emerged primarily in the 19th century. 'Radical' had two uses here. It was associated with the English reform movement, in which efforts were made to extend voting rights, reform the House of Lords and develop popular civil participation in democracy. 'Radical' was also associated with Jacobinism and revolutionary republicanism in England during the Napoleonic Wars. In the 20th century Williams (2013) argues that 'radical', as well as 'radicalise' and 'radicalism', has a more complex and mixed political use. In French parliamentary politics 'radical' came to be used by liberal, secular and republican parties, by conservatives as a concept of the radical right and additionally, by left-wing parties contradictorily both by social democrats to distinguish themselves from revolutionary, socialist and militant politics but also interchangeably with these traditions (Williams 2013; Dewey 1963).

Building from the work of Williams (2013), Fenton (2016b) considers the radical as politically progressive and left-wing. Fenton also locates this progressive 'radical' in multiple sites: the 'high' politics of parliaments, the street politics of movements and the politics of everyday experience and social relations. Within the consideration of radical as broadly progressive, it is also worth noting variations and narrower usage within social movement theory (Fitzgerald & Rodgers 2000) and egalitarian theory (Baker et al. 2016). In both theoretical frameworks 'radical' refers to the organisation and bodies of people who go further, push boundaries and demand major system change. This is in contrast to moderates, who accommodate, compromise and aim for concessions. While radicals' and moderates' tactics are distinguished from each other as different tendencies, they are both considered broadly politically progressive.

'Radical' as it applies to emancipation also has specific origins and usages. Emancipation is a normative expression and underlying principle for and of social transformation. It expresses a formulation of freedom. Emancipation encompasses opposition to and freedom from toil, bondage, exploitation,

oppression, domination and subjugation (Harnecker 2007; Harman 2008). Emancipation is also expressed as a process of change, where social transformation remakes the person and the collective. An emancipated subject is one who is free. Finally, it has been used as freedom in the sense of a goal: the world and society that we want to have (Levitas 2013; Leach 2013; Hardts 2003; Harding 2010).

Historically, emancipation has been used as a concept in a variety of ways by radical political struggles, movements and organisations from the late medieval period to today. In the 1600s and 1700s peasant and labour proclamations such as those of the Diggers in England and the early cooperative movement, emancipation within a utopian framework (Harman 2008; Levitas 2013 Leach 2013). In the early 1800s 'emancipation' emerges within radical liberalism and revolutionary republicanism. 'Emancipation' was used to express the extension of rights beyond the narrow framework of citizenship defined by property (Harman 2008). This meant the inclusion of the property-less, peasants, the industrial working class, slaves and women. This in turn feeds and was carried by dissenting political traditions such as Jacobinism, socialism, abolitionists and the feminist movement.

In the late 1800s and 1900s important shifts occurred in the conceptualisation of emancipation. Marx distinguishes between social and political emancipation, the transformation of the whole social being and the transformation of an extracted political subject (Marx & Engels 1965; Marx 1973). Bernstein and Luxemburg used 'emancipation' within debates on the nature of social revolution and political reform, considering the process and end goal of socialist transformation (Luxemburg 2007). In the 1960s emancipation was considered in terms of civil rights, articulating a right of representation and social and economic status. Liberation movements expressed emancipation as a demand and as processes and goals in which all systems of oppression are dismantled and the fullest freedom of collective economic, political and social relations is created (Evans 1980; Freeman (1973); Haider 2018; Taylor 2016).

Finally, tendencies of particularism and universalism bring questions of the subject and means of emancipation into the 21st century (Harvey & Williams 1995; Rahman 2008; Čičigoj 2017; Haider 2018; Woods 1995; Amin 2018).

1.3 Political Power and Early Theories of Radical Media

Early radical media theories placed the question of political power at the heart of their analysis of radical media. They considered the role that media plays in maintaining dominant bourgeois power and in creating new radical socialist and communist societies built for and by the working class. Three political economic theorists are selected: Marx, Gramsci and Lukacs (Marx & Engels 1983; Marx 2008; Gramsci 1971; Tomas 2009; Anderson 2017; Lukacs 1972; Lukacs 2017; Fuchs 2016). These theorists are significant political economists and can all be read from a Marxist humanist perspective, centring the agency of the working class and oppressed to rise up and systemically transform the world. These three theorists lay the foundation for a wide analysis of dominant and radical media, even though they consider radical media as a secondary subject behind a more general analysis of capital, the state and class. In addition, they present a particularly sharp analysis of media in relation to questions of political power, how the media is used to maintain political power and how the working class can use it to gain power.

Marx was a theorist set in a particular socio-economic and political context: the rise of industrial capitalism in Europe and the conflict between forms of monarchy and bourgeois democracies. Marx wrote in considerations of rebellion and revolution in particular: the European revolutions of 1848, the Paris Commune of 1870 and the formation of the early trade union movement and First and Second Internationals. Marx would have understood the media, or press, in terms both of liberal bourgeois publications and as a radical tradition, such as that of the Chartist radical press (Fernbach 1974; Marx, Wheen, & Ledbetter, 2007).

Gramsci and Lukacs were theorists of the interwar years. Media and politics shifted during the era: capitalism was in crisis, revolution occurred in Russia, the Fascists took power in Italy, and communist revolution failed in the West.

Mass media, radio and film emerged for the first time, pushing theorists to account for both the social and ideological barriers to working-class power, in which the media was seen as significant, and the new formation of counter-power, in which radical media could be positioned. Two theorists who sit within a political economic framework, and who analysed the state, capital and ideology, including the media, are excluded from this analysis: Lenin (Resis 1977; Lih 2005; Fuchs 2010) and Trotsky (Chilcote 2009; Trotsky 1971; Saccarelli 2008).

1.3.1 Dominant Media: Marx, Gramsci and Lukacs

Marx was a complex theorist whose largest and most significant body of work, *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*, attempted to analyse the complete development of a totalised, historically grounded production system: capitalism. Marx's work on media or the press was largely a secondary or derivative analysis as part of a body of writing on politics in *The German Ideology*, *The Communist Manifesto* and collections of letters and articles as a journalist, organised by Fernbach (1974) as *The First International and After: Political Writings* and by Ledbetter (2018) as *Dispatches for the New York Tribune: Selected Journalism of Karl Marx*. Marx considered journalism as 'playing the piper's tune', indicating an understanding of dominant media as a secondary site of power determined by capitalist power.

Marx's analysis positioned the press within a wider concept: ideology. Engaging Hegel and Feuerbach (Marx & Engels 1965) and developing Hegelian dialectics into a method of historical materialism, ideology was considered as a series of institutional structures, rituals, customs, cultures, assumptions and messages which maintained class power. Marx argued that ideology operates primarily through the creation of false consciousness, where the material interests of the working class are contradicted by social interests imposed through ideology by the ruling class. Bourgeois media, or the media of the ruling class, are carriers of ideology used by the capitalist class to maintain power (Marx & Engels 1965).

Ideology, and thus the bourgeois press, was positioned within the superstructure (Marx 1970). In contrast, Marx understood the base as the site of material production. It includes the means of production, the economic materials, tools and resources, and the relationships of production: the class relations between the worker who sells labour, the manager and the capitalist. The superstructure is the social relations, customs, cultures, social rituals and practices which are organised in institutions. To Marx, superstructure power is derived from base power, or power at production. Ideology and the bourgeois press rests their power on the wider ruling-class power to expand capital and suppress the working class.

The core tension at the heart of capitalism is the relationship between capital and labour. The 'engine' of capital is dependent on the extraction of labour power, the creation of surplus value and the expansion of capital, centring the survival of the system itself on profit creation. In the *Grundrisse* (1973), although limited analysis takes place of the topic, Marx does identify journalism as emerging from a labour production process and thus subjected to the same principles of surplus value extraction and commodification as within the wider capitalist system (Marx 1973). He also briefly discusses a specific role for communication technology, of which media is a specific form, in its ability to change the temporal and spatial dynamics of capitalism and thus contribute to more general production changes (Marx 1973), but these points of analysis are left underdeveloped.

Gramsci greatly builds on Marx's analysis of ideology and creates a firm basis for considering dominant media. Gramsci wrote in *Avanti!*, the Italian communist newspaper, in 'The Newspapers and Workers' in 1916, that the bourgeois press were a danger to the working class. They hold significant power in how they can present their analysis of current events as objective reporting while they are laden with bourgeois ideology. Gramsci argues that the bourgeois press should be boycotted and the working-class press built instead. Gramsci (1971) more famously develops his analysis of the press within a far wider conceptualisation and consideration of ruling-class power in *The Prison Notebooks*.

Gramsci conceptualised the press as an active economic, social and political site of power, understood within the wider concept of hegemony. While acknowledging the centrality of material production in class formation and power, Gramsci (1971) argued for a more active and developed understanding of social power. Thomas (2009, p. 194) argues that Gramsci set out to conceptualise social power as both a structure and a process of power: 'Hegemony is a particular practice of consolidating social forces and condensing them into political power on a mass basis – the mode of production of the modern political.' Gramsci transforms Marx's understanding of ideology – the idea that social and cultural power are subordinate to the 'raw' material clash of labour and capital at the point of production – into a framework in which tensions and conflict operate at a social and political organisation level, as groups within the ruling class have to be socially and politically bound together in order for capitalist exploitation to effectively operate as a whole.

Anderson (2017) argues that the idea of hegemony was developed by Gramsci from debates within the Russian communist movement before 1917 which focused on an analysis of both ruling-class composition and the composition of forces that could oppose them. This concept re-emerged with the foundation of the Third International in 1919, in which the leaders of the successful Russian revolution engaged with communist revolutionary parties throughout Western Europe on the means, barriers and methods of working class revolution. The concept of hegemony as such concerned how to consider alliances of the ruling class that existed to sustain capitalism. Hegemony is both the achievement of a social, economic and political majority, in the capacity to impose political will as a collective force on the working class, maintaining subjugation, and the way in which a force within the ruling class – a class fraction or section, such as, for example, the landed aristocracy or shipping industrialists – imposes hegemony or dominance within the ruling-class alliance (Anderson 2017).

Hegemony allows for a conceptualisation of the press or media as an active contributor to capitalist power rather than a by-product of economic production. Specifically, Gramsci (1971) identified the press as a means of transmitting the ideas of the ruling class in a similar fashion to how Marx

considered bourgeois ideology (Marx 1973). Importantly, Gramsci additionally considered the press as a means of both linking and consolidating social and political aspects of the power of the ruling class, beyond dominance and the use of force. That is, the press brings together different actors within the ruling class – the state, military, industrialists, church and other social forces – consolidating their narrative, strategies and ideas and contributing to their political organisation (Curran 2002). If the ruling class is in crisis, the press can become a battleground between opposing class fractions, in which they articulate their positions and attempt to limit the power of opposing forces within the ruling class.

Lukacs's consideration of philosophy and ontology within Marxism and his analysis of social being and class power are important additions to an understanding of dominant media. Lukacs wrote *History and Class Consciousness* (1922) while a member of the Hungarian Communist Party, and was shortly thereafter the minister of education and culture in the Hungarian Soviet of 1924. He attempted to grapple with Marxism as a methodology which centred dialectics and humanism. The relationship between agency and ideology was a central consideration of his work. He also specifically developed three key concepts relevant to an understanding of dominant media: reification, alienation and class consciousness. While *History and Class Consciousness* is primarily grounded in the political questions of revolution, Lukacs opens a bridge to critical theory and questions of culture, which became particularly significant in the Cold War theorising of dominant media. Fuchs (2016) argues that in the *Ontology of Social Being* (1978) Lukacs moves his analysis towards an understanding of society and capitalism, with the analysis of labour and culture particularly significant for understanding dominant media and communication.

Lukacs attempted to grapple with concepts of ethics and political power in the context of the Russian Revolution. Relevant to understanding dominant media, Lukacs developed Marx's concept of alienation, which focused on the way in which the labour-capital relationship abstracted labour as sets of rules. These rules regulated and governed, alienating labour. This idea was interlinked with

the concept of commodity fetishism – the belief that inanimate things (commodities) have value able to govern the activity of human beings. Lukacs extended the concept of alienation to ethics, arguing that the rules of ethics disembodied the human from processes of social relation, separating people from themselves and from each other. Ethics as a regulatory framework serves an important function with the media, not only as a feature of propaganda, exonerating bourgeois life and moral character, but as a process which abstracts and alienates people from themselves and their social relations.

The concept of reification expanded and developed these understandings of alienation. Reification refers to the process of the creation of the 'thing', the creating of 'objects' as ideas governing social relations. Relationships between people are distorted under capitalism; relationships take on an object form, the character of a thing, and thus acquire a 'phantom objectivity', an autonomy that seems 'so strictly rational and all-embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: the relation between people' (Lukacs 1922, p. 1). Objects created are disembodied entities separated from the social forces of production and reproduction. This disembodiment is a specific form of alienation that takes place as part of the labour–capital relationship and a social phenomenon of commodity construction in capitalism.

Reification is both material and ideological. Materially, the qualitative homogeneity and continuity of human work is destroyed when industrial work processes commodity forms as part of a process of rationalisation, and the specialisation of production leads to fragmentation of human relationships and to the destruction of the 'organic, irrational and qualitatively determined unity of the product' (1922, p. 88). Ideologically, reification entails a fragmentation of human experience, leading to an attitude of 'contemplation' where one passively adapts to a law-like system of social 'second nature' and to an objectifying stance towards one's own mental states and capacities.

Fuchs (2016) argues that Lukacs greatly expands his analysis of labour within communication and dominant media in the *Ontology of Social Being* (1978). After World War II, Lukacs accommodated to Stalinism and the leadership of the USSR until the Hungarian uprising in 1956. He took a position in the new

government before the revolution was crushed by the Soviet army. For Lukacs (1978) work is the essential and foundational activity of humans and society that forms the basis of other phenomena such as language and cultural construction. It is the 'model for all social practice, all active social behaviour' (p. 46). Work 'is the underlying and hence the simplest and most elementary form of those complexes whose dynamic interaction is what constitutes the specificity of social practice' (p. 59). There is an 'identity of identity and non-identity' of work and other forms of human practice (p. 59). Lukacs considers the subjective experience of work as operating on the material realities of production; this means that work and communication – that is, the economy and culture – operate through similar processes of subjective expression onto material reality.

Lukacs identifies important differences too. In the economy, where work creates goods, the intentional goals tend to be much more clearly defined, whereas in culture, where communication influences social behaviour, there is much more scope for what is considered desirable and undesirable, for 'reactions to societal matters of fact, situations, tasks and so on' (Lukacs 1978, p. 417). Lukacs says that in the economy the value of a product depends on whether it is 'immediately useful or non-useful, whereas in artistic creation the field and possibilities of value and non-value are extraordinarily widely stretched and hardly determinable in advance' (p. 535).

1.3.2 Working-Class Radical Media: Marx, Gramsci and Lukacs

Marx, Gramsci and Lukacs all consider the broad operation of capitalism, the systems of ideology and the coordination and organisation of subjugation (Marx & Engels 1983; Marx 2008; Gramsci 1971; Thompson 2009; Anderson 2017; Lukacs 1922; Fuchs 2016). In the analysis of dominant power and media all three theorists pose a counter-point: how can the working class or proletariat achieve political power and what society can they build from the ashes of capitalism? Radical media, in light of this question, is a consideration of and interrelated to the processes and forms of working-class power in and against capitalism.

At the point of material production, Marx (1983) considers the labour–capital relationship as a site of conflict itself via exploitation and alienation. Capitalism relies on the extraction of surplus value, the squeezing of the wages of labour, the increase of capital profit, the dissociation of ownership of production from the worker, and the social disfigurement, or alienation, of the human being. The working class is the central subject and means of radical transformation to Marx (1972), at the point of production when active class consciousness is formed. To Marx the working class moves from a class ‘in itself’ to a class ‘of itself’. That is, the members of the working class have to become aware that they are together in terms of existing as a class (in) and organise together as a class (of). Strategically, the working class has a unique position in the capital–labour process. They can stop capital, seize power and then reorganise production. This material power is coupled with an ideological power: the working class has the potential consciousness to not only overthrow the ruling class, but abolish class itself (Marx 1972).

For Marx, media changes role when organised and controlled by the working class. It moves from being a producer of false consciousness and the ideology of the capitalist class to being a means of production of the message and consciousness of the organised working class (Marx 1972). The working classes are tied together firstly by a common relationship to exploitation. From this a social and cultural dynamic, a working-class ideology, can be created which acts as a counterweight to the ideology of the ruling class. However, this also needs concrete organisation, and it is here that the idea of media as the organ of the working class emerges as part of a more general process in which sites of working-class power and consciousness are built. Although Marx did not directly comment on the history of radical media, in practice he wrote both for the Chartist press and for the organs of the First and Second Internationals, both as a means of articulating positions to the general public, the working class, and as a means of internal socialist debate.

Gramsci expanded on Marx, and more directly grappled with the immediate challenges and potential of radical media. Gramsci considered how the working class can take power, in a context where there are developed institutions of

bourgeois state and civil power. While his writing in *The Bourgeois Press and the Worker* (1916) expresses a simple demand for the working class to boycott the bourgeois press and build their own press, later work, in particular in the *Prison Notebooks*, saw the development of a more sophisticated analysis of radical media as part of a counter-hegemony.

Gramsci introduces the concept of the 'subaltern' to explain the potential subject of social transformation and the role of radical media in this transformation. The subaltern is all social forces outside of and subjugated by the ruling class. Counter-hegemony operates as a means of organisation of the subaltern, independent from the ruling class, and as a means of coordination among the subaltern. Within the subaltern there are many contesting forces, and class fractions, which needed to be consolidated as a united force, but also in which particular forces would emerge as leaders (the vanguard). Gramsci, in the context of the 1917 Russian Revolution and the failure of revolution in the West, considered the working class as the leader of the counter-hegemony, but was also interested in the way in which forces formed alliances, consolidated and hegemonised. For example, in the Russian Revolution there was a particular counter-hegemony of both the industrial working class and peasants, with the industrial working class, although smaller, leading.

The media has three specific strategic roles from here. In the war of position the working-class forces set out to develop their own institutions, media, cultural spaces, theatre, film and other forms of civil society. These are built to raise class consciousness and have the widest array of strategic bases of operation to work from. In this war of position efforts are additionally made to exploit and deepen divisions within the ruling class, to drag or destroy parts of their hegemonic apparatus; in this the media takes on an agitation role. Finally, in the war of moment, direct assault on the centres of power occurs. This involves not only seizure of the means of production but also social and political power. This is the moment of revolution. Radical media as part of a process of revolution involves the ending of the ruling-class press and its organs of propaganda and the formation and action of radical media as revolutionary agitation and organisation (Gramsci 1971).

Gramsci (1971) also identified a particular dynamic within counter-hegemony and working-class struggle, the organic intellectual. Organic intellectuals have a particular social agency as a class fraction which articulates and coordinates the feelings, expressions and ideas of class consciousness from within the class. Organic intellectuals are part of a leadership among the working-class, subaltern and socialist forces, a transmitter, clarifier and developer of ideas, identities, culture and strategy, and a consolidator of class forces, a tying of alliances among class fractions as they move toward power. Radical media is a key point from which organic intellectuals speak to other intellectuals and to the class as a whole, the subaltern and the counter-hegemonic forces.

The conceptualisation of the organic intellectual was not abstracted from an analysis of the concrete forces and considerations of Gramsci's time period. Organic intellectuals existed within a war of position and movement between the hegemonic ruling forces and the subaltern. Gramsci argues that a weakness of the existing working-class movement was that it relied on traditional middle-class and bourgeois intellectuals who 'defect and are assimilated in the socialist forces of the time. Conquest is made quicker and more efficacious the more the group (the working class and subaltern) in question succeeds in simultaneously elaborating its own organic intellectuals instead of relying on the defections of the bourgeois.' (Gramsci 1971, p. 10).

Lukacs in *History and Class Consciousness* (1922) theorised working-class agency and material power with considerations of a developed analysis of class consciousness. Lukacs, considered in terms of Marx's understanding of working-class emancipation and Gramsci's counter-hegemony and the organic intellectual, develops a particular analysis of the seizure of power by the proletariat. The seizure of power, in which production is seized and the forces of political subjugation are dismantled and replaced by new organs of democratic power, is more than a material and political reality. It is also the 'idea' of the proletariat as an agent of historical power. It creates a subject of historical agency, an example, a cultural and ideological force, beyond the immediate practice and material dynamics of the actual power.

Lukacs argues that not only was the Russian Revolution and the revolutionary current of the proletariat a question of the seizure of production (industry) and political power (the state), but they were also processes of the overcoming of reification and alienation. The proletariat were overcoming the formation of labour as object and the formation of ethics as abstracted object, which disengaged people from the social relations of being. Agency was being formed and capitalist social relations were being overcome. A tension exists within Lukacs's analysis between two forms of agency formation. Mass consciousness through mass action considered by Rosa Luxemburg (Elliot 1965; Luxemburg 2007) argues that agency is formed in mass action by the class, where they realise and understand their power and relationship to each other. This contrasts with a Leninist concept of the vanguard party, the most organised and leading section of the working class, as that which forms agency. In terms of radical media, the idea of agency formation greatly expands the scope of what a radical media of the working class could be. If the class can form itself as its own subject, the independent collective communication and articulation of the class takes a central position within the formation of this consciousness and from here the capacity to take power and transform society. Leninism implies that this radical media will be centred on and organised by the vanguard party, while a Luxemburgian interpretation means that radical media is centred in the mass action of the working class.

Lukacs (1922) additionally argues that there are potential pitfalls to the formation of the proletariat as an idea. The proletariat was formed as a subject-object in the struggle of revolution, particularly in Russia in 1917. Here the proletariat and the vanguard party became a new abstracted formation which disengaged the social relations of being from the collective self. Here radical media can become a part of this process of object construction, of separating the proletariat from itself and its relationships of being. The danger here is that this object construction becomes a barrier to the social emancipation of the working class; the idea of the proletariat is held separate from and above the working class itself, its objectification destroying the process of transformation that has to take place.

1.4 Cultural Power and Cold War Radical Media Theories

The second half of the 20th century was a fruitful period of media and radical media theorising. Mass communication and media – the vast print, radio and television broadcasters and their position within mass consumerism and Western globalised culture – became a central consideration for political economic theorists. Reflecting on the rise of mass media, fascism and the horrors of World War II, as well as the historic compromise in the West, the turbulence of the 1960s and 1970s and the neo-liberal turn in the 1980s, theorists increasingly looked to understand dominant culture and resistance (Curran, Gurevitch & Woollacott 2005).

Three schools of thought, and particular theorists within them, are considered. The Frankfurt School (Adorno & Horkheimer 2007, p. 1) and Benjamin (2008) shift the analysis of dominant media society and radical media. Considering the 1930s, but writing primarily in the 1940s and 1950s, they open up considerations of mass consumer capitalism and the mass industrial murder of fascism, the role of media within this, and the limits and potentials of radical cultural resistance (Benjamin 2008). Stuart Hall (1982a; 1982b; 1988), writing after the explosion of radical politics in 1968, during the long economic crisis of the 1970s, the defeat of the British left and the rise of Thatcherism, further develops considerations of culture, politics and cultural resistance. Finally, Bourdieu (1986a; 1986b), writing in France, primarily in the 1980s, opens up a third conceptualisation of dominant cultural, social and media power, in the theory of capitals, field and habit, and with consideration of the pervasive social relational controls of the ruling class and the practices of radical resistance (Bourdieu 1988).

The 1960s, 1970s and 1980s are significant decades of cultural radicalism theorising. Theorists such as Lefebvre (Lefebvre & Nicholson-Smith 1991; Smith 2005), while writing on radical culture and media, are excluded because of their geographic and spatial focus. Althusser (2014) is one of the canons of the age, emerging in the late 1960s as a French Communist Party theorist and writing extensively on media as part of the ideological state apparatus. His

anti-humanism and anti-dialectics run counter to the Marxist humanism of this thesis. Foucault (1984) had considerable weight as a theorist of society and power, which included media and the potential or limits of radicalism. Foucault, though, is explicitly against the totalising analysis of a political economy and is not included in this analysis. In addition, Laclau and Mouffe's theory of ideology and hegemony (2001), while widely considered and referenced at the interface of radical politics and radical media, is excluded because they move outside a political economic framework representing a post-Marxism.

1.4.1 Dominant Media: The Frankfurt School, Hall and Bourdieu

The Frankfurt school was a German-centred strand of Western historical materialism, exiled to the US during World War II and returning to Germany after the war. The Frankfurt School moved media analysis from questions of political power towards questions of cultural production and reproduction. In the analysis of cultural production media becomes a central, rather than peripheral, consideration in the wider study of society. Media is considered as having value as production but also specific rules and dynamics as culture. Cultural production is understood by the Frankfurt School as a driver of social and economic power in society rather than a by-product of economic production in capitalism. The media as such is not an 'empty' carrier or vehicle of and for ideology, as Marx (1970) articulated, or a political-strategic consideration of hegemony as in Gramsci (1971), but an active site of material production in itself, as well as a site with unique cultural logic, in particular consumerism and collective consumer identity.

The Frankfurt School argued that the process of capitalist production, in which a commodification of material life takes place, had extended to and overtaken culture in the 20th century. Culture was now produced under and according to the material and ideological logic of capitalism (Adorno & Horkheimer 2007). Building from Marx and Lukacs, they argued that commodification, and the alienation it creates in the object construction, was extended to a range of ideological formations; that the social relations, rituals, customs, tastes and interests of the people were now a product that could be bought and sold. Benjamin (2008) argued that the rhythm of mass industrial capitalism, in

particular the factory, was extended culture. Culture had become a site of mass production, a cultural factory, as a new site of production, consumption and capital creation. Capital accumulation entailed that culture needed to extend into new markets, new facets of everyday life, commodifying these spheres; new cultural products were needed, and labour's consumption patterns had to readjust, forming a mass consumerism.

Technological and media advances, from the telegraph to the radio to the television, allowed and had facilitated the extension of capital into culture, constructing popular culture as mass tastes and interests, rituals and customs, which could in turn be commodified. Importantly, the Frankfurt School argued that not only is culture taking on the logic of capitalism but it is beginning to reshape capitalism itself in its own image, in particular mass consumerism and collective consumer identity feeding back and driving production priority and the logics of material production, which in turn shifts and expands the remit of culture commodification (Adorno & Horkheimer 2007).

The cultural industry, reflecting capitalism as a whole, was in motion, with the engine of the industry being the capital-labour process and the formation and reproductions of class within mass cultural production (Adorno & Horkheimer 2007, p 1.). The metaphor of industry as a machine of moving parts that work together to create and sustain a dominant whole was applied to culture: 'official broadcasting is controlled and absorbed by talent scouts, studio competitions and official programs of every kind selected by professionals'. The rules set down by executives are reproduced across employees and consumers, and a system of mutual dependency is created where each 'cog of the machine' fulfils and maintains the industry as a whole.

The cultural industry extends itself into the mechanism of the state and politics. Voters become consumers, sold electoral products. Democracy has no independent value beyond the commodification of the voter. The collective identity of democracy is instead the collective identity of a democratic industry. Parties adopt public relations and public relations informs and writes policy.

The spectacle of the celebrity as politician and politician as celebrity is formed. Overall the extension of the factory into culture and the extension of commodified culture into politics is a negative expansion of the power of capital over every aspect of our day-to-day lives and a restriction of the possibility of democratic participation in Western consumerist society.

Hall (1982a; 1982b), within a culturally focused political economic analysis, develops a number of important considerations of dominant and radical media. Hall was a leading figure in the field of cultural studies, which offered a multidisciplinary exploration of cultural development and practice. The primary focus within cultural studies was to understand how cultural practice acts as and interacts with power. Hall was writing in the context of the end of the long boom, the anti-war, civil rights and social economic rebellion of 1968, during the economic turmoil of 1970s England and the rise of Thatcherism in the UK in the 1980s. Hall became particularly interested in the circulation of media as an active cultural-political form. Within this, specific processes of coding and decoding occurred and media played a key role in constructing representations of society and the people within it. Additionally media acted as a site at the interface of dominant and subversive culture, between co-option and accommodation on one hand and resistance and sub-culture on the other. While a media theorist, Hall was also a radical media writer and essayist, contributing to *Marxism Today*, *Race Today* and writing a range of essays, articles and books (Saville 1990).

According to Hall (1982a), dominant media is organised through a coding process. There are four guiding codes. The dominant (i.e. hegemonic) code is the general dominant message, or general message of what society, the economy and politics are. This is filtered through a professional code, where the message is filtered through a layer of expert opinions and judgements, authenticating said message. Below this is the negotiation code, where what can and cannot be debated is defined. Finally there is the opposition code, where counter-posing positions can be held within the system, polarising and

fermenting debate, but without undermining the overall validity of the system as a whole.

Hall (1982b) offered an analysis of the specific mechanisms or processes of media coding. Media operates in a cultural circuit, that is an interlinked set of representational structures, which the dominant powers encode into society. Media can specifically steer an existing cultural code, for example 'a subordinate group are cheats'; it can heighten the salience of such a representation through, for example, the planting of a controversial story. Additionally, it can more slowly, develop a representation via a series of stories over time, which it in turn amplifies and repeats. These dynamics reinforce and maintain ruling-class power and dominant media authority and control.

Representation for Hall (1982a) engages the significance of naming and assigning meaning to an object, subject or context. This assigning of meaning and naming is itself a site of power as it is a site of value construction. Hall (1982a) gives greater weight to this linguistic value construction than previous political economists. Representation and symbolic value are a central power within capitalism. Media acts as a key site of representative power and thus media directly shapes and forms reality as we know it. This is structured in accordance with maintaining systems of dominant power and capitalism.

Hall (1982b) was interested in how the British ruling class maintained power through the negative representation of the working class. Representational models of media power have had significance far more widely with the analysis of social aspects of class identity, feminist analysis of sexual and gender representation, and critical racial analysis of racial representation. Feminists considering social reproduction and the gendered nature of social constructs such as rationality and the public sphere, have been interested in how patriarchy is reproduced through the framing of gender roles, sexual identity and sexual power and consent (Hooks 2000; Mendes & Carter 2008). Racial theorists, particularly in critical race theory, have looked at how racialised peoples have been framed as violent, dangerous, irrational or emotional and

how social concepts such as poverty, class and social value in themselves have been racially framed (Crenshaw 1995; Delgado & Stefancic 2012).

Hall (1982a) introduces key new understandings of how media maintains dominant power, building on the analysis of false consciousness under Marx (1970) and hegemony under Gramsci (1971). At a societal level ruling-class power is maintained through violence and coercion but also by a process of consent construction. The hegemony of a ruling-class culture requires some degree of consent from the subordinate class. One way to achieve consent is through cultural accommodation. In this, hegemonic culture draws in bits and pieces of other cultures without allowing them to dramatically impact central ideas and beliefs. As a consequence of accommodation, the 'bourgeois culture' ceases to be entirely bourgeois – it has co-opted many other cultural elements – and the subordinated groups and their cultures are never directly confronted with or oppressed by a pure class culture; they see elements of themselves in the culture, but elements only.

Cultural assimilation and accommodation both maintain subordination and can act as means of taking the power out of subordinate communities, de-radicalising them (Hall 1982b). Hall provides insight into how aspects of Black Caribbean culture in England have been assimilated and accommodated by the majority white and ruling-class British culture. This co-option is extended to youth subcultures and working-class identities more generally. The state and the dominant culture can simultaneously accommodate aspects of these subordinate cultures while overall retaining a repressive apparatus, celebrating traditional British values, a working-class work ethic, Black cultural value, at the same time that aspects of the cultures are repressed and represented as violent.

Pierre Bourdieu (1986a; 1986b), the French sociologist, builds on this cultural analysis of dominant media with a particular interest in the ways in which social practices maintain dominant power. Bourdieu wrote after the radical wave of 1968 in France, the strikes and strength of communism in the 1970s,

the politics of Eurocommunism, and the collapse of the Mitterrand government in the 1980s (Harman 2008). Bourdieu theorised the embedded and extended means of control that the ruling class had developed in the West throughout the second half of the 20th century. Bourdieu believed that ruling-class power was comprehensively extended through layers of social power, of which the media was a key component.

Bourdieu (1986a; 1986b) considers symbolic power as the overarching generalised power which is in operation in society. Symbolic power constitutes the universalist norms and propositions that cannot and should not be challenged. He identified norms around progress, development and reason, as well as hierarchy itself as universal norms which make up symbolic power.

Bourdieu (1986a) additionally argued that symbolic power operates through specific fields. Fields are sites of power which have their own internal logic, rules, norms and codes. Fields divide symbolic power into sites of operation. The media field operates as a collective whole while also containing specific subfields – for example, print journalism, television, radio, digital and social media. Within the media field there can be a jostle for power, as the dominant subfields shift. For example, the power of television impacted and reconstructed print journalism and social media reconfigures both print and television.

Bourdieu (1986b) argues that the internal order of such fields operates through the reproduction of multiple forms of hierarchy. Hierarchy is understood as what one has which gives one position, status and power. Bourdieu outlined three capitals involved in the formation of hierarchy or status: economic capital, social capital and political capital. In the media field economic, social and cultural hierarchy is reproduced across generations and between and within sets of organisations. In addition to the status of capital within fields, 'habitus', or the practices of people in spaces, is articulated by Bourdieu as a key final mechanism of power. Habitus is the interpersonal practices that people engage in, from clothing to hair, linguistic cues and body language, which maintain power within spaces. These are learned and

reproduced to maintain hierarchy. Dominant media articulates dynamics of symbolic power, capitals and habitus through society as a whole, as well as having particular practices pertaining to and maintaining dominant power within the media.

1.4.2 Cultural Resistance: The Frankfurt School, Hall and Bourdieu

Benjamin (2008) and the Frankfurt School, Hall (1982a; 1982b) and cultural studies and Bourdieu (1986a; 1986b) shift the analysis of radical media, from the primary question of how the working class or proletariat can achieve political power and what role a working-class media plays within this, to considerations of how power is mediated by culture and at what points there can be general cultural resistance which includes new radical media. How society can be transformed moves from the direct confrontation with the bourgeois to mediating forces, filters, mechanisms of control and counter-forces of cultural resistance. The Frankfurt School are pessimistic about the potential for radical social transformation, while Benjamin (2008) sees the potential for social transformation on the cultural plane. Hall considers mass popular culture (Friske 2010; Hall & Whannel 2018) and subculture (Hall & Jefferson 1993) and their media as containing radicalisms. He also sees the shift in politics, the formation of neo-liberalism, Thatcherism and the need to form a new left with a radical culture (Hall & Jacques 1983; Hall 1988). Bourdieu (1988) shifts to an analysis of radical media with and through points of resistance in fields and habits of social power and the new formation of radical practice within social movements.

The early work of the Frankfurt School, in the formation of critical theory, articulated a belief that their analytic framework itself was a form of 'social critique' intended to be part of a movement of social change and intellectual emancipation. The methods of mass media propaganda could not simply be replicated by the socialist movement and advocates of social change because the process of 'intellectual' emancipation as part of social change involved a critical and normative ethical form which differed from dominant and repressive media and knowledge accumulation.

After the war, authors such as Adorno and Horkheimer (2007) offered a far bleaker picture of the all-dominating power of culture production and the extension of its control mechanisms via the culture industry. Instead of a working-class war against the cultural industry and the extension of its logic in liberal democracy, mass popular culture was more likely to be adapted by authoritarian and fascist forces such as in Nazi Germany. For Marcuse (1964), culture was eating itself via the commodification project. This pessimism was embedded in a general analysis of the hollowing out of the Enlightenment via its own internal contradictions, thus providing the space for fascism (Marcuse 1964).

By contrast, Benjamin (2008) offers an exit from the post-war impasse of Adorno (2007) and Marcuse's (1964) Frankfurt School and a path towards a new interpretation of radical media. Benjamin argued that mass culture offered the opportunity for democratic opening and new points of power for the proletariat (Benjamin 2008). The logic of capital accumulation in the 1800s created factories and mass alienation but also the potential for mass organising. Culture opens as a site of conflict and proletariat power in a similar vein. Mirroring the argument that the master digs its own grave, capitalism's extension into culture, its commodification of the rituals, institutions and rites of cultural formation, and its transformation of these into mass practices, is a basis for mass working-class cultural resistance and power. For example, the technical developments of radio and television could be turned into radical media of and for the working class; the advancement of film can be a site of power for the working class.

Hall simultaneously located radical media within the dynamics of class, popular culture and the rituals and oppositional codes of subcultures and minority cultures (Hall & Whannel 2018; Hall & Jefferson 1993). Hall outlined how resistance occurs in dominant codes and narratives, through the formation of opposition codes and through rituals and relations of the marginalised and oppressed. In the context of mass media, opposition codes come into existence as people interpret mass media and form opposing interpretations of the narratives formed. For example, youth knife crime, which is framed in a

racialised manner, can be challenged and redirected when crime is interpreted as a point of social and economic malice rather than individual moral wrong. This is a form of cultural resistance within the dominant and popular cultures (Hall & Whannel 2018).

In addition, Hall extends the potential for radical culture, and thus radical media, to exist in the rituals and oppositional cultural relations of subcultures and marginalised forces. Examining working-class youth culture, black British subcultures and punks, Hall (1982) and Hall & Jefferson (1993) argued that rituals of food, relations, music and practices of everyday life were organised as a counterpoint and protection against dominant culture. The range of community and minority media, music, record labels, and other forms of culture can be considered radical in this sense, although there is a constant pressure from corporate, capitalist and dominant cultures to assimilate and commodify this culture and subcultural resistance.

In the late 1970s and 1980s Hall turned his attention to the emergence of a new British right wing under Margaret Thatcher (Hall & Jacques 1983; Hall 1988). Hall argued this new authoritarian right, also called Thatcherism, had built from an existing moral conservatism, present in labour and working-class moral norms, and combined with a jingoist foreign policy. Drawing on Gramsci, Hall argued that the combination of social and moral conservatism and imperialist foreign policy served to break up and weaken the working-class coalition existent in the 1970s, in order to facilitate an economic offensive by the ruling class and a new cultural hegemony of the right. The struggle is one of ideas, tactics and organisation, of a working-class defence against this attack and the formation of a new counter-hegemony. Radical media is located in this new counter-hegemony. Hall argued that the electoral politics of the British Labour Party would have to combine with a new coalition of the diverse working class and marginalised. From here a mass popular culture and the radicalisms of subcultures could be the basis of a new alliances of left-wing power (Hall & Jacques 1983; Hall 1988).

Like Hall, Bourdieu was a radical public intellectual, writing in popular journals, engaging in public debates, radio and television. Bourdieu analysed a dual basis of radical social and cultural power: the power to operate within and undermine the existing habits and fields of dominant power, and the ability to build outside and against it. For example, Bourdieu (1986b) wrote on the specific dynamics of symbolic power within media and journalism as part of the wider reproduction of power but with its own unique characteristics, fields and habits; radicals build resistance among and within journalism and against journalism itself, its capitals, social habits and hierarchy of power.

Bourdieu (1988) considered practices of professionalism and other social hierarchies as reinforced by a symbolic violence against the other and an active effort to limit and constrain oppositional and radical forms of social resistance. All cultural, social and economic capital and habitus – the day-to-day rituals of language and clothing – are positioned to maintain hierarchy. An entire practice of radical resistance is necessary as the triple load of cultural, social and economic capital are weighted to maintain hierarchy. Radical practice is the undermining of these capitals and the undoing of the habitus of social hierarchy. The media and the professionalism of journalism which acts as the carrier of dominant symbolic power used to reinforce social hierarchy, must be undone.

For Bourdieu (1988), radical practice is most effectively formed as a cultural and social resistance outside the dominant fields and habitus. Social movements are the most powerful force for this. Social movements energise sets of radical practices, remaking them and allowing us to relearn habits and structures of hierarchy we had become accustomed to over time. The specific preconditions for change and social movements lie in the types of objective structures that are 'in a state of uncertainty and crisis that favours uncertainty about them and an awakening of critical consciousness of their arbitrariness and fragility' (Bourdieu 2000, p. 236). However, the increased opportunities need to be perceived and interpreted by actors. They also need a site to move to, the social movement itself.

Conscious efforts to transform social relations also introduce new elements into the established relations of power, which necessarily produce an effect on these relations. For instance, gender relations are an example of interdependent social relations in everyday life. New formations of social practice are developed by feminists within social movements. These in turn shift everyday practices and open up potential for new fields of power and habit to replace the dominant (Lash 1993; Bourdieu 1988; 2000). Radical media as a component of radical practice is stronger in and of social movements intervening and pressuring dominant political forms from the outside rather than within mainstream journalism, where conservative forces of habit and field constrain and limit its transformative potential. These changes from the outside will in turn filter into the dominant field, changing its composition.

1.5 Radical Media Theories in the Digital Era

Major shifts in the political economy analysis of media power have occurred in the 21st century. The 1990s saw a period of retraction from the analysis of media domination and radicalism, with a shift towards positivism, media psychology, and reductive analytic frameworks for the analysis of media theory (Curran 2002), bound within the political context of neo-liberalism (Harvey 2014) and the domination of the end of history narrative. The 2000s saw media power analysis tentatively return. Conflicts of globalisation and the anti-globalisation movement, US and UK intervention in the Middle East and the anti-war movement meant that political economic questions such as mass media as propaganda, globalised communication and media ownership became important critical topics (Curran 2002). As these questions of mass media power reopened, dominant media itself was in a fundamental process of change. The rise of the internet in the 1990s and subsequent rise of social media has impacted both on industrial production and consumption of communication. Digital media and social media have both contested legacy media (Mosco 2009) and integrated (Fuchs 2012) with it, opening up new considerations for both dominant and radical media.

Three theorists are selected: Castells (2007; 2011; 2015), Fuchs and Mosco (2012) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2014; 2015; 2016), and Fenton (2016a; 2016b). They offer a political economic perspective which weaves towards an analysis of the new forms of digital media dominance and radicalism. Castells' concept of a network society is a defining contribution to the analysis of digital media, society and radicalism. Here there is a re-conceptualisation of capitalism and anti-capitalism as networked. Castells writes primarily after the period of techno-utopianism which characterised the late 1990s and early 2000s, where new consideration of vertical distribution, and exchanges without mediation by the traditional mass media forms – radio, television and print – and their mass corporate and public service broadcaster organisations were being explored. Castells' (2007) emphasis is on the shifting communication power dynamics which have emerged in the digital age.

Fuchs and Mosco (2012) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2014; 2015; 2016), writing after and reflecting on the financial crisis, and with consideration of new movements, developed a theory of digital capitalism and digital labour. They re-engage the classic political economy of Marx and bring considerations of ownership and working-class power to the forefront in the digital age, as well as considering the contested interactions, movements and alternatives within social media platforms. Their emphasis is on the role that capital takes in shaping communication, media and politics in the digital age and on the potential anti-capitalist alternatives that can be built.

Finally, Fenton (2016a; 2016b) merges a classic Marxist conceptualisation of power, Holloway's (2002) autonomism, Laclau and Mouffe's (2001) new subjects of radical politics, within a framework of radical politics in the digital age, cohering an analysis of shifts in digital capital, movements and electoral politics, and the space of radical media within and between these forms. Fenton's emphasis is on materially grounded radical political processes and the relationship that communication and media have to these processes in the digital age.

The 21st century has been a significant period for direct theorising of radical media. As such, a range of important theorists of radical media in this era are not included. Of those, Atton (2002) and Downing (2001) offer important definitions and case studies of alternative and radical media practice but reject a political economic framework. Curran (2002) sits within a political economic framework, but focuses his analysis on historical formations of radical media, in particular the British radical media of the 1800s, rather than contemporary digital media. Finally, Jeppesen (2016) similarly, while offering a more comprehensive theorising of alternative media, eschews a totalised theoretical framework, such as political economy, in favour of developing anarchistic frameworks of analysis and practice. Jeppesen (2016) is considered in later typological work on radical media.

1.5.1 Dominant Media: Castells, Fuchs and Fenton

Castells (2007; 2011) articulated three significant changes in how media operated within dominant power structures in the digital age. Firstly, Castells (2007) argued that social power in the digital age operates primarily through language construction and networked communication. Specifically, this social power of communication is based on the relational nature of language. Meaning is derived from the relational aspect of language; linguistic meaning orders society. Castells (2011) argues that this linguistic power has been globalised and that this globalisation occurs through networks; that is, interlinked communication 'nodes' that cross geographic boundaries. Power is ordered in these networks according to specific rules. The first is that the actors and organisations within the network have the power to set who is inside and who is outside of the network of digital communicative power. This operates horizontally across the network – for example, digital media corporations control the market and dictate what other corporations can enter and on what terms – as well as vertically, as organisations control who is producing and employed in the digital network below them.

Once inside the network, the second power is the setting of rules of inclusion.

Rules of language and social identification are formed within the network. These are both explicit and discrete rules of use allowing for networks to self-select and direct power. This is similar to Bourdieu's concept of habitus (1986b), considered in terms of an expansive and globalised digital network formation. Thirdly, the network sees power formation in relation to the relative position and composition of actors within the network and their power over each other. For example, Facebook will have a dominant position of power within the digital media network compared to a digital start-up. This power is material, social, cultural and political. Echoes of Gramsci's (1971) hegemony and class fractions are evident here, if we consider this formation of power in terms of a materialist critical political economic analysis. Finally, Castells argues that, along with competition within the network, strategic alliances between dominant actors are a key component of power formation.

There are significant implications to the way in which digital communication has been shifted by networked power. Castells (2007; 2011) argues that dominant media has been remade by the networked power inherent in the digital age. Instead of the classic formation of mass media in the 20th century, in which media production, television, radio and print, dominated by large media corporations, dictated the formation of power, with the 'public' operating as passive consumers, production and consumption are networked in the digital age. This means that production and consumption become fused to a degree, with consumption patterns directly feeding production, and vice versa. Rather than distributing power into a more egalitarian formation in which consumers can check the power of corporate media producers, the power of capitalist media is extended into consumption and social relation patterns themselves. While the early internet characterised this change, social media can be seen as an acceleration of this commodification process and extension of corporate digital network power.

Castells (2011) further argues that dominant digital media, embedded in digital communication networks, profoundly reshapes wider social and economic relations in society as a whole. Castells (2011) argues that capitalism

has shifted with the formation of the network society. Faster digital communication has allowed for a process of horizontal integration of production. Markets are extended and deepened in knowledge and information exchange. Cultural production is being shaped to fit global digital production and information and knowledge networks. Within this context, networked production is in turn shifting the conditions of labour. Both the material practice and the ideological positioning of lean production, jobless and flex-work and networked consumption are the basis of economic shifts and corporate restructuring (Castells 2011). Finally, at the most basic social level, concepts of self are being shifted towards a hyper-networked identity.

Fuchs and Mosco (2012) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2014) offer an important critical political economic perspective focused on dominant and radical media in the digital age. Fuchs and Mosco, in the 2012 special edition of *Triple C* entitled '*Marx is Back*', argue that Marxism as an analytic framework was neglected in the 1990s in communication theory, with an emphasis being placed on positivist analyses and technologically determinist frameworks rather than critical analyses of capitalism and power. Building from this, they argue that the 2008 financial crisis has reopened interest in and potentially positive reception of a more explicitly Marxist analysis of capital and digital communications. While Fuchs and Mosco's (2012) analysis of changing production and distribution mechanisms has similarities to Castells' (2007) work, they do not share his networked analysis of power; instead, they shift their analysis towards classic Marxist concepts of capital-labour relations, communication production, use and exchange value and crisis theory to explain developments in 21st-century communications and media.

Digital media is driven by the laws and logic of capitalist development (Fuchs & Mosco 2012). This means that capital begets capital, as the primary function of the system as a whole. Surplus value extraction, which oscillates between the expansion of capital into new areas of social life and the rationalisation of existing means and modes of production, is transfixed into the digital age. Fuchs and Mosco (2012) identify at least three key dynamics of dominant

media's role in the processes of digital capitalism. Media is increasingly fused with the process of commodity circulation. Digital media is used as a means of speeding up the circulation of commodities, as a time-saver which increases profitability. This operates in two ways: the speeding up of the interaction between supply and demand, for example the ability to order products online, and more profoundly the ability to exchange commodities, in particular information, online and charge for this transaction, thus creating a commodity.

In addition, digital media is increasingly used to coordinate production. Media take on a coordination role generally across capitalist production, with communication central to increasing efficiency and, with that, surplus extraction. Digital communication reduces geographic boundaries to production. This facilitates an expansion of capitalist production more generally. As digital communication fuses with artificial intelligence and an automated production process, overseen by an automated oversight system, it simultaneously speeds up production and reduces labour costs, increasing profitability.

Finally, Fuchs and Mosco (2012) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2014) argue that digital production, in particular social media, increasingly brings together production and consumption. The 'prosumer' both produces and consumes media and technology. The uploading of YouTube videos, blogs, websites, Facebook Live, and social media more generally all point towards prosumption, where users are producing and consuming their own content collectively. While users produce and consume, they do not own the content or the production process. As a result, there is an increased extraction of surplus value through sale (of DIY-produced content) and resale (through data compilation and sale). The profitability of new content production forms is used to reduce the wage draw by media, communication and journalist workers.

Fuchs and Mosco (2012) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2015), while identifying important shifts in media and communication production, see a line of continuity from the capitalist press of the late 1800s to the capitalist mass media of the 1900s and the digital capitalist media of today. In keeping with a Marxist political economic analysis, Fuchs (2012) also returns to the concept of

ideology to explain the secondary power of dominant media. Ideology is centred on the process of commodity fetishisation and the concept of false consciousness. Specifically, Fuchs and Mosco (2012) build from classical Marxism which identifies ideology as 'the fetishism of commodities' that makes social relations appear as characteristics of things and thereby creates 'misty realms of consciousness'. Commodity fetishisation means that people – workers – see their production of social content in terms of external objects which are to be desired, purchased and consumed, and not as their own labour. In addition, the ideology of Silicon Valley, the communication and media entrepreneurship, infused with mindfulness, creativity and social liberal values, is itself an ideological force of the new digital oligarchy (Barbrook & Cameron 1996; Fuchs 2014; Bell et al. 2017).

Fenton (2016b), from a critical political economic perspective, offers a third position on the shape of dominant media within the digital era. Fenton (2016b) places emphasis on neo-liberalism and financialisation as the driving engine of 21st-century capitalism, with media constrained by its relationship to the physical offline world: 'the online world is firmly anchored by the offline world in terms of the social constraints to which all participants are subject ' (Fenton 2016b, p. 20). Conceptually this means that Fenton (2016b) considers the material constraints of capitalism and the materially grounded processes of radical politics as the basic entry points from which to analyse dominant and radical media. In tandem with the material constraints imposed by capitalism, the ideology of a digital public sphere promises enhanced democratic participation despite such promises being deeply constrained by the concentration of wealth and power.

Fenton locates dominant media within an analysis of the increasing inequality under neo-liberalism, extending Piketty's (2014) identification, in the general economy, of a level of wealth inequality unseen since the late 1800s to information and communication systems. Internet access is marked by inequality between rich and poor countries, and within rich nations between higher and lower earners. Fenton (2016b) also links media and communication

to the process of financialisation, where, like Fuchs and Mosco (2012), she identifies digital communication as a means of speeding up commodity circulation, in this instance making it easier to move money and financial assets from country to country and, importantly, into tax shelters. This financial leverage is compounded by the World Trade Organisation, which demands national financial prudence, including austerity measures and privatisation, while capital can flow freely.

Digital media corporations, in particular Facebook and Google, can avoid paying tax on profits, not only amassing capital for expansion but also increasingly using their leverage of investment, as well as lobbying, to shape national government policy. Fenton (2016b) points out a final significant way in which digital corporations interact with nation states: they participate in and help develop a digital security state. Fenton (2016b) argues that not only do digital corporations support law-and-order policing in relation to the general defence of their corporate property, but increasingly they interact with states in terms of online surveillance and predictive policing. Digital media corporations see an oscillation between their sites being shut down in 'states of emergency' and being jammed by law enforcement and the exchange of digital consumers' personal data with state security apparatuses.

Fenton (2016b) also conceptualises digital media as a component of a contested democratic and political field. Fenton (2016b) argues that Habermas's (1990) concept of the public sphere has been adapted by many theorists and commentators in the digital age to invoke ideas that digital media has enabled a major democratisation of political life, with greater access, accountability and participation. Fenton argues that this is far from the case. Citing Hall (1988), the Frankfurt School and some of Habermas's (2006) work, she argues that despite the PR imagery of participation and democracy, in the guise of New Labour and 21st-century social liberalism, there has actually been a hollowing out of democracy and a reproduction of dominant media forms. Digital media participation is based on the logic of assimilation and absorption into the modes and contents of entertainment (Habermas 2006). Digital media expands the amount of media content in circulation. This expands and speeds

up the 24-hour news cycle, promoting 'churnalism' (Davies 2008). In addition, Fenton (2016, p. 56) argues that despite notions of increased political pluralism (more voices can be heard), many factors are increasingly limiting, constraining and undermining the public sphere, including 'surveillance and malware, censorship and blocking and corporate exploitation and dominance'. This means that more voices do not translate to more power for the vast majority to make decisions and direct their political, economic and social lives.

1.5.2 Digital Alternatives: Castells, Fuchs, Fenton

Castells (2011) sees media conflict and resistance as diffused across the networked communication society. In *Networks of Outrage and Hope* (2012) Castells develops his analysis of radical politics and media most substantially. He writes in response to the explosion of anti-austerity and social movements in 2011: the movement of the squares, Occupy, the Arab Spring and the financial crisis protests in Iceland. Castells builds on his analysis of communicative power and network power (2009) to explore the ways in which media power is contested in digital society. According to Castells, wherever there is dominant media power there is also counter-power. The actual configuration of the state and other institutions that regulate people's lives depends on this constant interaction between power and counter-power. Power may be exercised by means of coercion, but more commonly and effectively by the construction of meanings in people's minds, through different mechanisms of symbolic manipulation. The digital networks help reinvigorate a *digital plurality* (the capacity to express and participate in political life) that is key to social empowerment.

Castells (2012) goes further and argues that social movements reconstruct values and meaning through communicative networks, reshaping social life more generally (p. 9). They exercise counter-power by constructing themselves through a process of what he calls 'autonomous communication', referring to the creation of new public space. Castells conceived the virtual digital spaces and concentrated physical urban spaces as fused together in these new public spaces. The central square and the digital space are

interlinked autonomous formations, constructing themselves outside of existing power and in turn reshaping power itself. The digital space as part of autonomous communication is also a trigger for social movements; that is, the news of specific emotive events is spread rapidly, promoting widespread outrage and then action.

Fuchs and Mosco (2012), Fuchs and Sandoval (2010) and Fuchs (2012; 2014) offer a number of important contributions on how radical media in the digital age can be conceptualised. Firstly, they reject the techno-utopian idea that digital communication and media have been a major progressive step in human development. They also reject Castells' (2011) argument for a more limited techno-positivism in which the internet has created the conditions for a digital plurality and enhanced democratic participation. Instead, considering the massively expanded material inequality, class conflict and austerity, they relocate radical media within a digital class conflict which the digital corporate media class is winning.

Fuchs and Mosco (2012) consider class conflict as central in the digital age. This remains fundamentally a conflict between capital and labour. Discord is located at the point of distortion between use and exchange value in media and communication. Exchange value, defined via monetary value as separate from the use value of media, is the value of the expanded carrier of information. The logic of capital is to convert use value into exchange value, monetising and commodifying it through the dynamics of digital communication and media. Advertising and pay walls, communication for coordination, rationalisation via technological development, are all points of domination and conflict.

Media ownership and distribution are increasingly centralised in the digital age, even as consumption expands (Winseck 2011; Fuchs 2014; Schlosberg 2016). Within this, the media platform workers in Facebook and Google, the technicians, administrators and content editors, are joined crucially by the labour of the social media users as points of radical resistance. Collectively these workers make up the sum total of labour under digital community. These

can be points of organising and strike action as labour withdraws its digital production. Ideology is a core barrier to the capacity of the digital workers both to see themselves as labour and to realise their power within the production process. The ideology of Silicon Valley is globalised and digitised individualism and entrepreneurship, a continuation of the line of neo-liberalism.

For Fuchs and Sandoval (2014; 2015), the key response, the key formation of radical media, is centred on the ownership of digital production. Fuchs and Sandoval argue against the valorisation of participatory radical media, decentralised and prefigurative (Downing 2000; Atton 2002); instead they argue that alternative media, rather than aiming to be and functioning as a subculture or minority current, have to be built to be a majoritarian force of class power. The central consideration of this is a shift from capitalist modes of media production to non-capitalist, non-commercial modes, to co-operatives and collective ownership. The content produced by such anti-capitalist media and communication should be critical, critiquing and counter-posing to capitalist ideology, bourgeois individualism, profit and competition, in favour of anti-capitalism. Finally, the active agent is constituted as the critical 'prosumer'; that is, consumer and producer are merged.

The creation of alternative, anti-capitalist media takes place in the context of a contested political field. Ownership is the major bulwark against capitalist commodification of radical and alternative media and communication spaces. In addition, alternative media ownership must interact with the motion of social movements. Here Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) argue that the use of corporate media platforms by radical social movements is a major problem. In the short term it may feed rapid expansion of protest ideas and actions, but in the long term it faces the challenge of digital corporate commodification and the interaction between corporation and state in limiting digital and media communication if it threatens private property and state power.

In addition, Fuchs (2012; 2014) counters the technological determinist argument of Castells (2012) that digital communication *leads to* political

action. Specifically considering the social movements of the post-financial-crisis context – the ‘movement of the squares’, Occupy and the Arab Spring – Fuchs (2014) argues that material conditions, unemployment, economic and social strife, which in turn was fed by political crisis, and an inability of successive governments to deal with the economic and social crisis, form the basis for protest and social movements. The movements used the means of communication and media which were open to them, including Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter, rather than such platforms determining political action.

Fenton (2016b) draws from Gramsci’s (1971) concept of counter-hegemony, Mouffe’s (2005) concept of popular democracy and Holloway’s (2002) concept of counter-power and radical politics outside the state to conceptualise a political economy of radical politics in the digital age. Radical politics in an era that is defined by the rise of digital technologies is understood from a critical theoretical perspective, taking in the most immediate goal of the Frankfurt School, an analysis which seeks human emancipation (Fenton 2016, p. 5).

Fenton (2016b) outlines the political as being both the extra-ordinary involvement in formal political organisation and the politics of the ordinary, the politics of the everyday. Finally, as mentioned in the introduction, and used in this thesis, Fenton (2016, p. 9) articulates the radical as that which is normative and progressive and involves change at the roots of society. From this, Fenton (2016) weaves an analysis of radical politics and media together, covering digital activism and counter-public spheres, radical expression, radical organisation and strategy and consideration of *being* political (the politics of the everyday) and *doing* politics (organised politics), as applied to a post-2008 progressive political context.

Fenton (2016b) argues that the techno-utopianism of theorists such as Castells (2012) rests on a consideration of digital communication and media as an enhanced public sphere. Primarily this confuses the idea of pluralism (many voices) with communicative freedom, relegating the influence of ‘power over events, media and communication’ to ‘power to speak’ (Fenton 2016, p. 78). Social movements, digital activism and the analysis of said forces have been

integrated into a process of plurality and *participation within and reinvigorating of the system*, rather than a resistance to the existing order and an experiment and process in forming a *counter-public sphere*.

Fenton (2016b) argues that radical politics restarted after a period of decline after 2008 due to the structural financial crisis and the period of national economic and political crises that has followed. Radical subjects engaged with radical media firstly in this period in terms of the emotional response to injustice. In an argument that rests somewhere between Castells' (2012) media platforming expression of emotion leading to political explosion in the social movements of 2010 and 2011 and Fuchs's (2012) discounting of the emotional interaction of social media as commodified under capitalist domination, Fenton (2016, p. 103) argues that passions and emotions are simultaneously everyday and ordinary – the relations of family, school, friends, community – and extra-ordinary in fuelling political organisations which have wider strategic goals. This is simultaneously commodified and interjected by capitalism while building in opposition to and outside of capitalism, countering its logic. Radical media are embedded in this process, the ordinary and extra-ordinary.

If passion and emotion drive the entry into radical politics, radical politics, mediated by radical media, is characterised by an organisational form which has an historical and material legacy and contemporary conditions. Fenton (2016b) shifts the overall analysis of radical media away from utopia to a consideration of practice and resources. Rather than considerations of what is morally or ideally best, ideology interacts with capacity and effectiveness: How best can a message be organised, what goal does it pertain to, and what resources does it activate or use up?

Fenton (2016, p. 126) cites Tufekci's (2014) consideration of this dynamic of power and resources within radical media in the context of anti-austerity street movements. Tufekci (2014) argues that a key shift in the digital age has been the lower entry cost for media participation and radical media formation. This has been empowering in the sense of allowing a large number of people to

enter into political action while also being disempowering by pushing movements and people into the spotlight prematurely, creating situations where the organisational structure is not in place to sustain mobilisation or deal with state and capital repression.

Fenton (2016b) argues that after the financial crisis of 2008 two forms of being political have grown from emotive groundswell: social movements, operating outside and against the system, on the one hand, and, on the other, new socialist and social democratic political organisations that have sought to seize power through elections and use the state to tilt the balance of power in favour of the people. Fenton focuses on the new socialist political parties and their relationship to digital radical media. Fenton (2016b) examines SYRIZA and Podemos specifically within the context of social movements in Greece and Spain. The radical media of SYRIZA combined the old-style party papers with a network of co-operatives and social-movement publications interlinked with radical social struggles. Podemos took considerably from Laclau and Mouffe (2001), centring and using media to propose a new formation of identity: position *la caste* (the cast or elites) against the people. Parts of the Podemos leadership emerged out of a university radical media radio and television channel. Fenton (2016b, p. 159) concludes this analysis by invoking Gramsci's (1971) analysis of historic blocs. Radical media are subordinated under the primary forces of the era, the new social movements and the broad left socialist parties, as they use radical media to create a new historic bloc.

1.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, our understanding of the conceptualisation and general processes of radical media has been greatly enriched by taking a long historical view of the development of the political economic theories of dominant and radical media.

Historically, political economic theorists, considering the Marxist humanist emphasis on agency, have considered dominant media in a number of ways. Marx, Gramsci and Lukacs considered dominant media as part of a hegemonic

force, subjugating and controlling the masses, disorientating working-class organisation and creating false consciousness, alienation and reification. Cold War theorists considered the cultural power of the ruling class and the role of dominant media within this, in particular the way in which the ruling class co-opt and assimilate elements of working-class and oppressed cultures and the way in which field and habit operate to maintain power. In the 21st century hegemonic material and cultural power has extended to a new battlefield, digital communication and media. Digital capitalism creates new avenues for labour extraction and new means of neo-liberal and financial extraction. Our capacity to hold power over our surrounding has been eroded, even as the power to speak has been expanded.

Historically, political economic theorists have considered how and what opposition to dominant media can occur. Radical media is considered in a number of ways within this context. For Marx, radical media is part of a process of working-class consciousness formation in which the formation of working-class publications and the working-class press facilitates a process of debate, analysis, organisation and action which moves the working class on the path to emancipation. For Marx, radical media is secondary to material political power at the point of production, in particular industrial production. Gramsci greatly developed and more centrally positioned the media within both dominant 'hegemonic' power and counter-hegemony. The media can both articulate and coordinate ruling-class ideas and articulate and coordinate, when owned and developed by the working class, a subaltern position. Within this, organic intellectuals have agency to express, articulate and develop the idea and thoughts of the working class, through the radical press in particular. Lukacs builds on and complements both Marx and Gramsci. He argues that the capacity of the proletariat to form its own collective agency and consciousness means that radical media can mould working-class power.

Benjamin (2008) considers the new cultural factories as points of proletarian resistance and power; Hall (1982a:1982b) sees both popular and subculture media, as well as the political organisation of the new left, as points of both

material and cultural resistance; and Bourdieu (1986b; 1988) considers cultural practice within contested dominant medias such as journalism, as well as the ways in which social movements reconstruct practice, as sites of opposition. Cold War theorists give added weight to the grey areas of cultural co-option and the limitation of radicalism. Popular cultures and subcultures can fight for a better world and be integrated by the state and mass capitalist culture; the proletariat can be defeated in the battle for the cultural factory; and the practices of resistance can be integrated into the dominant habitus, field and symbolic power of the ruling classes and re-appropriated and used for violence and suppression (Hall 1988; Bourdieu 1988).

In the digital age Castells (2011; 2012) offers the most positive view of the potential of radical digital media. He sees opportunities for digital media pluralism, networked resistance and new avenues to contest digital media power. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) and Fuchs and Mosco (2012), centring an analysis of capital, argue that an alternative anti-capitalist media can be built, with communication and digital workers a key potential driver of this anti-capitalist media, owned by and for the digital worker and building a mass platform from which to counter capitalist ideology. Fenton (2016b), concentrating on a material political analysis, offers the most dynamic analysis of the politics of radical digital media, exploring digital activism and counter public spheres, radical political expression, questions of radical political organisation and strategy and the role of media within this. Fenton (2016b) considers radical media within the wider consideration of radical politics in the digital age, both outside the system in the social movements, and through the formation and organisation of political parties that have taken power, such as SYRIZA in Greece and Podemos in Spain.

The review of political economic theories of radical media supports the initial conceptualisation of radical media in a number of ways. Early, Cold War and digital era political economic theorists all consider radical media in terms of mass forms of radical politics, of institutions of political counter-power and cultural resistance and as alternatives to capitalist media and power.

The analysis of early, Cold War and digital era political economic theorists gives an understanding of how dominant media has developed and how it is deeply embedded within ruling-class material and ideological power. The press was a cornerstone of bourgeois power in the early 20th century. This power expanded and extended with mass consumer capitalism in the second half of the 20th century and the emergence of a new sphere, the digital, in the 21st century. These developments are underpinned by an evolving relationship between capital, the state and civil institutions over time.

Where there is domination there is also resistance. Radical media embedded in radical politics is a means of developing class consciousness and political organisation. Early radical media theorists conceptualise this as a part of working-class and proletarian emancipation, counter-hegemonic power, and Cold War theorists considered this in terms of the cultural revolution and the New Left. Digital theorists identify new terrains of class struggle in the 21st century. They position general conceptualisations of radical media in the digital era: the new avenues for digital networks, the new points of contradiction between capital and labour and the new movement and progressive parties which have integrated digital communication and media into a radical politics.

Chapter Two: Reviewing the History of Radical Media Practice

2.1 Introduction

Curran in *Media and Power* (2002) considers the Chartist press (1820–1850) as a key force in a little-studied golden age of British radical media. Curran (2002) argues that the Chartist press, rather than being a fringe or subcultural phenomenon, interesting only as a niche subject within critical communication and media studies, was a mass print medium, with a sophisticated distribution network and millions of readers. Not only that, but it both contributed to radical and labour politics for decades to come and contested and shaped the development of the liberal and conservative press in Britain more generally.

The Chartist press is an example of a long history of significant radical media publications and platforms that have existed in every generation interlinked to radical politics. This chapter examines the historical development of radical media practices, from 1800 to 2005, divided into five periods of radical media, in three sample countries: Ireland, the UK and the USA. Radical media practice covers the specific publications and platforms, their backgrounds, content, production and political relations, and how they developed in the context of radical political struggles and expressions of radical thought and culture.

Radical media practice is examined within the literature review for a number of reasons. Within a Marxist humanist political economic framework, the goal is to have a totalised understanding of radical media which is historically and materially grounded and which centres working class agency in the development of said media. A review of practices of radical media brings the analysis down to the specific dynamics of publications and platforms. Combining the analysis of theories and practices of radical media creates a whole picture of how radical media has been understood and what gaps exist in the understanding of radical media.

This time period is chosen because it is argued that the modern history of radical media (Curran 2002) begins shortly after and in relation to the political, socio-economic and cultural context of the French Revolution (Harman 2008; Hobsbawm 1965). The French Revolution and the formation of the early

working-class press sets an important marker for subsequent radical media (Harrison 1974). Radical media practice is argued here to have historically developed in terms of a gradual *sequenced* development of radical media production, from the nationally based radical press of the early 1800s to the international radical press of the late 1800s and early 1900s. From here the radical media became a multi-medium form, including print, radio and television produced by radical political parties in the context of revolution and war. In the 1960s this production was dispersed, as lower entry costs allowed for the growth of diverse low-cost production. Finally, radical media became intertwined in digital production in the 1990s and early 2000s.

With this production sequence there are *particularities* that are 'of their era'. In the first half of the 1800s, the radical media were part of the formation of emancipatory – supporting in particular racial justice, feminism and anti-colonialism (Streitmatter 2001; Whelan 2004) – and working-class consciousness (Curran 2002; Harrison 1974; Thompson 2015). In contrast, 1860–1914 saw radical media as part of the formation of socialist and anarchist political ideology and strategy (Streitmatter 2001; Harrison 1974; Shore 1988; Lane 1997). Interwar politics 'sharpened' radical media as a tool of class struggle and revolution, with state power contested by communist movements between 1917 and 1924, before being pushed underground and then re-emerging as anti-fascist media in the 1930s (Streitmatter 2001; Trotsky 1974; Harrison 1974; Hodgson 2014; English 1994; Grant 2012).

The long boom and the politics of containment in the 1950s, as well as the USSR invasion of Hungary, severely weakened the communist movement in the 1950s. New social revolts in the 1960s and economic conflict in the 1970s created the conditions for a new radical politics framed around questions of civil rights and liberation (Harman 2008; Laybourn 2006; Devlin 1969; Ramdin, 2017; Freeman 1973). In this context, radical media acted as a space in which radical identities and strategies reshaped themselves. In the 1990s a shift towards digital production meant a reformation of international radical politics, defined around the question of how to challenge neo-liberalism and globalised capital (Atton 2002; Graeber 2009; Kauffman 2017; Söderberg

2015). Anti-globalisation and digital techno-utopianism underpinned the new radical digital media at the turn of the century before a decline and co-option in the mid 2000s by the new digital and social media corporations (Pickard 2006; Giraud 2014; Fuchs 2014).

2.2 Early Modern Radical Media (1800–1860)

Between 1792 and 1814 the Revolutionary Wars and the Napoleonic Wars raged across Europe, with republicanism and monarchy, empire and citizenship forming, challenging and reforming political economic structures and national identities (Hobsbawm 1965; Harman 2008). The revolutionary period gave way, with the victory in particular of the British Empire, to a period of capitalist expansion and empire building (Hobsbawm 1974; Harman 2008). In the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Ireland (under British rule) from 1800 to 1860, we can see the radical media as a key platform from which emancipatory political and working-class identity were formed as an alternative to monarchy, empire and capital (Streitmatter 2001; Whelan 2004; Curran 2002; Harrison 1974; Thompson 2015).

Curran (2002) argues that in the UK radical media, in the form of print, called the radical press, not only helped in the formation of new radical identities which facilitated the first working-class organisations but also contested for hegemony with the early liberal press. In the USA, Streitmatter (2001) argues, the radical press became an opposition force, critiquing the shortcomings of the America Revolution, in particular the continuation of slavery and the exclusion of women, as well as forming a key plank in the formation of the first trade unions. In Ireland the picture is a little different, with the Act of Union in 1801 eliminating national autonomy and suppressive Penal Laws limiting press freedom. As such the radical press acted as a clandestine underground organising tool of national liberation, forming and keeping alive an anti-colonial identity in Ireland (Whelan 2004).

2.2.1 Early Radical Media Content

During the British war with revolutionary France and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars, press restrictions were strictly enforced. Despite this, independent radical working-class publications began to emerge. The most famous of these was *Crosbitt's Herald* (Harrison 1974) in the 1810s and 1820s, which used satire and political polemics to critique the British ruling classes. Curran (2002) argues that the 1830s and 1840s were the high point of the British radical press. The Chartists, a movement of the working class, particularly strong in the north of England, emerged, demanding political, economic and social rights. The first mass press of the day emerged from this movement. The *Poor Man's Guardian* (1831–35), the *Northern Star* (1837–1852), *Northern Liberator* (1837–40), *Midland Counties' Illuminator* (1841) and *English Chartist Circular* (1841–43) set themselves up as voices of the working class and downtrodden (Curran 2012; Allen & Ashton 2005; Klaus 1985; Epstein 2016; Thompson 2015). Political demands for universal rights were combined with stories of the everyday hardships of ordinary people, satire, reports from protests and political statements.

In the USA the first trade union press was founded in emerging industrial centres in the north-east of the country. Publications such as the *Mechanic's Free Press*, *Spirit of the Age* and *Delaware Free Press* operated similarly to the Chartist press, although smaller in scale, raising a sense of collective class-consciousness, exposing the terrible working and living conditions and outlining the political, social and economic demands of the working class (Streitmatter 2001). In the USA the abolitionist publication the *Liberator* would publish for over 30 years from the 1830s through to the 1860s. The *Liberator* produced shock and horror content exposing the realities of slavery. This style of content was later copied by tabloids. In addition, editorials used strident language attacking the institution of slavery and the political, social and economic interests that protected it (Garrison 1966; Ruchames 1963; Streitmatter 2001; Bulla 2017). *Revolution* was another significant early emancipatory publication in the USA emerging out of the early women's and feminist movement. *Revolution* tackled specific issues and produced specific demands on job

discrimination, equal pay, sexual harassment, political representation, domestic violence and abortion. This content focused on the everyday realities of women's lives and the need for political reform to tackle these issues.

In Ireland, the *Nation* would emerge as the main publication of Irish radicalism. Founded and funded by the Irish diaspora, banned in Ireland and distributed illegally, the publication called for the independence of Ireland, reeling from the defeat of the 1798 rebellion and the Act of Union in 1801. It also set out to promote Irish language, culture and identity in the face of the Penal Laws and British suppression (Whelan 2004; McMahon 2005). Radical media in this era in Ireland was otherwise limited by repressive Penal Laws and a lack of political representation. The Great Famine and the failed Younger Irelanders rebellion in 1848 marked a devastating period of Irish emigration and suppression. There were also some links between Irish republicanism and English Chartism. The Chartist *Northern Star* was founded by Fergus O'Connor, a former Irish MP who relocated to Yorkshire. He named the publication after the original paper of the United Irishmen from 1792 to 1797.

2.2.2 Early Radical Media Production

The Chartist publications were in many ways the first mass media in the world. A subscription model was introduced by Chartist publications, with both individual and group subscriptions. Publications were distributed through volunteer networks: workers in transportation, sports and men's clubs, workers' clubs, early trade unions and co-operatives. These production and distribution mechanisms were also forums of radical democracy, sites where the publications helped create a collective class-consciousness with the collective reading, debating and sharing of articles and issues. Peak readership was in the millions, far ahead of the liberal and conservative press of the time (Curran 2002; Allen & Ashton 2005).

In the United States there were three production strands. Firstly, the press acted as an organising tool for early craft unions, sharing information among members and potential members, creating solidarity and commonality by sharing stories of poor conditions and exploitation, and positioning demands on workplace activity and union representation. Secondly, the new labour press

was seen as an alternative to the mainstream press. In the earliest forms of class politics, it was argued that the papers of the day were run for the benefit of the upper and middle classes and as a voice of these groups; the working class needed their own independent voice. Thirdly, the early labour press became an important basis for the first working-class political electoral efforts in the US, with the labour press becoming the platform for the first local and city council candidates running on labour-backed working-class platforms (Pessen 1967; Aronowitz 1973 Streitmatter 2001).

In contrast to the working-class and trade-union press, other emancipatory publications were concentrated in the hands of charismatic editors and wealthy benefactors. The *Liberator* was written and maintained by one editor supported by speaking tours and lecturers, with subscriptions a minority of the publication income. A version of baiting occurred to increase donations, with controversial statements within the *Liberator* denounced by conservatives and political opponents, increasing the exposure of the publication. The printing of *Revolution* was dependent on a liberal philanthropist funder, and his bankruptcy ended the publication (Streitmatter 2001).

The *Nation* in Ireland activated a unique early internationalism to sustain production. The Irish diaspora, in the USA and Britain, were the primary funders, fundraisers and even printers of the *Nation*. This production relation was an important consideration of where power lay in the early Irish Republican movement, with Fenian clubs in the USA, in particular in the north-east, acting as fundraisers, producers but also safe houses and points of wider political subversion. In addition, the Irish diaspora interlinked with the Chartist movement in the UK, learning from the political programme and organisation of the Chartists. Although there is evidence of political links, it is unclear to what extent radical republican publications such as the *Nation* and the Chartist press overlapped (Thompson 2015; Whelan 2004; O'Higgins 1961).

2.2.3 Early Radical Media Political Relations

The early radical media publications had important relationships with the major political movements and organisations of their time. All publications to a degree orientated around the need to highlight political and social

emancipation in various forms: anti-slavery and women's emancipation, Catholic emancipation and working-class emancipation, as well as wider and looser concepts of radicalism, based on social justice, social change and equality. There were different relationships and often tension between mass participation within the organisation and lone or vanguard intellectual editors and producers. The *Liberator* and *Revolution* operated as 'vanguard' voices, solo or small projects, with a high level of production, subsidised by speaking tours and philanthropy (Streitmatter 2001). By contrast, the Chartist and trade union, working-class press of the US and the UK specifically orientated towards a membership-based structure, intertwined with working associations, organisations, clubs and socials (Curran 2002; Harrison 1974).

As a whole, the radical press of the era was focused on forming a collective consciousness of emancipation, on building, appealing to and raising the consciousness of the masses. The working-class press was part of the formation of the first working-class organisations; feminist and anti-slavery publications helped ferment feminist and racial justice consciousness; and Irish republican publications kept alive Irish national identity and anti-colonial consciousness. This consciousness-raising was not without complication, as often contradictory ideas of emancipation emerged in the era. Publications such as the *Nation* engaged both national identity – 'Irishness' – and universal emancipation and rights (Whelan 2004). The *Liberator* specifically engaged with anti-slavery without necessarily engaging with wider questions of racial emancipation (Streitmatter 2001). Republicanism produced an insurrectionist influence and a conspiratorial politics often in contrast with broad-based movements. Broader-based demands for emancipation – of women, slaves, Catholics, the working class and, in the case of Chartists, the mass mobilisation of people – would also be caught between a minimum political demand for rights, representation and reform and a wider aspiration of transformation (Harman 2008).

Curran (2002) argues that the press of the era, in particular the Chartist press, as a leader in terms of scale and reach, was not only trying to position itself as a radical alternative to the mainstream, but aimed to and attempted to directly

contest for overall media hegemony. The liberal press in the first half of the 1800s was weak, with a small readership in Britain among a middle class with restricted political and social powers (Curran 2002). Readership was limited in the USA, with an even smaller readership among the Protestant administrative class in Ireland. The explosion and then sustained organising of the Chartist press was a real threat to the ruling classes, carrying the possibility that radical publication with a large working-class audience and participation would dominate media more generally. Measures were taken by the state to alter the balance of forces, first through regulation, with printing prices raised and a stamp tax introduced, then through suppression. When this failed in England, a liberal press was explicitly subsidised to counteract the radical press of the era (Curran 2002).

2.3 The First Socialist & Anarchist Radical Media (1860–1914)

The 1860s saw a transformation of economic structure and political power in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Ireland (Harman 2008). A rapid period of industrialisation continued in England, along with colonial expansion, and with the defeat of the Chartists there was relative political stability (Hobsbawm 1974). A new radical politics centred itself on the trade union movement, co-operativism and the formation of the Labour Party (Harrison 1974). In the USA, slavery and divergent economies between the planter South and newly industrialising North led to civil war followed by a period of rapid expansion to the west and migration to the industrial core of the north-east coast and Great Lake regions (Harman 2008; Fernbach 1974). Migration, discrimination and poor social and economic conditions created the basis for a new radicalism in the USA (Harman 2008). In Ireland the north-east was industrialised but the rest of the island was used as a basis for agricultural exports, with vast absentee landed estates populated with landless Irish peasants (Lane 1997). Mass movements, first for Catholic emancipation, then Fenian insurrection and the formation of the Irish Parliamentary Party, the Land Wars and republican revival at the turn of the century, transformed Irish radical politics, as well as feeding, through the large Irish diaspora, radical

currents in the USA and Britain (Whelan 2004).

Radical media shifted in important ways between 1860 and 1914. In the first half of the 1800s, the radical media were part of the *formation* of working-class identity and the continuation of the revolutionary tradition from the French Revolution. In the second half of the 1800s, new ideological currents emerged: socialism and anarchism. Both connected economic and social conditions faced by the new industrial working class to the exploitation of capitalism and the destructive force of private property. Both called for organisation and revolution. Both were international, and transmitted their ideas through migrant communities of the era and through the organisations of the First and Second Internationals (Fernbach 1974; Goldman 2017). These ideologies were also rivals, differing in terms of their analysis of state and in terms of contesting for political leadership of the International (Forman 2010).

In the second half of the 1800s, socialist and anarchist radical ideas reorganised radical media into a focused ideological force. In the UK, anarchism was weak but socialism influenced and pushed the formation of trade unions and an independent working-class party, the Labour Party. In the USA, socialism consolidated around the American Socialist Party and anarchism in the *Industrial Workers of the World* and a vast network of militant organisations (Dubofsky, 2000). In Ireland socialism fused with republicanism, forming an anti-colonial socialist politics (Lane 1997).

2.3.1 The First Socialist & Anarchist Radical Media Content

Appeal to Reason in the United States was a defining mass socialist publication of the era (Streitmatter 2001). A publication of the Socialist Party of America, *Appeal to Reason* developed a number of important radical content features. It reported on, investigated and commented on the appalling working and living conditions in the booming industrialisation of the United States. These reports centred working-class voices, as they told their stories of long work hours, without enough money to feed their children, workplace injuries and deaths, damp, overcrowding, social misery and illness. These reports were powerful portraits of everyday life.

Appeal to Reason connected the suffering of the working class to a critique of capitalism as a whole. Suffering was caused by industrialists and landlords, their agents and the politicians in their pocket. This moved the analysis of everyday suffering towards anger and political action. Socialism was proposed as the solution, where the fruits of people's labour would be shared equally and all industry would be owned by the working class, based on the needs of the working class. The reporting of social ills and a radical investigative journalism were also evident in *Free Speech*. *Free Speech* continued the racial justice media tradition in the USA, uncovering the widespread use of lynching in the American South. Reporting from the sites of lynching and racially motivated murders and attacks, it described events in disturbing detail to shocked audiences (Streitmatter 2001).

In the United Kingdom publications were linked to the growing labour and socialist movements. Publications such as *Labour Leader*, *The Clarion* and *Reynold's News*, *The Commonwealth* and *Justice* offered a mix of socialist, trade unionist and co-operative news, reporting, analysis and commentary (Harrison 1974). These publications continued the traditions of content from the Chartists, satirising the ruling elite, infusing tabloid style with a sharp analysis of the economic and political systems, while expressing a more strident political agenda than in the decades before: better wages were not enough; the entire wage system that held down the working class should end. Parliamentary reform was not enough; political power was necessary for the working class (Harrison 1974).

Anarchist publications were particularly significant in the United States. Publications such as *Mother Earth* and *Alarm* created a new format for radical media content: agitation-propaganda. Radical publications served a dual role: they agitated for social change, calling for strikes, revolts, direct action, bombing and insurrections, and they acted as propaganda platforms for workers and the working class more generally when they took these actions, promoting the press releases, statements, messages and arguments of strikers and rebels in 'battle' (Streitmatter 2001; Goldman 2017). This format was also used by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) an anarcho-syndicalist

formation which would influence trade unionism on both sides of the Atlantic, and their publication, the *Industrial Worker* (Dubofsky 2000).

In addition, anarchist publications such as *Mother Earth*, *Alarm* and *Industrial Worker* would construct two additional content styles. Utopianism was explored on the pages of the anarchist press, where a more experimental design and format saw ideas such as a world without bosses, free and collective living, and emancipated social realities without racism or misogyny explored and discussed (Streitmatter 2001; Goldman 2017). These publications also exhibited an open critique of other parts of the left. *Appeal to Reason* and the Socialist Party, particularly its engagement with the electoral system in the United States, were critiqued by *Mother Earth* (Streitmatter 2001; Goldman 2017). The *Industrial Worker* critiqued the moderate and unaccountable trade union leadership, demanding industrial, rent and land strikes and mass democracy, as opposed to craft elitism (Dubofsky 2000). *Mother Earth* also made demands for more immediate radical action: a slow build to socialism expressed on the pages of *Appeal to Reason* was not good enough, action against racists in the South was needed now, as was armed insurrection, support for a dynamite campaign in the 1880s, sabotage of industry, and with the onset of World War I, a firm opposition to all 'imperial' war.

In Ireland, republicanism would grow and intertwine with feminism and socialist thought in an ecosystem of radical press. The *Irish People* and *United Irishman* would take on the mantle of the *Nation*, focusing on the independence of Ireland, national identity, the Irish language, sports and culture. Both publications reported on and analysed political developments such as parliamentary reform and social agitation such as the Land Wars, while also exploring and promoting the suppressed Irish culture: Gaeilge, Gaelic football and hurling, and traditional folk music and dance (McMahon 2015; Lane 1997). Doughan (2015) argues that the regional Irish press had a strong political, and often radical, basis in the period, reporting on and supporting the Irish nationalist parties and aspects of the Land Wars and republican revival.

The 1890s and the years leading up to World War I were a period of Irish cultural revival as language, music and literature developed both in poor rural

communities and among the urban middle class. Independence and anti-colonialism would also fuse with socialism in the *Workers' Republic* (Lane 1997). The *Workers' Republic*, edited by James Connolly, combined short, sharp agitation pieces, public addresses and statements which articulated support and demands for national self-determination and working-class economic and social power, and which critiqued the social ills of Ireland in longer theoretical and analytical pieces, dealing with questions such as religion, the nature of labour in Ireland, the relationship between rural and urban class structures, feminism and women's emancipation (Connolly 1951; 1987). In *L'Irlande Libre*, *Shan Van Vocht* and *Bean na hEireann* (*The Woman of Ireland*), republicanism and women's emancipation fused in a new radical press (Steele 2007; Rosa 2014). Subversive content such as advice for women on how to load, shoot and maintain pistols was positioned within pieces on gardening, to avoid censors, and wider analysis pieces raised the major questions of the day: national independence, war, empire and the social ills of the people.

2.3.2 The First Socialist & Anarchist Radical Media Production

The radical press of the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century saw important shifts in production. The early radical press of the 19th century had used working-class associations, trade unions and the support of philanthropic figures to maintain production and distribution networks. In the new period radical political parties and organisations took a more dominant role.

Appeal to Reason was produced by the Socialist Party in the USA. By 1910 it had 800,000 buyers with a multiple of that reading the publication. It operated through a mass volunteer network of up 80,000 members of the Socialist Party. Distribution was built on the organising network being established across the country, with workers in the rail system taking and offloading bundles of papers to waiting volunteers along transport routes (Streitmatter 2001; Shore 1988). Political organisation fed radical press production and vice versa. Socialist party members made up the editorial team, as well as organising finances and logistics.

In the UK *The Commonwealth* was a publication of the early socialist league (Harrison 1974), *Reynold's News* a co-operative-focused publication that peaked at 640,000 weekly readerships, while the *Clarion* and *Labour Leader* were closer to 100,000 (Harrison 1974). These publications were integral parts of the early trade union movement. Until the 1880s radical political movements had lobbied the British Liberal Party for reforms. These publications were part of a new effort to develop an independent political group, free of the Liberal Party and representing the working class. This was to become the British Labour Party. Radical publications in the United Kingdom, by contrast to the United States, were smaller than the 1820s and 1840s Chartist movement and the million-strong readership of Chartist press (Curran 2002; Pelling & Cox 1993; Wring 2004; Garrard 2001; Hodgson 2014).

The Irish Socialist Republican Party, organised by James Connolly, produced the *Workers' Republic*. Unlike the USA Socialist Party or British Labour Party, the Irish Socialist Republican Party was not a mass organisation, and the *Workers' Republic* (Connolly 1951) lacked the mass readership of its USA and UK counterparts. The Fenians, who later became the Irish Republican Brotherhood, continued to be the dominant political influence on publications such as the *United Irishman* and *Irish People*. They operated in a clandestine manner, with underground printing presses and funding and support from republican elements of the Irish diaspora (McGee 2005; Bolt 2008). *L'Irlande Libre*, *Shan Van Vocht* and *Bean na hEireann* also mirrored a production formation evident in the earlier US feminist press; wealthier benefactors would subsidise the printing costs of the feminist press and political connections were maintained in high society for a degree of protection against production being shut down. Maude Gonne and Countess Markievicz were famous feminist, socialist women who helped to engage donor networks to sustain their insurrectionist feminist and republican publications (Innes 1991).

2.3.3 The First Socialist & Anarchist Radical Media Political Relations

The late 1800s to the outbreak of war in 1914 would mark a major change in the relationship between the radical press and radical politics. The first transformation was ideological. The early 1800s had been a period where

radical thought was diffused across different traditions: radical republicanism and Jacobinism, which focused on secularism and the end of monarchy, and which centred both the insurrectionist method and democratic reform; movements of peasants and the working class which demanded a voice for the suppressed – the working class in the UK, women in the USA and Catholics in Ireland; and various co-operativist and utopian groups offered a third political pole (Harman 2008). Marxist socialism and anarchism came to either adopt or replace these traditions from the 1860s. Marxists and anarchists centred the working class as the agent of social change, and mass revolution (as opposed to insurrection conspiracy or reform movement) as the central process of transformation. Marxism and anarchism both saw the new working class as key agents of radical politics, and trade unionism as an important vehicle of struggle, but differed on the role of the state in social transformation. Anarchism argued that change must happen outside the state and Marxists argued for the capture of the state by the working class (Harman 2008; Forman 2010). The radical press became an organ of socialism and anarchism.

Political parties were a key organisational form for Marxist socialists and anarchists, and the radical press became increasingly tied to these. Early radical movements had organised around clubs (Jacobin clubs) or associations such as the working men's associations (Harman 2008). They were membership-based but loose ideologically. The party as a form tightened up the ideological aspect of political organisation, with clear principles, policies and positions on local, national and international topics. Anarchists differed from Marxist socialists in discounting the political party as a vehicle for seizing state power, instead focusing on the economic, social and insurrectionist methods of radical political organising, building separatist radical working-class organisations in communities and workplaces (Forman 2010).

Internationalism was a key concept binding the radical politics and media of the era. A social and economic migration pattern, between Europe, the UK and USA, and from Ireland to the UK and USA, allowed radicals to move between radical spaces, learning, exchanging and developing ideas and platforms. The First and Second Internationals cohered these exchanges to a degree, with the

International producing internal bulletins and publications, as well as supporting the development of the radical press in each country (Fernbach 1974). Importantly, national radical publications also looked outwards, more readily discussing international economic, social and political developments and radical political events (Fernbach 1974; Harrison 1974).

The radical press of the period also opened up important tensions within radical politics. The newly formed British Labour Party saw internal party battles played out on the pages of the radical press, between publications aligned with its moderate wing, who positioned themselves in terms of parliamentary reform and an alliance with liberalism, and its left wing, which called for working-class independence. The *Workers' Republic* critiqued nationalist Irish publications, despite sharing common cause in Irish freedom, and anarchist publications in the USA, as mentioned, critiqued the 'electoralism' of the US Socialist Party. These fault lines were exposed to an even greater degree with the outbreak of World War I. Nationalists in Ireland, including many regional papers, supported the British war effort, as did the mainstream of the British Labour Party. Publications which opposed the war were banned under emergency powers acts (Harrison 1974). In the USA, the Socialist Party of America split over the war and Emma Goldstein, the leading editor of *Mother Earth*, not only saw her publication banned and its printing presses seized, but she herself was deported (Streitmatter 2001; Shore 1988).

2.4 World War and Interwar Radical Media (1914–1945)

The interwar period saw marked shifts in radical media. International imperial tension came to a head in 1914 and the first modern, industrial-scale war saw the deaths of millions. The war destabilised capitalism as a whole (Harman 2008). The Bolsheviks seized power in Russia, forming the first communist government (Harman 2008). Revolutions erupted across Europe, and Traverso (2016) argues the period can be considered as a European civil war. The USA, UK and Ireland were not left unscathed, with revolution in Ireland (Hopkins 2009) and industrial unrest in the UK and USA. The 1920s continued as a period of class conflict despite a boom in the USA. The financial crisis of 1929

made the 1930s the decade of the Great Depression, fascism and deep class polarisation and conflict. In the radical sphere, the Second International split in 1914 between those who supported their national governments in the war and those who opposed them. The Third International, or Communist International, formed from the opposition. Its revolutionary period was ended by the mid-1920s with the defeats of revolution and the Stalinisation of the USSR, but in the 1930s it played an important role in anti-fascism across the world (Harman 2008).

The radical press shifted in the interwar period. The sharp class conflict and revolutionary conditions from 1917 to 1926 and then the threat of fascism in the 1930s pushed radical media into a new role. Agitation-propaganda, pioneered by the anarchist press at the turn of the 20th century, became the main radical media form, along with communist party theoretical journals, used to consider strategy, macro-politics, epistemology and philosophy during rapidly shifting political contexts (Kenez 1985; Lenoe 1998; Taylor 1971). Agitation-propaganda, or agit-prop, was a tool used for the immediate task of radical insurrection (Lenin 2015) and its use in the interwar period would influence radical media for the rest of the 20th century.

2.4.1 World War and Interwar Radical Media Content

In the United States, World War I and the period of global revolution from 1917 to 1923 would herald a significant shift in the composition of radical media publications and the content they produced. World War I censorship laws saw the banning and closing of the anarchist publications *Mother Earth* and *Women Rebel* and the deportation of their editors (Streitmatter 2001). *Appeal to Reason* was also banned, under the espionage act, based on its anti-war position. In 1917 the Russian Revolution would set off a chain of rapid shifts in radical politics and press. Splits within the long-standing Socialist Party of America saw the emergence of new revolutionary publications such as the *Revolutionary Age*, *The Communist* and *Class Struggle*, as well as the *Black Communist* (Brown 1974; Draper 1954; Aaron 1992; Zumoff 2014). The mid and late 1920s would force these publications underground. The radical press would re-emerge in the 1930s, with industrial and community radical

communist publications such as the *Daily Worker* (Copsey 2011; Morris 1944).

In Britain the radical press between 1916 and 1926 would be defined by the competing interests of the moderate British Labour Party, who dominated the leadership of left-wing and trade union organisations, and the smaller radical parties, communists, worker groups and communities engaged in strikes and radical actions. Pockets of radicalism existed across Britain, from the East End in London to 'Red' Clydeside in Glasgow and the mining communities of South Wales, where industrial and community unrest in the period 1915–23 were reflected in publications such as *Socialist*, *Justice*, the existing *Clarion* and the *Workers' Dreadnought* (Harrison 1974). Publications such as the *Daily Herald* re-formed and moved dramatically to the left, supporting the Russian Revolution and positioning themselves against British war with communist Russia (Harrison 1974). In the 1930s both the official trade union movement and Labour Party, and the communist and worker militants, took an anti-fascist position, and publications such as the *Weekly Worker* grew (Harrison 1974).

In Ireland a decade of radicalism, from the lockout in 1913 to the Easter Rising in 1916, the anti-conscription boycott, the War of Independence and Civil War, saw a flourishing of the radical press. The socialist *Workers' Republic*, feminist publications such as the *Irish Citizen* and republicanism built around Sinn Féin's *Irish Freedom* and *Irish Volunteer*, as well as local and independent publications on the republican socialist left, such as the *Bottom Dog*, defined a unique combination of and internal tension between and within socialism, republicanism and feminist thought and practice. The counter-revolution of the Civil War and the new independent and conservative Free State saw the suppression of this radical period and its press. It re-emerged in the 1930s. Publication such as *Saor Eire* and the *Republican Congress* would merge republicanism and communism, proposing the union of class power and national independence (English 2014; Grant 2012; Bheacháin 2007).

While anarchist publications such as *Mother Earth* and *Alarm* pioneered agitation-propaganda as a content form in the 1890s and 1900s, the radical press in the interwar years expanded its use and sharpened its form. Agit-prop

was simultaneously an approach to content form and content distribution. Short-form newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets would focus on immediate actions and events which illustrated the conflict between capital and the working class. Industrial strikes, rent strikes, protests and demonstrations, insurrections and revolutions would fill the pages of the agit-prop radical press. The demands of these struggles, the call for unity and forward action by other forces of the working class, were proclaimed. The interconnection between struggles in different countries was positioned. A constant fomenting of resistance and revolt was underpinned by a clarity and simplicity of writing and an emotional trigger, the channelling of grief, anger and hope into action. Agit-prop was also a method of distribution in which newspapers, leaflets and pamphlets were rapidly distributed to the heart of existing conflicts, drawing the demands from the front, feeding their politics and expanding the revolutionary fever. The radical press was there to maintain morale, and distribute ideas from 'front' to 'front' in ongoing conflict (Kenez 1985; Lenoe 1998; Taylor 1971). Not only was print used to this end, but radio and cinema as well. This was considered organising-scaffolding, with radical media considered part and parcel of radical political action (Harrison 1974).

In the UK this role was fulfilled by the *Daily Herald*, and then in the 1920s by the *Sunday Worker* and *Lansbury's Labour Weekly*. With the rise of fascism in Europe and Mosley's Blackshirts in England, the *Daily Worker* was founded. Harrison (1974, p. 200) argues that the launch came 9 years after Lenin had urged 'the communists to start a daily not as a business but as an economic and political tool of the masses in their struggle'. In Ireland both the revolutionary-era *Irish Citizen* and *Irish Volunteer* and the 1930s publication the *Republican Congress* adopted this agitation-propaganda format as they pushed for industrial and rent strikes and street confrontation with the fascist Blueshirts (English 2014; Grant 2012; Bheacháin 2007).

In the interwar period a second news content form was developed, the theoretical journal. Distinct from the agit-prop press, the theoretical journal aimed to educate the members of a communist party and other radical

organisations, and develop theoretical and strategic insight in a rapidly shifting political climate. At first these operated as internal party bulletins, but they expanded to include wider theoretical publishing and international exchanges among communist leaders. Leaders of the communist parties in Europe, Lenin (2005) and Trotsky (1971), Gramsci (1971) and Lukacs (1920) were all sophisticated thinkers as well as front-line organisers and political leaders. They used such publications as means of exchange but also as part of the development of organic intellectuals among the working class, independent of the bourgeoisie. Theoretical publications served an internal party and working education purpose as such. Additionally, as communists took national regional and local power, and as they dealt with civil and national wars, such journals were important points at which analysis could be developed and transitional programmes and revolutionary processes outlined. In Britain the *Communist Review*, in the USA *Class Struggle*, published by the Socialist Publication Group, and *The Communist* were theoretical monthlies (Linehan 2017; Harrison 1974). In Ireland the theoretical journal was a less evident form, with the *Workers' Republic* the nearest (Connolly 1951), maintaining a mixed format with theoretical and agit-prop content.

2.4.2 World War and Interwar Radical Media Production

The interwar years were difficult ones for radical media production. Ruling-class fears of communist revolution saw them extend aspects of the World War I Emergency Powers Act, limiting press freedom. Radical publications moved between public and commercial operation and underground clandestine operation. Often legal action was a midpoint between these two conditions and radical publications struggled to sustain themselves financially under repressive conditions. Radical publications ceased publishing in the late 1920s, but re-emerged during the Great Depression and with the threat of fascism in the 1930s. As war approached with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, emergency powers pushed back against the communist radical press and the wider anti-fascist press of the era (Harrison 1974).

In Britain the Clyde Workers' Committee publication *The Worker* and the Glasgow-based *Forward* were banned during World War I, but re-formed on a

socialist and anti-war basis in 1917 (Harrison 1974). *The Call*, formed by the national shop stewards and workers' committee movement, drew up positions in favour of the new communist government in Russia and agitated against the British war effort. The *Daily Herald* acted as organising scaffolding, not only publishing in support of the Russian Revolution but even calling a meeting in support of the Russian Revolution in the Albert Hall in London which drew 20,000 people. The *Herald* went on to raise £200,000 to build itself as a socialist daily. The Newspaper Properties Association refused to supply paper for the printing presses of the *Herald* and the British government tried to ban the publication. Threats of strike action by the transportation workers, which would have shut down the paper mills, forced the Newspaper Properties Association and the government to back down (Harrison 1974).

In 1925 the *Sunday Worker* and *Lansbury's Labour Weekly* launched. They tried an inside-and-outside funding strategy, building resources up from among communist and radical workers and attempting to re-direct Labour Party funds towards themselves simultaneously. In 1925 and moving into the General Strike of 1926, the Labour Party purged the communists and the state banned their publications and arrested many of the key organisers. The 1930s *Daily Worker* was banned from its inception, which meant production was kept underground, in communist printing presses, and it was distributed by members across the country. *Reynold's News* was subsidised by the co-operative movement and the *Tribune*, launched in 1937, remained funded and produced by a new faction of the Labour Party, the Labour Left (Harrison 1974; Wring 2004; Pelling & Cox 1993; Garrard 2001).

In the USA, the Communist Party of America was the main supporter of radical press production. It funded, staffed and operated networks of volunteers in publications such as the *Monthly Worker*, *Masses* and *New Masses*. The Socialist Party of America also backed and produced publications such as the *American Socialist Quarterly* and *Socialist Review*. These publications were produced on the cusp between the legal press and the underground. Not only was the production of these publications criminalised, but workers and volunteers distributing these papers faced arrest, firing from work or violence

on the part of owners, the police and racist organisations such as the KKK (Denning 1996; Foley 1993; Hoffman, Charles & Carolyn 1946).

In Ireland, publications such as the *Irish Citizen* and *Irish Volunteer* were funded and organised by the semi-legal Sinn Féin and their military wing, the Irish Republican Army, while the *Workers' Republic* was tied to the Irish Citizen Army (English 1994; Grant 2012). This type of semi-underground press meant that fundraising and printing were carried out through networks of volunteers and supporters. In the 1920s, after the Civil War and with a repressive conservative Irish state in place, Fianna Fáil emerged as the constitutional wing of Irish republicanism. It produced a daily, the *Irish Press* (O'Brien 2001; Horgan 2012) to compete with the Conservative Party (what was to become Fine Gael), who were influential supporters of and were supported by papers such as the *Irish Independent*. The *Irish Press* was funded by Fianna Fáil and through a wider subscription model. In the 1930s *Saor Éire* and the *Republican Congress* were both connected to and produced by a new republican-socialist formation, to the left of Fianna Fáil. The *Republican Congress* was in particular sustained by a network of workers, tenants, republicans and socialists, and distributed through these networks (Bheacháin 2007; English 2012).

The role of Soviet Russia in the funding of the radical press remained an important issue from 1917 to 1939. The *Daily Herald* was accused of being 'in the pocket' of the Soviets in 1920. These accusations were confronted and ridiculed by the *Herald* (Harrison 1974). Despite the ability of radical publications to deflect from this accusation, the role of Soviet financing and ideological influence remained an important consideration in the production process throughout the 1920s and 1930s, although the specific financial and logistic support, outside of fraternal alliance, remains unclear. The real or imagined Soviet influence was a tool used to suppress the radical press across all three countries. The red scare was tied to a strong nationalist rhetoric that outside and foreign agitators were trying to import destructive alien ideas. This was aimed at weakening and isolating radical movements and communists and their press from its working-class base, as well as forming the basis for the use of special powers and emergency powers against the radical press (Harrison

1974; Kenez 1985).

2.4.3 World War and Interwar Radical Media Political Relations

The interwar years were a period of significant political conflict, in which the radical press were often an important interlocutor. The state in all three countries attempted to repress the radical press – at the end of World War I, during the scare of the Russian Revolution and independence wars in 1917, during the 1920s and again in the 1930s. In addition, a major conflict between moderates and radicals on the political left occurred in all three countries, with the press taken over, funded or de-funded, promoted or denounced based on shifting balances of power (Harrison 1974).

In the USA the major battle occurred between the Socialist Party of America and the Communist Party of America. The Socialist Party attempted to walk a tightrope between capitalism and communism, proposing a unique American road to socialism and reform instead of revolution. The Communist Party of America tied itself to the Russian Revolution, the Soviet Union and world revolution. The Communist Party of America dominated the radical press of the era, with the range of theoretical journals and dailies backed up by a series of fronts and alliances in industrial trade unionism, anti-fascism and rural organising (Brown 1974; Draper 1954; Aaron 1992; Zumoff 2014).

In Britain the battleground was the British Labour Party and the trade union movement. The British Labour Party and Trade Union Congress (TUC) were challenged throughout the 1920s and 1930s by communists, left socialists, shop stewards and radical pockets of workers (Harman 2008). The *Daily Herald* illustrates the way in which the radical press became a battleground of radical politics (Harrison 1974). It moved from being a communist-sympathetic publication from 1917 to 1923 to a TUC and moderate Labour Party publication which called for communists to be expelled after it ran out of money and was offered funding by the TUC. This conflict became particularly bitter during the miners' strikes of 1925 and then the General Strike of 1926, and when the Labour Party joined a national government following the Great Depression. In the mid-1930s, the threat of fascism created a larger left wing and a common basis for action, filtering through to a more diverse radical press (Hodgon

2014).

In Ireland the revolutionary period, 1917–1923, saw a range of radical publications in alliance, from the communist, socialist, feminist and republican to the nationalist in the War of Independence (English 1994; Grant 2012). The Civil War and counter-revolution of the 1920s weakened the left. At least two major political divisions played out in terms of the radical media. The labour movement was weak and divided. Labour and worker opposition was concentrated in Larkinism (McCarthy 1978), which failed to produce a publication or effective party vehicle. In republicanism, Fianna Fail took a strategic position similar to that of the British Labour Party, with Irish particularities, calling for radical reform while also focusing on anti-colonial and national change, in particular the dismantling of the Anglo-Irish Treaty and economic independence from Britain. Publications such as the *Republican Congress* and *Saor Eire* criticised Fianna for abandoning the rural poor and the working class, as well the oppressed Catholic minority in the north (English 1994; Grant 2012).

2.5 Liberation and New Left Radical Media (1960–1980)

A historic compromise between labour and capital in the UK and the USA following World War II facilitated two decades of economic growth. Wages rose, public services were expanded, including in the UK the National Health Service, the large-scale building of social housing took place and there was a massive expansion of consumer goods and access to education (Harman 2008; Hobsbawm 1994). In contrast, Ireland remained economically isolated (McCabe 2011). Radical media and politics began to shift after World War II. Radical media and politics had been dominated by the communist movement in the interwar years. This domination was weakened after World War II. The red scare of the 1950s weakened communism in the UK, Ireland and the USA and laid the basis for state suppression. In 1956 this was compounded by divisions within the communist movement over the invasion of Hungary by the Soviet Union (Harman 2008). Many prominent intellectuals within the communist movement in Britain and Ireland, as well as a body of radical workers,

disagreed with the Soviet invasion and broke from orthodox communism. As such, a new generation of people radicalised in the 1960s would be largely disconnected from the politics of interwar communism.

The 1960s were a period of social revolt. African Americans in the USA and Catholics in Northern Ireland rebelled under the banner of civil rights, demanded an end to segregation, discrimination and violence against their communities. Bhattacharya (2017) argues that this revolt was the product of a crisis of social reproduction woven together by class and racialised discrimination and gendered repression, in which housing and domestic labour were deeply exploitative and repressive, even while examples of unionised wages and labour existed. This was further fed by a wider worker and student rebellion, the generation of May '68, and an anti-war movement (Harman 2008). In the 1970s, economic crisis struck. Industrial conflict came to the fore. Workers organised against pay cuts, factory closures and other attempts to restore profit through cuts to labour (Harman 2008). In Ireland the civil rights movement was replaced by an armed civil war (Devlin 1969; McKearney 2011). Radical media took new forms in the social and economic upheaval and new radical politics of the era. Radical media became part of a process of radical identity recomposition via new concepts of radical liberation and civil rights and new political organisations (Harman 2008; Laybourn 2006; Devlin 1969; Ramdin 2017; Freeman 1973).

2.5.1 Liberation and New Left Radical Media Content

Radical investigative journalism, media and culture interwove in the 1960s, leading to new styles and content forms in the radical press. The anti-war *Worker* and the *National Guardian* would pioneer a challenge to US foreign policy and the containment doctrine using moral statements, analysis and investigative journalism. They offered forensic analysis and uncovered major scandals of US war policy decisions, the funding for right-wing paramilitaries, the cover-up of massacres by US forces and the business interests and profits of the US industrial war machine. The counter-cultural press would be a significant new force in the 1960s, with publications such as the *Berkeley Barb*, *Kudzu* and *The Paper* combining issues such as creative and lifestyle freedom

and free love with radical anti-war and anti-conservatism politics. Both the anti-war and counter-cultural press fused a diverse range of media and cultural forms, bringing together poetry, literature, everyday stories and songs, polemic and political critique (Streitmatter 2001).

In the 1920s and 1930s communist parties created a distinction between internal party journals, which placed emphasis on theory, and agit-prop publications intended to stir the masses and contribute to social struggle. In the 1960s the separation of theory and practice was challenged (Streitmatter 2001). Feminist publications in the USA such as *It Ain't Me Babe* and *Goodbye to All That* engaged with topics similar to the 18th century publication *Revolution* such as domestic violence, abortion and reproductive rights, healthcare, rape and sexual assault, while also exploring women's sexuality, patriarchy as a structure of oppression and militant tactics such as separation from men and physical and armed resistance and revolt (Streitmatter 2001). 'The personal is political' became a major radical content frame for the radical feminist press of the era, with deeper exploration of the everyday lives of women and views and practices of social transformation. Sexuality, specifically in the gay and lesbian radical press, would emerge as an issue in its own right, with publications such as *Gay* contrasting with the bolder and more defiant *Come Out* (Streitmatter 2001). Such publications also emphasised the confluence of radicalism in one's personal, social, cultural and political life. They brought together agitation-propaganda, demands for political reform, everyday issues – in particular discrimination – while exploring new dimensions of the theory and analysis of gender and sexuality (Streitmatter 2001).

Black radical publications, such as *Black Panther*, *Inner City Voice* and *Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement*, combined broader theoretical analysis of capitalism and race with agit-prop, where immediate issues, social conditions, work conditions and harassment were reported on. These reports were used to raise consciousness as part of an organising process (Streitmatter 2001). *Black Panther* argued that discrimination and economic injustice, such as poor housing, pay, healthcare and education, combined with police brutality and

incarceration, could only be overcome by the black community defending itself, providing for itself and then staging revolution (Jones 1998).

The cultural element of building and sustaining black pride was also important for radical black publications. Black power politics would also emerge independently in Britain, with a period of racial discrimination challenged by a new radical black youth. Publications such as *Black Dimension*, *Race Today* and *Race & Class* would set an important current within British radical media (Ramdin 2017). Content was focused on both the analysis of colonialism, imperialism, race and class, and the analysis of the everyday experiences of the black community.

Trotskyism would take a leading role in the British radical media and street politics of the day, while socialist-republican media would again emerge in Ireland as the dominant current of street reporting, analysis and agit-prop. Publications such as *Black Dwarf*, *Socialist Women*, *Red Mole*, *Red Weekly* and *Socialist Challenge* would use the press as scaffolding for political work and as agitation-propaganda (Laybourn 2006). The agitation-propaganda of the Trotskyist press of the 1960s and 1970s differed from the revolutionary press of the 1910s and 1920s in that a new emphasis was placed on mass movements of students as agents of political change. In addition, the 'streets' were now a key site of struggle emphasised by this press. The radical press existed to sharpen the demands and push for an escalation of action. These actions would reach a tipping point at which revolution would be possible. Other publications of the era in the UK focused primarily on rank-and-file trade unionism and workers' struggles, such as *Class Struggle*, an anarcho-syndicalist publication, and *Militant*, a publication of the early Militant Tendency of Trotskyism (Laybourn 2006). These publications reported from and analysed the shop floor, demanding changes in industrial policy and wages, and agitating for workers' action.

The radical press developed rapidly in the late 1960s in Ireland. The civil rights movement pushed an emerging feminist, socialist, republican and communist press into life. Socialist republican and communist publications such as *Comment*, the *Irish Communist*, *Socialist*, *Socialist Review*, *People's Voice* and

the *Socialist Republican* focused on the conflict in the North and socialist action around housing, health, education and industry. The split in the republican movement in 1969 (Hanley 2013; McKearney 2011) was reflected in a division of the radical press. A communist wing, the Officials (later the Workers' Party), and their publications, the *United Irishman*, the *Irish People* and *Ireland*, organised their press to promote their party and offer socialist analysis of local, national and international affairs (Hanley & Millar 2009). The militarist Provisional IRA and their publications *An Phoblacht* and *An t-Olgac* used the radical press as a means of maintaining confidence and morale within the republican movement (Horgan 2002). The pages of these publications were focused on articulating party position, reporting updates from the Troubles, and increasingly as the Troubles continued and inter-republican violence took place these publications were used for bitter denouncements of each other.

Feminist publications influenced by republicanism would, as in the 1910–1923 period, emerge once again during the Troubles. *Banshee* and *Women's Action* were particularly important (Roulston 1989). They combined analysis and agit-prop, demanding socialism, national unity and reproductive rights and justice for women across the Island. They differed in important ways from the republican press in their challenge to, in particular, the conservative influence of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Other publications, such as *Saor Eire* and *People's Democracy*, were smaller radical socialist publications that engaged in both analysis and agit-prop, representing a wider socialist movement (Brennan 2002; Roulston 1989; Dublin Community Television 2010).

Finally, a new form of radical theoretical journal would emerge in the 1960s and 1970s. Free from the confines of the official communist movement, theoretical journals, particularly in the USA and UK, would interconnect with public intellectualism and academic institutions (Souvlis 2019) and the milieu of the New Left. In the UK the New Left adopted an open heterodox Marxism, leaving room for the development of new theories of Marxism and new analyses of changes in the structures of capitalism. These publications took a line famously stated as 'neither Washington nor Moscow', focusing on a critical independence in the analysis of international affairs and geopolitics. Important

theoretical journals such as the *New Left Review* (Bahro 1984) and *Marxism Today* emerged in this period. Important historians such as E.P. Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm, political theorists such as Perry Anderson and cultural studies founder Stuart Hall were both academics and public radical media producers and intellectuals as part of the New Left (Williams 2015). They encapsulated a form of Marxist intellectualism which placed emphasis on rigorous critical analysis of theory, global and national politics and socialist strategy and practice (Souvlis 2019). In addition, in the UK the Trotskyist left would produce Marxist theoretical journals such as *International Socialist*, with a stricter party line, a focus on revolution, and opposition to both the USA and the Soviet Union, similar to the New Left, while retaining elements of the language of the interwar agit-prop radical press (Laybourn 2006).

2.5.2 Liberation and New Left Radical Media Production

The 1960s and early 1970s were a period of rapid growth and experimentation in radical media production. The investigative journalism of the *National Guardian* and *Worker* was sustained through a combination of donations and subscriptions, similarly to investigative work in publications such as *Free Speech*. Most experimentally, the counter-cultural and anti-war radical press in the USA pioneered cheap DIY production, producing short-form print, pirate radio, and photography, offering diversity of styles, colours and forms. Production was often localised and decentralised, with mixtures of funding models, from social centres, gig nights and donations to professionalised editorial and production teams or resources from political movements and cultural 'scenes'. The ability to print and record quickly and cheaply meant that often such publications could report from the front line of actions. In addition, many of the publications were embedded in new counter-cultural and radical scenes which the mainstream press struggled to access (Streitmatter 2001).

Theory in the 1800s was contained within working-class education and the new formation of labour and social democratic parties, and in the interwar period largely within the Third Communist International. In the 1960s this began to change. Theoretical journals such as *New Left Review* (Bahro 1988) and *Marxism Today* (Saville 2000), produced outside of socialist political parties,

opened up a diverse editorial board and promoted heterodox Marxist and socialist analysis. They were often interlinked with the resources of universities and the public profile of intellectuals, as a generation in the UK, the USA and to a lesser extent Ireland gained access to a university education and setting. The university even became a site of conflict over production itself. In Detroit the Revolutionary Dodge Workers encouraged their members to go to college in Detroit University. While there they took control of the student printing presses and radio and re-purposed them for radical black worker politics (Georgakas & Surkin 1998). This entryism into mainstream institutions was part of a tactic of turning over resources and extending the voice of emergent black radical movements in a sophisticated war of position with conservative forces at city, regional and national levels.

Agitation-propaganda and street politics in the Trotskyist tradition in the UK, republican socialism in Ireland and Black Power in the USA have their own particular production dynamics. All three aimed to reach those active in the civil rights movement and the social unrest of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Production was fast-paced and largely voluntarist. Street sales, particularly at protests and demonstrations, were combined with distribution in communities and among workers. The aim was both to educate members and to raise class consciousness in a traditional Marxist sense (Horgan 2002; Jonas 1988; Laybourn 2006). In Northern Ireland and among Black Power groups in the USA organisations faced state repression. Printing presses were key components of illegal and semi-legal activity. This meant that often printing presses were underground and fundraising was among networks of sympathisers (Horgan 2002; Jonas 1988; Laybourn 2006). The repression of these organisations, the assassination of Black Panther leaders in the USA (Jonas 1988) and the murder of republican socialists both by Unionist paramilitaries and within inter-republican conflict, as well as more generally in all three countries the defusing and repression of the energy of the late 1960s and 1970s, took its toll on radical media production. The volunteer model dependent on agit-prop and street politics had waned by the late 1970s.

2.5.3 Liberation and New Left Radical Media Political Relations

The 1960s and 1970s were a turbulent time for radical politics. New ways of considering the world, new theories and challenges to dominant power and modes of thinking were widespread. These new ideas emerged on the pages of the radical press. In addition, debates among radicals were increasingly open and contentious. These debates often occurred on the pages of the radical press, alongside street debates and other forums.

The retreat of the official Soviet-backed communist parties opened up a range of political positions and a diversity of publications under the umbrella of the broadly defined New Left (Harman 2008). Within the New Left, the shifting political organisations and their relationship to class and social power can be considered in terms of recomposition, that is the breaking down and reorganisation of class forces and their political expressions (Harnecker 2007; Sotris 2019). A dual recomposition occurred in the 1960s, with both the radical revolutionary tradition and democratic socialism or reformism repositioning themselves in relation to the conditions of class and social revolt.

Social democracy, democratic socialism and reformism were represented by the Labour Party in Britain, a shifted Democratic Party in the USA, and in Ireland the SDLP in Northern Ireland and the Irish Labour Party. New forces demanded not only economic protection for the working class, such as workplace protection and collective bargaining, but social and civil rights, decent housing and education, de-segregation, recognition and protection of identities and sexuality and an end to discrimination (Harman 2008; Devlin 1969; Taylor 2016). Publications such as *Gay National Guardian* and *Inner City Voice* pushed and supported these reforms, often criticising revolutionary poles in the movement for inciting violence and being separatists (Streitmatter 2001). In Britain, the Labour left (Williams 1983; Panitch & Leys 2001), officially represented by *Tribune* but also engaged with and challenged by publications such as *Marxism Today*, pushed for an expansion of socialist democratic reforms, the nationalisation of industry by a Labour government and the massive expansion of universal social protections.

The revolutionary recomposition produced a far more varied and at times larger and more diverse range of publications: *It Ain't Me Babe* and *Banshee* from the socialist feminist tradition; *Come Out*, a Gay liberation publication; *Red Mole* in Britain and *Peoples' Democracy* in Ireland, both Trotskyist; revolutionary republicanism in *Saor Eire* and the *Black Panther* all pushed the boundaries of who and what constituted a revolutionary politics (Streitmatter 2001; Laybourn 2006; Horgan 2002). *Black Panther* called for black Americans to arm themselves, *Saor Eire* supported the armed struggle against the British Army and the unionist state of Northern Ireland. Feminists and black radicals used the pages of the radical press to explore ideas of complete separatism from their oppressors (men and white America), as well as exploring the full range of social revolution, of the liberation of daily lives, of fulfilment, of nurturing care and social solidarity. Rank-and-file workers and black radical workers produced their own content on the front line of strikes and wildcat actions, often fighting both the leadership of their unions and capital (Georgakas & Surkin 1998; Streitmatter 2001). They also expanded the scope of what could be considered a workplace issue, from pay and conditions to discrimination. They questioned who should own the factory, informing a revolutionary experiment and a call to have the means of production directly run by the worker themselves.

The hugely diverse publications in the period were also characterised by rapid rises and collapses. Publications disappeared quickly, with few outside of the theoretical journals lasting into the 1980s (Streitmatter 2001). With the diversity came deep political divisions between moderates and radicals, civil rights and liberation, and also within the revolutionary movements themselves, with views and tactics fought out between papers, but also in an expanded radical cultural sphere, in art, poetry and music. Radical media, as with radical politics at this time, were a restart, after the defeats of the 1950s: the anti-communism and repression and the degeneration of the official communist movement. The 1960s and 1970s were richly radical, but ultimately ended in defeat, as cultural war conservatism and neo-liberalism defined the 1980s in the USA, UK and Ireland. Overall the period can be considered simultaneously

a period of rich diversity, a glimpse into the potential of a diverse radicalism, and a point in which politics fragmented, weakening the capacity of the radical movements to sustain and then defend themselves against the neo-liberal counter-offensive which emerged.

2.6 Anti-globalisation and Digital Radical Media (1995–2005)

The 1980s were a period of economic and social defeat for radical and emancipatory movements. Progress made in the 1960s and 1970s, in civil rights and reproductive rights, was steadily eroded by a conservative culture war. In the early 1980s the right under Thatcher in Britain and Reagan in the USA would go on the offensive against the trade union movements, defeating the air traffic controllers' strike and miners' strike. In Ireland protests over unemployment, industrial unrest and the PAYE marches were replaced by the Tallaght Agreement and a period of social partnership. The Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Fukuyama proclaimed the end of history and US geopolitical hegemony as well as capitalist and liberal democratic victory against all possible alternative histories and futures became the hegemonic discourse in the 1990s (Fukuyama 2006; Harman 2008; Fuchs & Mosco 2012; Harvey 2011).

In the 1990s dominant media would begin to shift; globalisation and financialisation turned national corporate media into a globalised force (Mosco 2009). As corporate media, in particular television corporations, reached a peak, digital media began to emerge. Computers had been in operation for nearly two decades, but the 1990s saw their transformation into consumer goods and viable means of mass communication (Fuchs 2012).

Radical media re-emerged as part of challenges to this corporate, globalised and neo-liberal order in the USA, UK and Ireland. The Zapatista uprising in Mexico in 1995, an autonomist and indigenous-led insurrection, shattered the post-ideology agenda, pushing movements in the West to organise (Atton 2002; Graeber 2009; Kauffman 2017; Söderberg 2015; Wolfson 2012; Agamben et al. 2012). Radical media in this era were defined by their readjustment to the conditions imposed by neo-liberalism and the digital shift.

Radical media built a new radical voice that was both local and international, in opposition to corporate power and globalisation, while also experimenting with utopian possibilities in the present (Atton 2001; Downing 2001).

2.6.1 Anti-globalisation and Digital Radical Media Content

Indymedia was the most important and significant site of digital radical content in the late 1990s and early 2000s. *Indymedia* would begin as the Independent Media Centre (IMC) in 1999 and would operate in Ireland, the UK and the USA. The IMCs were both physical sites and new digital communities (Wolfson 2012). *Indymedia* was anti-corporate and anti-capitalist. The radical press from the 1800s right through to the 1970s had reported on the impact of capitalism in people's everyday lives, as well as on protests, actions and insurrections. *Indymedia* advanced this using digital media and communication to platform instant reporting and analysis. Specifically, *Indymedia* groups would report and give live-feed updates from protests, particularly powerful during the large-scale G20 protests in Seattle 1999 and Genoa in 2002. *Indymedia* fused traditional beat reporting with street agit-prop to expose police brutality and the struggle of anti-capitalists on the streets in real time. There would be live footage and instant reporting of police activities and security measures, including the use of baton charges, kettling, tear gas and rubber bullets.

While television had allowed for some of the content aspects of immediate reporting, *Indymedia* shifted this in at least three ways. It took control of the narrative, in particular removing the voice of the reporter, a key mediator; it was often intertwined with and part of the organising of the protests themselves, giving unparalleled access and perspective from those protesting; and it allowed discussion and comments to take place online as the content was uploaded, enabling an interaction among and between protestors and observers across the globe (Platon & Deuze 2003; Kidd 2013). Overall this speeded up the process of reporting and the agitation that occurred.

The discussion sections, comment trends and forums were an important digital content form developed within digital radical media such as *Indymedia* (Platon

& Deuze 2003; Kidd 2013). Here anyone, either with an account or anonymously, could write replies and start discussions on articles and reports. An array of radical collective blogs utilised the same format, but *Indymedia* was by far the largest in terms of the volume of comments and discussion. *Indymedia* pioneered this format long before social media corporations and legacy media integrated it into their business model and before subsequent right-wing blogging and discussion forums emerged (Pickard 2006; Giraud 2014; Fuchs 2014).

The ideal of developing and platforming voices from below, the voices of the oppressed and marginalised, came to the fore in the late 1990s and early 2000s as part of the radical media ecosystem. This influence came from the Latin American left, based on the theoretical frameworks of radical Latin American sociology, critical communication research and development studies as part of a re-interpretation of global development, colonialism and neocolonialism. New radical media frameworks of citizen and community radical media, which produced radio and digital content, centred the lives and culture of the oppressed and marginalised. Media here were seen as part of a critical pedagogy (Freire 1971; Fanon 2007). The goal was to use media to empower people to learn and develop their own consciousness and agency (Kidd, Rodriguez and Stein 2002; Howley 2009; Gorde 2009; Forde 2009). In the USA *Democracy Now* combined this approach with investigative journalism and reporting, while *Near FM*, *Dublin Community Television* and the *Community Media Network* in Ireland and community media in the UK began to adopt these methodologies (Sheehan 2012; Dublin Community Television 2010).

In the United Kingdom there was a less marked influence of both the anti-corporate and anarchist media, notwithstanding the local *Indymedia* platforms which emerged in Britain. Much of the radical media of previous decades carried through, with intellectual journals such as the *New Left Review* and the agit-prop of the Trotskyist *Socialist Worker* representing continuity rather than realignment (Allen 1985; Laybourn 2006). *Red Pepper* was founded in 1996 as a broad social-movement-orientated publication, adopting some of the causes

of anti-war, environmentalism and feminism along with traditional labour and socialist politics (Khiabany 2000), and the *Scottish Left Review*, founded in 2000, offered an alignment of broad socialist politics and analysis.

2.6.2 Anti-globalisation and Digital Radical Media Production

Indymedia and the wider anti-corporate zeitgeist of the late 1990s and early 2000s saw a series of novel experiments in production, facilitated by the shift to the digital (Platon & Deuze 2003). *Indymedia* would grow to 89 active sites across the world by 2002, with multiple active *Indymedia* sites in the United States and United Kingdom and Ireland. Publications such as *AlterNet* and *TruthOut* set out to combine the counter-cultural politics of the 1990s, elements of youth culture anti-consumerism and *Indymedia*'s anti-capitalism. Production was most profoundly experimental, centring prefigurative politics and the decentralising of production. To Atton (2002) and Downing (2000), prefiguration meant a focus on the process of constructing the society we wish to see in the practice of the present. In radical media that meant a focus on developing marginalised voices, non-hierarchies of decision-making, active participation and co-construction of media by producer and consumer embedded in lived social relations.

Content and production would flow from prefigurative processes. Digital production reduced entry cost, allowing access for more and more people. This paired with a speeding up of production, as instant reporting of protests and high volumes of content production meant the rapid spread of knowledge and skills which formed a basis for widespread empowerment. *Indymedia* was uniformly volunteerist, opposing the professionalisation of radical media production, and contained widely varying editorial structures, participation and organisation of content across the its sites (Platon & Deuze 2003; Pickard; Giraud 2014; Fuchs 2014). The immediate goal of a prefigurative production process was to open media up and allow the flow of information and knowledge across movements and peoples in resistance to neo-liberal capitalism. A more advanced goal of production was to create autonomous media zones, in which media more generally would be de-commodified and organised by the people

(Holloway 2002).

Latin American radical media – the development of community media and media co-operatives, the development of pan-Latin American radio, television and print supported by socialist governments, such as *Telesur*, and the Latin American solidarity networks and world social forums – would feed into the re-emergence of co-operative radical media in the West. Western scholars, NGO members and radical activists were increasingly consumers of Latin American radical media. They in turn influenced the development of subscription-based localised radical community media platforms. These platforms used radio, video and digital platforms in particular to produce low-cost content, and would see elements of the *Indymedia* and alter-globalisation movement drawn to the membership-based model and democratic processes of community media producers (Painter 2006).

By contrast, traditional radical production – the socialist journal and agit-prop short-form print – had a more gradual shift in the digital age. They digitised their archives, releasing press releases online and intervening in other spaces such as *Indymedia*. The *New Left Review* added a digital website to its print edition, extending its international focus and relations, and *Socialist Worker* moved online, supplementing its street sales. For different reasons, both were resistant to change or total transformation to the digital. The *New Left Review*'s production was tied into left-wing publishing houses (Williams 2013; Souvlis 2019) and the *Socialist Worker* saw street sales as not just a means of distributing their message but a form of organising, which created discipline among its members and helped to reach those active in protest.

2.6.3 Anti-globalisation and Digital Radical Media Political Relations

Digital radical media were positioned within two mass movements, anti-globalisation and anti-war, as well as an array of smaller community, worker and student, anti-racist and environmental campaigns. Both challenged capitalism and imperialism on a mass scale for the first time since the defeats of the 1980s. Both were broadly driven by an anti-capitalist political current that fused new social movement politics, counter-cultural formations and anarchism. Anarchist thought and practice, in particular concepts of

prefiguration and collectivised reinvention, combined with counter-cultural and subcultural dynamics of resistance to mass and consumerist culture. Anarchism also set an organisational structure, building from the new social movements of the 1980s, developing horizontal distribution of labour and an interweaving of consensus-based assembly experiments in democracy and affinity spoke structures in the organisation of and around mass direct action (Graeber 2009; Kauffman 2017). Radical media contributed to and existed within this political ideology, with the reporting of direct action fuelling further action, which spurred participants to learn methods of organisation and democratic prefigurative processes. Within this, at least in theory, multitudes, nodes and networks could expand, building new social relations and 'grabbing' more and more pieces from under capitalism without imposing a centralised leadership structure or 'authoritarian' socialism (Graeber 2009; Kauffman 2017; Holloway 2002).

The New Left and militant, non-anarchist traditions, were largely marginal and reorganised during this period. Radical media were an important element in the survival of organisations and currents of socialist thought through this period. Trotskyism reoriented towards the new social movements, attempting to win people, in particular students, over to their parties, amid an anti-vanguard sentiment. Broad left modes of thought – Marxism, socialism, socialist feminism and others – stayed alive through publications such as the *New Left Review*, feeding academic conferences and journals such as *Historical Materialism*. The Labour left reoriented through publications such as *Red Pepper* in an age where New Labour rejected socialism. The *Socialist Review* and other Marxist and Trotskyist publications were kept alive paired with radical publishing houses such as Haymarket Books (Souvlis 2019).

The question of whether the local, national or international should be the main focus of radical politics was a key political question in the period. It was mediated by the new strengths and limits of digital communication and media. The nation was largely rejected by the anarchist-influenced radical press, as both a conceptually and historically negative force and, under the conditions of globalisation, as increasingly insignificant as a site of radical political action

(Bonefeld 2006). Instead, people debated returning to local organising in an effort to create pockets of resistance and autonomous zones (Holloway 2002), as is evident in radical community media. Efforts were also made to go global, with the focus on the disruption of the international meeting of the G7, IMF and other transnational capitalist bodies, as is evident in *Indymedia*. Whole months would be used to prepare for the large transnational showdowns of the global summits, from Seattle in 1999 to Genoa in 2002 (Della Porta & Diani 2009). In the mid-2000s this summit hopping continued, while anti-war agitation and demonstrations and environmental protests occurred in Britain, Ireland and the USA. *Indymedia* and the wider radical digital media covered these large transnational radical events as well as turning their focus to local campaigns and movements.

2.7 Conclusion, Research Gaps and Research Questions

The history of radical media practice, considered from the 1800s to the dawn of the 21st century, and in three countries – Ireland, the UK and the USA – opens up important insights which can inform an analysis of radical media today. Radical media have developed in a historic sequence and with particularities in each era. Early radical media (1800–1860) helped form both working-class and a broad emancipatory consciousness, and radical media from 1860 to 1914 introduced socialist and anarchist thought to a wide working-class readership and helped support the organisation of worker and socialist parties. During the wars and in the interwar period, the theoretical journal and agit-prop models dominated radical media, which twisted and turned between open mass publishing and clandestine underground activity when suppressed. In the 1960s and 1970s radical media emerged as part of the formation of new radical identities and a recomposition of radical politics. Finally, after the retreat of the radical under the relentless material and ideological assault of neo-liberalism and late capitalism, radical digital media transposed the struggle to the international, via the anti-globalisation and anti-war movements.

2.7.1 Literature Review Implications

The history of radical media practice shows a large-scale, diverse and complex set of publications and platforms existing in every period since the early 1800s, interlinked with radical politics. In addition, radical media publications and platforms have had an influence on media and communication more generally, offered innovative production methods and pioneered new forms and content. Theorists of radical media pointed towards the way in which capital, the state and civil institutions combined as a means of strangling radical media power. In this chapter the state emerges as a particularly important consideration of ruling-class media power. Rather than the state acting as a neutral arbiter or a promoter of press plurality, the state has intervened in every period of radical media production, suppressing the early working-class press, limiting the socialist and anarchist press, banning the community press in the interwar period and counteracting black radicalism and republicanism in the 1960s and 1970s. These actions combined with wider suppressive tactics: the surveillance of radicals, imprisonment and even, at the most brutal, assassination. These actions jar with the idea of an enshrined press freedom.

Within radical media publications and platforms, political tensions, media ownership and the relations between everyday experiences and political organisation emerged as key considerations. Tensions within the tendencies of radical politics and their impact on the development of radical media are particularly evident in the history of radical media practice. The historic division has been at its core between radicals and revolutionaries demanding working-class and oppressed media independence from the state and capitalist classes, and a social democratic and reformist influence demanding integration with the state and capital on the basis of social provisions and a degree of press plurality. This division has escalated into open conflict in periods of heightened political tension, in particular during the interwar years, where the moderate wing of the radical press was used against the revolutionary wing.

Ownership has been a core concern of the radical press since its emergence. In the 1800s the Chartists developed a subscription, mass production and distribution model in which the working class, trade unions and socialist parties

owned and produced their own media. Under conditions of repression, through the 1900s but in particular in the revolutionary period between the wars and the social revolt of the 1960s and early 1970s, radical media producers learned how financing and the law can be used, often backed by force, in the suppression of radical publications or how, in the case of the *Daily Herald* or *Irish Press*, radical publication can be incorporated into mainstream and bourgeois politics (Harrison 1974; Horgan 2002). The relationship between radical politics and media remains a key consideration. The politics of being, the everyday social life of the people, has been a core concern of the radical press since its beginning. Radical publications and platforms have turned their focus towards the everyday experiences of the working class and the oppressed, in the tradition of social realism, exposing the harsh realities of everyday life, but also aiming to agitate for change and create hope in a better life. This coverage of the everyday has not been from the perspective of an abstract observer, but intertwined with and embodied in the processes of working-class and oppressed self-organisation: working-class associations, trade unions, socialist parties, movements, networks, culture clubs and community spaces.

The history of radical media practice gives us insights into the shifts in radical media practice in the 21st century. The radical media of the early 2000s came after a period of political de-radicalisation as part of a neo-liberal restructuring of the Irish, US and UK economies, and more generally a period of neo-liberal ideological hegemony. The publications and platforms of the early 2000s emerged as part of a radical political opening: the push back against free-trade agreements which gave more powers to transnational corporations at the expense of ordinary people. A new production method, digital communication, was available, allowing a 'scaling up' of production and an expanded reach to new audiences. Anarchism, alive in environmental, racial justice and other movements from the 1980s and 1990s, was able to offer and cohere a mode of political organising, horizontalism and direct action, and connect it to the new radical digital media platforms. In addition, digital media offered a real sense

of hope; corporate mediators and filters could be bypassed and people could organise laterally against capital and the state.

For radical media, the energy and utopianism of *Indymedia* began to run out by the mid-2000s. Corporate social media quickly adopted key methods, the forums and discussion sections, comments and the ability of users to upload their own content, commodifying this process and expanding it (Fuchs 2012). Radical media shifted from platforms owned by networks of radical activists to those owned by multi-billion-euro corporations (Fuchs 2012). Protests and movements against austerity reopened some radical media potentials, with publications such as *Occupy Times*, but this was small and limited compared to the days of *Indymedia* (Fuchs 2014). The history of radical media practice reinforces the idea that radical media publications and platforms, their rise and fall, are deeply tied to the political context of the era. The financial crisis and austerity were major shifts in capital and class, and the basis for radical movements and press. At the same time the commodification of social media limited the capacity to bypass the corporate sphere.

2.7.2 Research Gaps and Questions

What gaps exist in the analysis of radical media and what questions can be posed which can address these gaps? While there is an analysis of radical media as a subject in general, placing it in a broad radical political, historic, social and cultural context, there is a lack of clear and specific definition and categorisation of radical media from a political-economic perspective. Concepts such as radical, alternative, independent, community, working class, worker, proletariat, movement and dissenting have all been used at times interchangeably or the definition of radical media has been considered in terms of a looser negation: non- or anti-mainstream, non- or anti-capitalist, non- or anti-corporate.

This gap is compounded by the lack of specific analysis of publications and platforms and media actors (journalists, workers and producers). As mentioned in the introduction, political economic analyses in the field have focused on

developing abstract models (Fuchs & Sandoval 2012) and understanding the general framework of systems such as radical social media (Fuchs 2017), or the focus has been broadly on radical media within radical politics such as movements (Locke, Lawthom & Lyons, 2018; Askanius & Uldam 2011; Ince, Rojas & Davis 2017) or left political parties (Fenton 2016b; Casero-Ripollés, Feenstra & Tormey 2016; Penney 2017; Pickard 2018). While all of this research is necessary and important for the development of a comprehensive analysis of media and communication in the digital age, the exclusion of an analysis of radical publications and platforms today is problematic. Radical publications and platforms have been analysed historically. They have been understood as centres of organised radical media production and content, as well as forces which shape and influence radical politics more generally. They have also shifted after 2008 as the financial crisis and austerity have struck. This needs to be accounted for.

Finally there is a gap in terms of the lack of specific analysis of the relationship between radical media publications and platforms and the contextual dynamics of capital, class composition and radical movements, and there is a gap in understanding the specific role that radical media actors (journalists, workers and producers) play in shaping radical media publications and platforms. These gaps stem from the lack of definitional clarity and the limited evidence base.

As a result, this thesis aims, primarily, to clarify the theoretical conceptualisation of radical media. In addition, this thesis aims to explore what publications and platforms have emerged, how they organise production, what role radical media actors play and what relationship they have to radical politics more generally. These aims are considered within the context of the digital era, from the anti-globalisation and anti-war movements (2000–2005) to the rise of digital media corporations, the financial crisis and institution crisis and anti-austerity movements (2005–2015) and with particular focus on the context of political polarisation (2015–2019) with the rise of new social movements and the far right.

Specifically considering these aims, the research questions are:

1. How can radical media be conceptualised and defined in the digital 21st century?
2. Examining the late 2010s (2016–2019) as a specific period of political polarisation, what radical media publications and platforms exist in Ireland, the United Kingdom and United States of America?
3. In an exploratory matter, how can political economic dynamics, such as content, production (including funding and practices) and political relations, of publications and platforms and the consideration of the role of radical media actors in the post-2008 context inform the conceptualisation of radical media?

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the early 2000s a period of radical media growth occurred, exemplified by *Indymedia*. Digital technology facilitated a period in which media could operate free from the filters of large corporate or public sector broadcasters. It organised itself horizontally with hundreds of contributors, and an infrastructure of progressive anti-globalisation and anti-war protest movements provided a radical political base for its activities. By the 2008 financial crisis, *Indymedia* declined, and large digital social media corporations had taken its place. A smaller and shorter set of platforms, in the spirit of *Indymedia*, emerged after the financial crisis: *Occupy Times* and *Occupy Wall Street Journal*, connected to encampments opposing financial capital, and in Ireland *Rabble* captured an anti-austerity and counter-cultural moment, but on the whole radical content shifted to corporate social media platforms.

Great optimism had existed for the democratic and socially transformative potential of the internet during the *Indymedia* and anti-globalisation period, both in activist and academic circles. This techno-optimism, in Fenton's (2016b) words, confused the idea of pluralism (many voices) with communicative freedom, relegating the influence of 'power over events, media and communication' to a 'power to speak' (Fenton 2016b, p. 78). By 2010, the harsh realities of a renewed and brutal class war in the digital age became more clear, and rather than the internet providing a democratic and transformative space it had become another sphere in which structural inequalities and corporate power were being deepened.

The history of political economic theories of radical media and the history of radical media practice, reviewed in chapters two and three, give us a foundation for the re-conceptualisation of radical media and a direction towards a new study of radical media focused on the period after the financial crisis in particular. Radical media can be considered as a mass media, grounded in radical political movements, facing a dominant media force tied to the capitalist class and filtered through the state and civil society. It has additionally been bound by a particular historic shift from the 1970s to the 21st

century: the defeat of the radical movements and New Left, neo-liberalism and a prefigurative rebellion against globalisation in the early 2000s.

How can radical media be conceptualised and defined in the digital 21st century? Examining the late 2010s (2016–2019) as a specific period of political polarisation, what radical media publications and platforms exist in Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America? In an exploratory matter, in the post 2008 context, how can the political economic dynamics – such as content, production including funding and practices, and political relations – of publications and platforms, and the consideration of the role of radical media actors, inform the conceptualisation of radical media?

This research design and methodology chapter sets out to operationalise these research questions within a political economic theoretical framework, and in the process to reflect on my position as a researcher in relation to the study and the context of the research. Multi-methods design is argued to be the best means of analysing radical media in the 21st century as it allows for multiple overlapping questions to be examined together, using multiple samples and analysis methods within an overarching political economic framework.

Multi-methods research design is used to establish three methods for the analysis of radical media with additional supporting and preparation work highlighted: a selection of models of non-mainstream media developed by theorists in the 21st century; a corpus of texts consisting of 'About' sections, mission statements and principles of radical media publications and platforms between 2016 and 2019, including the rationale for a discussion of the choice of publications and platforms in three countries – Ireland, the UK and the USA; and finally, a selection of interviews with radical media actors (workers, journalists and producers) between 2016 and 2019.

A multi-methods research design is further used to frame the analytical approaches. The selection of models is examined using a typology analysis; the publication and platform 'About' sections, mission statements and principles are explored using a content analysis; and the interviews with radical media actors are explored using a thematic analysis.

The limits of the study are outlined, including: the focus on re-conceptualising radical media through a typology analysis; the limits of a specific analysis of publications and platforms from three countries only and from a specific timeframe (2016–2019); the limits of only sampling publications' 'About' section and conducting only five interviews; and the limits of my explicitly normative position in relation to the research subject. Finally, ethical considerations are outlined.

Two positions – an epistemological positioning and a biographic-spatial positioning – influenced the current approach to radical media, including the overall choice of political economy as a framework, methodological choices and the subsequent analytical approach. Epistemological positioning as defined by Suri (2013) and Moore (2016) is how an individual relates to and understands the development of knowledge and its purpose. Biographic and spatial position (Acevedo et al. 2015) refers to an individual's relationship to identity and place.

My overall epistemological position is based on Marxist humanism and encompasses three distinct but related strands. My role as a Marxist humanist researcher positioned my research inquiry as historically and materially grounded in the purpose of research being the advancement of human emancipation (Dunayevskaya 1965). My role as a critical educator (Freire 1971) situated research knowledge within a pedagogical process of co-learning as part of a process of humanisation (Freire 1971). Finally, through my radical grassroots political practice, my understanding of knowledge is located in the strategic advancement of political demands as part of a wider vision of social transformation.

My biographic-spatial positioning is grounded in working-class Irish identity. This identity shaped and anchored my epistemological position, in that knowledge was developed as part of a commitment to the development of knowledge for and of the working class. In the interview sampling, working-class Irish identity acted both as a point of access – through common experience of austerity and labour precarity – and a barrier, in that in some

instances I was perceived as an outsider to particular geographic understandings and experiences of racial and gender oppression.

3.2 Political Economic Analysis and Multi-Methods Design

A Marxist humanist political economic analysis is the theoretical framework used in this thesis and applied in this methodology. As outlined in the introduction, Mosco (2009) considers political economy in terms of power relations embedded in production, distribution and consumption, which should be analysed in terms of their historic context and from a multi-dimensional and normative basis grounded in praxis. Wasko, Murdock and Sousa (2011, p. 2) consider additionally the idea of a holistic or totalised analysis, with a normative basis and grounding in practice.

Political economic analysis is the theoretical drive for a historically grounded analysis of radical media theory and practice, in which changes over time in concepts of radical media and practices of radical media, in particular production, content and political relations, together give us a holistic picture of radical media. Political economic analysis frames how we can understand the conditions of 21st-century digital radical media, in that their shifts are both historically contingent (they come from the past development of radical media concepts and practices) and particular to the context of developments of production today: specifically, in the 21st century, the shifts from anti-globalisation and anti-war, through to the financial crisis, anti-austerity and digital corporate media, to political polarisation and new social movements.

In undertaking this research, I felt strongly that scholarly research was important – and that this project was responding to a knowledge deficit in the field – but I was also motivated by how such work could support critical research, critical pedagogy and radical political practice.

Russell (2015) contends that radicals should engage in militant research that is specifically located within their particular political environment. My political environment was characterised by an involvement in a multiracial working-class, anti-school-closing campaign in Chicago; a campaign called We're Not Leaving, focused on countering the framing of emigration as a choice; the

mass anti-water charges movement; and most substantially, a series of housing campaigns, including the formation of the Irish Housing Network, the Apollo House occupation and Take Back the City, Dublin. While initially interested in the negative media framing of these working-class struggles, I wanted to understand and contribute to a body of knowledge which could critically and practically develop radical media infrastructure in Ireland. Rather than specifically research radical media within my particular political context (the housing struggle), I drew on my knowledge of radical content development across these struggles, and opted to engage in research that I felt would more broadly help the social movements and socialist left to develop a counterweight to mainstream media. With this framing I perceived a particularly acute deficit in our understanding of sustainable funding, as well as labour sustainability, which could be addressed effectively by a political economic analysis.

Multi-methods design allows for a political economic framework to be operationalised. Multi-methods design allows for a comprehensive totalised analysis of radical media, providing a basis for blending an overarching analysis of radical media with specific analyses of components of radical media in a multi-layered, multilevelled and multidisciplinary manner. Multi-methods design is defined here as a methodology which addresses multiple questions and subjects, which overlap to achieve an overarching picture of a subject. This fits a political economic framework because it allows for theoretical concepts, collective publication and platforms, and individual radical media actors to be examined as discrete subjects and then built together as a whole radical media subject.

There is considerable debate on the use of, definition of, and conceptualisation of multi-methods design. 'Mixed methods' and 'multi-methods' have been used interchangeably to refer to the combining of quantitative and qualitative research methods (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2010). Multi-methods have been considered a subfield of mixed methods, aligning two of the same methodological approaches – quantitative and quantitative or qualitative and qualitative – in one study, in contrast with mixed methods, which combine methodologies (qualitative and quantitative) in one study (Tashakkori & Teddlie

2010). Finally, multi-methods and mixed-methods studies have been distinguished in terms of how they address the subject of the study, with mixed methods examining *one subject* or research questions using more than one method, and multi-methods examining distinct and overlapping subjects and research questions using more than one method (Creswell 2003; Fox & Alldred 2015).

In this study, multi-methods research design combines the analysis of Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), Creswell et al. (2003) and Fox and Alldred (2015). 'Mixed methods' is used to refer to the broad history of a third methodological movement which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. 'Multi-methods' is used to refer to the specific approach within mixed methods design which seeks to examine multiple overlapping subjects and questions together using more than one method.

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) argue that mixed-methods design, in which multimethods is included, in the 21st century is a rich, varied and complex methodology. It has emerged as the third methodological movement in its own right, distinct from quantitative and qualitative methods. In the traditional period (1900–1950) mixed-methods design referred to the combination of quantitative and qualitative design. During the modernist or 'golden period' (1950–1970), post-positivism influenced mixed-methods design in terms of the creation of a unified paradigm which emphasised value-ladenness and theory-ladenness while maintaining scientific processes. In the constructionist period and paradigm wars (1970–1990), positivism and constructivism faced off, considered incompatible methodological frameworks. During this period the concept of triangulation was also developed. Finally, today in the postmodern period, pragmatism (Howe 1988) and the compatibility thesis emerged as a means of fusing the constraints and contradictions of positivism and constructivism.

A number of aspects of mixed- and multi-methods design are particularly significant for this thesis. Multi-methods is theory driven; that means that a concrete theoretical framework is established in advance of analysis, in this thesis a Marxist humanist political economic framework. Two elements of

multi-methods design are particularly important as part of a political economic framework. The dialectics thesis (Greene & Carachelli 1997) sets out a process of counter-posing concepts, events and subjects and using this counter-position as a basis for analysis. Concepts and theories of radical media and practices and publications can be analysed dialectically. The paradigm of transformative–emancipatory mixed-methods design fits a political economic analysis. Here the goal of the study, its processes and outcomes are accounted for in terms of how they forward and achieve and contribute to social transformation.

Four aspects of multi-method procedure are additionally important for a political economic analysis of radical media: confirmatory and exploratory questions, methodological integrity, dominant analysis, and sequence of analysis. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010, p. 14) argue that a major strength of mixed-methods design is that it allows researchers to simultaneously answer confirmatory and exploratory questions, therefore verifying and generating theory in the same study. Mixed methods allows for stronger inferences and mixed methods allows the opportunity to provide divergent sets of views in one study. Multi-method design has clear internal structures and steps which validate an overall methodological integrity. Specifically, multi-methods design contains a dominant method and then a specific sequence of analysis. The dominant method is dominant in that it sets the parameters for the other methods of analysis used. There is a clear sequence from this to the analysis.

A multi-methods design as part of a political economic framework creates a framework from which the three research questions can be answered. The research questions have been outlined as distinct but overlapping considerations where radical media as a whole are considered from three angles: the conceptualisation of radical media; the evidence for publications and platforms; the political economic function, role of actors and politics of radical media.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

In keeping with the multi-methods design, the sampling of radical media is theory driven and takes place with the consideration of the generation of coherent datasets which are also diverse, in that they contain multiple data points, including large data sets, small in-depth samples and contextually driven samples (Morse 2012). In keeping with the research questions, radical media should be sampled to account for the development of concepts of radical media, sampled to consider the make-up of the publications and platforms and what they do, and sampled to account for the role of radical media actors. Three data samples were collected which provide three angles from which to address these questions, providing both a combined sample of radical media and discrete samples capturing specific perspectives.

A sample of models of non-mainstream media in the digital age (2000–2019) is collected, which gives a theorist's angle on what can be considered radical media, what they do, and how they have changed in the digital age. This provides a top-outside perspective on what radical media is. A sample of radical media 'About' sections, mission statements and principles of publications and platforms in the UK, USA and Ireland (2016–2019) is collected, giving publications' official perspective on their purpose, changes, conceptualisation and function. This is a sample which is positioned in terms of the surface and public representation of radical media. Finally, a sample of semi-structured interviews with radical media actors is collected. The sample of interviews with radical media actors gives a perspective from 'under the lid' of radical media publications and platforms and from the point of view of the day-to-day processes of production, content and political relations.

3.3.1 Selection of models of non-mainstream media

This sample of models of non-mainstream media is the ideological or 'top' layer of a consideration of how radical media have been understood over time. This sample captures the intellectual production, treating radical media as the subject of inquiry. Intellectual production – the production of ideas, theories, frameworks, categories and models – has value in that the broad dynamics of a subject, such as radical media, are analysed, and explanatory positions are

formed which help consider a period of time and predict future trends. In keeping with a multi-methods design, such an analysis also has value in providing a vantage point for assessment of the dialectics of radical media production and its development over time. Considering the transformational-emancipatory paradigm additionally, theories of radical media are laden with normative value judgements and their analysis should be considered as having a normative judgement and political perspective within them.

The first step of the theoretical data sampling is to assert the time frame of the sample. 1995–2019 is chosen because it represents a conceptual break from the early radical media theorists' focus on political power and the Cold War focus on cultural resistance. It is the point at which media and communications theorists turned towards the digital as the primary consideration of media and communications, resistance and radicalism. 1995–2019 represents more than two decades of radical media theorising, in which the analysis of digital media has become a norm in communication and media studies, and the examination of radical media and media in opposition to capitalism has grown.

The definition of the sample is the next key step. Non-mainstream models capture the widest example of 'radical' and 'radical like' media modelling. Radical is defined in the introduction and explored in chapters one and two in terms of radical media pertaining to change at the roots, progressive politics and emancipation. This positive normative consideration of radical media is an important marker for the sample: we don't simply want to assess theorists who explain how dominant media is destructive and alternatives are needed; theorists need to assert and assess normative alternatives to mainstream and dominant media. As noted in the introduction, a variety of terms is used in the study of radical media: alternative, oppositional, anti-capitalist, progressive, community, grassroots, dissenting. This means it is advantageous to explore a wider sample of 'non-mainstream' models in order to organise and clarify a narrower subject: radical media.

The sample shifts from an analysis of broad theories of radical media to examples of testable models of non-mainstream media. Jeppesen (2016) argues that alternative and radical media suffer from a lack of clear and

grounded definition. Collecting the models – specifically typologies, taxonomies and categorical models – of radical media as a data source is an attempt to address this, within the existing historical political economic framework, rendering testable concepts of radical media, which can in turn clarify publication and media actor analysis and be compared to the broader historical analysis of radical media theories.

The basic definition of progressive and radical media in opposition to capitalist and corporate media is used to as a starting understanding for the collection of the non-mainstream media models. These were searched for in journals of communication, media and journalism studies and more generally within sociological and political economic journals. A range of theorists in the digital age were considered: Castells (2012), Fuchs and Mosco (2012), Fuchs and Sandoval (2009; 2014; 2015) and Fenton (2016b), considered in chapter one; Friedman (2003), Couldry (2008), Herman and Chomsky (2010), Kidd, Kidd, Rodriguez and Stein and Stein (2009), Habermas (2006), Downing (2000), Atton (2002), Curran (2002) and Jeppesen (2016).

Of these theorists, three considerations were used to narrow the sample. Herman and Chomsky (2010) were excluded as they predominantly focused on a critical analysis of mainstream media, with little concrete development of a discrete non-mainstream media model. Habermas (2006), Couldry (2003) and Friedman (2003) were excluded because they focused on policy reform in the sphere of public media, rather than developing a discrete and separate analysis of radical progressive media. Kidd, Rodriguez and Stein (2009), Castells (2012) and Fenton (2016b) were excluded because although they developed a clear general analysis of radical, alternative and digital media, they did not turn this broad analysis into a specific model.

As a result, five models of non-mainstream media were selected: Downing's (2000) model of radical alternative media, Atton's (2002) model of alternative radical media, Curran's (2002) model of countervailing media power, Fuchs and Sandoval's (2015) model of alternative media, and Jeppesen's (2016) model of alternative media power. Such theorists consider and use a range of titles to describe media in opposition to or outside corporate and legacy media –

alternative, independent, community, progressive and radical – but they all use some feature of the starting definition of radical media, that radical media pertain to change at the roots, progressive politics and emancipation, and thus are included. In addition, not all analyse radical media from a political-economic perspective, but have anarchist, cultural studies and other theoretical influences. Despite this, the sample can be analysed from a political-economic perspective, with the model considered in a historical materialist and Marxist humanist manner, and the key features of the models considered in terms of what they say about content, production and political relations.

Author	Model Title
Downing (2000)	Radical alternative media model
Atton (2002)	Alternative radical media typology
Curran (2002)	Countervailing media model
Fuchs & Sandoval (2015)	Alternative media model
Jeppesen (2016)	Alternative media power model

Figure 3.3.1: Models of Radical Media (2000–2019)

3.3.2 Selection of Publications and Platforms

Radical media publications and platforms are the second data sample. Considering the transformative-emancipatory paradigm, radical publications and platforms can be considered collective sites of production and sites of collective agency in which media groups outside of the dominant and mainstream media organise themselves. In addition, it is considered that radical media publications, in the construction of emancipatory and anti-capitalist forms, aim to achieve a transformative agenda in process, but this is laden with the challenges and contradictions of existing capitalist modes of production and social relations. This means that there will be tensions and

non-emancipatory practices within the publications and platforms of radical media. These tensions are important to explore. In addition, a sample of publications can be compared to the theorising of radical media, to consider the differences and similarities.

Examples of publications and platforms were collected from three countries: Ireland, the UK and the USA. There are a number of arguments supporting the rationale for examining publications and platforms in these three countries, which are outlined below.

Radical publications and platforms are embedded in emancipatory radical movements that are international, therefore any selection of countries needs to reflect this. Emancipatory radical politics has always been internationalist in orientation, seeking to forge common identities beyond those of nation states but also paying attention to important issues more pronounced in certain national contexts, because they may feed into broader struggles for emancipation, for example anti-colonialism or anti-racism. This has become even more pronounced today where convergence, globalisation and transnationalism are important elements of the present historical context. Including more than one country in this research therefore allows for an exploration of the definition of radical media as it emerges across a globalised transnational landscape supported by digital infrastructures, while observing tensions between the transnational, the national and the local.

The influence of the UK and the US on emancipatory radical politics is hard to overestimate and the dominance of the analyses and literature from these countries attests to this. As a result, research on publications and platforms in these countries is vital. As considered in the literature review, the British Chartist press in the 1840s was formative for British radicalism and the shaping of British media and politics more generally (Curran 2002). At the same time in the USA, abolitionist, racial justice and feminist publications in the 1800s were a precursor to significant strands of thought, globally, in the 20th century (Streitmatter 2001). The socialist and anarchist press of the First International and the interwar communist press in the UK and USA were

significant components of a global emancipatory formation. The US civil rights movement, Black Power and anti-war movements (Streitmatter 2001), and British trade unionism (Harrison 1974) shaped radical publishing globally in the second half of the 20th century. Meanwhile, intellectual radical currents such as the New Left and their publications, such as *The New Left Review*, moved beyond and drew on currents of thought on either side of the Atlantic, redrawing Marxist theory and the understanding of global radical politics more generally.

The examination of publications and platforms in Ireland, with its unique radical history, brings another dimension to the study. Focusing only on the USA and the UK may risk overlooking the experiences and tensions of radical media operating in a context like Ireland, where emancipatory politics needs to be attentive to local realities, such as a post-colonial radical tradition, semi-peripheral to the core of US, UK and European capitalism. As considered in the literature review, the particular way in which Irish republicanism and the Irish radical press flowed through a diaspora embedded in the UK and USA, taking away lessons from British and US trade unionism and socialism and applying them to the particular conditions of Irish independence and post-colonial struggle, is important (Lane 1997; Whelan 2004). In the Irish revolutionary period (1913–1923) a diverse set of republican, socialist, feminist and trade unionist publications made up a rich radical media ecosystem, as again was the case in 1968, influenced by the US civil rights movement. At the turn of the 21st century, Ireland was an important site of environmental, anti-war and anti-globalisation mobilisations which supported radical platforms such as *Indymedia* and the flourishing of radical community media.

The rich history of analysis of publications and platforms in these three countries forms an important base from which to address current research gaps. While the transnational dynamics of the civil rights era and anti-globalisation era of radical media have been examined, particularly in relation to *Indymedia*, and aspects of the important historical examples of radical press have been studied in the UK, USA and Ireland, little has been done to examine

the publications and platforms of the post-2008 financial crisis and austerity era across multiple countries. This is in part due to a weakness of existing media frameworks with a multi-nation focus. For example, comparative media systems theory (Hardy 2012) argues that media in Ireland, the UK and the USA are part of a common liberalist system that is market driven and contains a highly professionalised journalist field. This is incompatible with a Marxist humanist political economic analysis of radical media, as it writes out a history of media conflict, subversion and the agency of the oppressed in the creation of media. Additionally, within a Marxist humanist political economic framework, countries cannot be considered from a comparative perspective, because they are not separate, isolated entities; they instead have to be considered as interlinked and interdependent, while containing national and local particularities.

Within more critical frameworks, which are compatible with a Marxist humanist analysis, there has been little examination of the specific role of publications and platforms. Instead the focus has been on developing abstract models of alternative media (Fuchs & Sandoval 2015), understanding the general framework of radical content circulation on social media (Fuchs 2017) and considerations of radical media within radical political movements (Locke, Lawthom & Lyons 2018; Askanius & Uldam 2011; Ince, Rojas & Davis 2017) and left political parties (Fenton 2016b; Casero-Ripollés, Feenstra & Tormey 2016; Penney 2017; Pickard 2018). Examining publications and platforms in these three countries begins to address this gap.

Examining publications and platforms in these three countries since 2008 also brings with it an understanding that specific dynamics of the current political context will shape publications and platforms today. Since the financial crisis it is hypothesised that radical movements such as Occupy and Black Lives Matter, and the social democratic campaigns of Bernie Sanders and Corbyn, are part of common radical political processes facilitating points of convergence of radical media. For example, *Jacobin* distributes to the UK and Ireland, *Rebel* in Ireland draws on US and UK Marxist analysis, and *Novara* and *Red Pepper* cover

movements and politics on both sides of the Atlantic. These publications and platforms are in turn international. Publications and platforms in these three countries, but particularly the UK and USA, have global influence, with a global audience for the analysis and coverage of radical politics in the US and UK but also room for the publications and platforms in these countries to cover radical movements, politics and capital across the globe.

In summary, the internationalism of radical politics is reflected in radical publications and platforms, thereby motivating the study of multiple countries. The US and UK are chosen because they provide historically significant and influential examples of radical media, and Ireland is examined to enrich the study with a particularly vibrant example of radical politics and media, which has engaged and been shaped by an anti-colonial republican tradition. A specific research gap exists in the examination of radical media today, and the study of publications and platforms in these three countries begins to address this, while taking into account the particular conditions of the modern radical political and media context – and providing the opportunity to explore them.

The 'About' sections, mission statements and principles are specifically chosen as a sample which articulates the collective and 'official' positions of radical media publications and platforms. There are many avenues for capturing messages and texts of radical media publications – including an analysis of editorials and samples of pieces, including text, video and audio, as well as an analysis of user-generated commentary and interaction with radical media publications – but in this analysis the focus is on the 'About' sections, mission statements and self-descriptions of radical media publications because these are considered content with a particular generative value; publications state their general mission and purpose, which frames editorial positions and types of publishing and writing that are carried out; mission statements, principles and 'About' sections frame the wider content of the publication and platform.

The first step was to search for radical media publications and platforms and use these to populate a database. The concept of progressive politics and the multiple ways in which 'progressive' is expressed were used as the starting set

of search terms to compile the dataset. These included the terms radical, alternative, independent, progressive, community, socialist, Marxist, anarchist, anti-racist. These terms were inputted in internet search engines. Social media network analysis, which included identifying publications and using their likes and shares as 'pathways' to other publications and platforms, was secondarily used. A total of 70 publications – 29 in the United States of America, 27 in the United Kingdom and 14 in Ireland and Northern Ireland – were collected and thus populated the database at this stage. The format of the publications and their output varied greatly from publication to publication. Print, both traditional and online, radio, television, blog and video were all used across the sample. Some publications and platforms saw multiple pieces released each day online, some released daily editions of print, radio, television and video, while others released digital content two to three times per week and still others published weekly, monthly or on a quarterly basis. Social media reach varied greatly. One indicator of social media reach was the number of likes each publication had. This also varied greatly. Likes were compiled in January 2017. Rabble had the largest following in Ireland with 23,000 likes. It ceased publishing in November 2018. In the UK, Novara Media's 38,000 likes is eclipsed by a series of agit-prop, tabloid style publications such as *Evolve Politics* (78,000) and the largest, *Another Angry Voice* (300,000). In the USA, Unicorn Riot (128,000), *Jacobin* magazine (266,000) and mass communication sites, both written but also radio and television – Alter-net (950,000), Truth Dig (790,000), *Democracy Now* (1,200,000) and *Young Turks* (1,700,000) – were all far larger than UK or Irish publications and platforms, due to the larger domestic market in the USA, along with their international reach.

Supporting work accompanied the sampling of publication and platforms. Over the course of the research I 'friended' or followed a growing number of radical public intellectuals, movement participants and radical media practitioners on Facebook to deepen my contextual knowledge of radical politics and media and as a means of finding and storing examples of radical media publications and platforms. This observation work was at first an informal cataloguing process using the 'save' function on Facebook to compile articles, comments and debates which referenced radical media publications and platforms, before

more formally using this as a basis for a radical media publication and platform database.

Specific boundary considerations were used to narrow the sample from here. Only collectively owned publications were included. This excluded both solo sites, in particular blogs, and radical content and users on digital social media sites such as Facebook. A range of closed groups and public Facebook pages, although collectively run and collectively producing content, are not collectively and independently owned. Ownership of the means of production, instead of freedom to circulate content, is considered as a core criterion of radical media for this sample.

Radical media publications sampled, in addition, should have clear statements of their principles, goals, ideas and purposes. This is done in the sampling to establish a distinction between publications which promote media plurality (having voices from multiple political tendencies, right, centre and left) and alternative media and subcultural media which define themselves in terms of difference instead of in terms of a partisan and openly political orientation. Finally, radical media publications and platforms are distinguished from other spheres of production where the primary site of production and the audience is not the general media sphere. Academic publications, social movement pages and campaign sites, specific communications and public relations roles for civil society organisation and progressive organisations such as parties, trade unions and NGOs are excluded on this basis. This sampling criterion is trickier, with boundaries often blurring.

In the USA *Counter Punch* and in the UK *Common Space* were excluded because it was unclear from their self-description what their politics were or if they could be defined as radical. *Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100)* was excluded because, while it was collective, it was primarily an educational and campaigning site, rather than producing news, analysis and other media content forms. Verso Books was categorised as a publishing house rather than a media platform, and thus excluded. *Another Angry Voice*, a prominent site in the UK, with 300,000 Facebook followers, was excluded because it was an individual blog, rather than a collective media project. *The Deep Left* also was

removed under these criteria, and Facebook pages such as *Red London* were not included.

Thirdly, publications were excluded during the course of the study if they ceased to exist, closed or finished operation during the time period. A three-year period acts as a counterweight to the often rapid rise and fall of radical media publications, allowing an analysis of publications that sustain themselves or have developed during the period. *We Are Many* and *Against the Current* ceased publishing and were excluded as such, in the particular conditions of the end of Solidarity and the International Socialist Organisation. In Ireland *Rabble* was excluded because it closed in 2018; *Alternative TV* was excluded because it merged into *Rebel*. This left a total of 59 publications: 25 in the USA, 22 in the UK and 12 in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

	Name	Place	Website	Facebook likes
1	Jacobin	USA	https://www.jacobinmag.com/	266,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
2	In These Times	USA	http://inthesetimes.com/	122,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
3	Dissent	USA	https://www.dissentmagazine.org/	37,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
4	Viewpoint	USA	https://www.viewpointmag.com/	9,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
5	Against the Current	USA	https://www.solidarity-us.org/atc	CLOSED

6	We Are Many	USA	http://wearemany.org/	CLOSED
7	International Socialist Review	USA	http://isreview.org/issue/104	11,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
8	Alternet	USA	http://www.alternet.org/	959,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
9	Truth Out	USA	http://www.truth-out.org/	748,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
10	Democracy Now	USA	https://www.democracynow.org/	1,200,000 FB likes 09/11/2016
11	Unicorn Riot	USA	http://www.unicornriot.ninja/	126,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
12	Sub Media	USA	https://sub.media/	41,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
13	It's going down	USA	https://itsgoingdown.org/	16,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
14	Chicago Reporter	USA	http://chicagoreporter.com/	21,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
15	City Bureau (Chicago)	USA	http://www.citybureau.org/	1,400 FB likes 07/06/2016

16	The Young Turks (TYT)	USA	https://tyt.com/	1,700,000 FB likes 30/05/2017
17	Labor Notes	USA	http://www.labornotes.org/	17,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
18	CounterPunch	USA	https://www.counterpunch.org/	EXCLUDED
19	Black Youth Project 100	USA	http://byp100.org/	EXCLUDED
20	#letusbreathe	USA	https://www.letusbreathecollective.com/	3,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
21	The Intercept	USA	https://theintercept.com/	370,000 FB likes 23/08/2016
22	Truth Dig	USA	http://www.truthdig.com/	242,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
23	Raw Story	USA	http://www.rawstory.com/	1,000,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
24	The Real News Network	USA	http://therealnews.com/t2/about-us/mission	332,000 FB likes 07/06/2016
25	Mother Jones	USA	http://www.motherjones.com/about	1530000 FB likes 07/06/2016

26	Feministing	USA	http://feministing.com/about/	282000 FB likes 07/06/2016
27	Catalyst	USA	https://catalyst-journal.com/	No Facebook Page
28	Monthly Review	USA	https://monthlyreview.org/	20,134 FB likes 07/06/2016
29	Red Pepper	UK	http://www.redpepper.org.uk/	14,000 FB likes 29/05/2017
30	Counter Fire	UK	http://www.counterfire.org/	19,000 FB likes 29/05/2017
31	Salvage	UK	http://salvage.zone/	7,000 FB likes 29/05/2017
32	The CanaryMedia	UK	https://www.thecanary.co/	132,000 FB likes 29/05/2017
33	Media Diversified	UK	https://mediadiversified.org/	36,000 FB likes 25/10/2019
34	Novarra Media	UK	http://novaramedia.com/	33,455 FB likes 29/05
35	Corporate Watch	UK	https://corporatewatch.org/	No Facebook
36	Common Space	UK	https://www.commonspace.scot/	EXCLUDED

37	LensBella Caledonia	UK	http://bellacaledonia.org.uk/	11,000 FB likes 29/05
38	The Morning Star	UK	https://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/	26,000 FB likes 25/10/2019
39	Evolve Politics	UK	http://evolvepolitics.com/	78,000 FB likes 29/05/2017
40	Real Media	UK	http://realmedia.press/	No Facebook
41	STRIKE! magazine	UK	https://www.facebook.com/strikemagyo/	18,000 FB likes 29/05/2017
42	The Bristol Cable	UK	https://thebristolcable.org/	10,100 FB likes 25/10/2019
43	Manchester Mule	UK	http://manchestermule.com/	No Facebook
44	Salford Star	UK	http://www.salfordstar.com/	3,600 FB likes 26/10/2018
45	The Deep Left	UK	http://www.thedeepleft.com/	EXCLUDED
46	Occupy Times	UK	http://theoccupiedtimes.org/	No Facebook
47	Another Angry Voice	UK	http://anotherangryvoice.blogspot.ie/	EXCLUDED

48	Skawkbox	UK	https://skwawkbox.org/	13,000 FB likes 25/10/2019
49	New Left Review	UK	https://newleftreview.org/about	52,111 FB likes 25/10/2019
50	The Ferret	UK	https://theferret.scot/	8,500 FBlikes 25/10/2019
51	Consented	UK	http://www.consented.co.uk/	No Facebook
52	Verso Books	UK	https://www.versobooks.com/	EXCLUDED
53	Open Democracy	UK	https://www.opendemocracy.net/	101,000 FB likes 25/10/2019
54	Notes from Below	UK	https://notesfrombelow.org/about	2,600 FB likes 25/10/2019
55	Red London	UK		EXCLUDED
56	Tribune	UK	https://tribunemag.co.uk/	9,700 FB likes 25/10/2019

57	Rabble	Ireland	http://www.rabble.ie/	CLOSED
58	LookLeft	Ireland	http://www.lookleftonline.org/	8600 FB likes 29/05
59	Dublin Digital Radio	Ireland	http://listen.dublindigitalradio.com/	4,200 FB likes 25/10/2019
60	Dublin Community TV	Ireland	http://www.dctv.ie/	No Facebook
61	Irish Marxist Review	Ireland	http://www.irishmarxistreview.net/index.php/imr	1,100 FB likes 25/10/2019
62	New View TV Belfast	N. Ireland	http://www.nvtv.co.uk/	No Facebook
63	Solidarity Times	Ireland	https://www.facebook.com/SolidarityTimes/	9860 FB likes 23/08/17
64	Alternative	Ireland	https://www.facebook.com/pg/IrelandAlternative	EXCLUDED
65	Near FM	Ireland	http://near.ie/about-us/	5,600 FB likes 25/10/2019
66	View Digital	Ireland	http://viewdigital.org/	1,599 FB likes 25/10/2019
67	The Last Round Belfast	N. Ireland	https://lastroundblog.wordpress.com/	971 FB likes 25/10/2019

68	Rebel	Ireland	http://www.rebelnews.ie/	27,000 FB likes 25/10/2019
69	Irish Broad Left	Ireland	https://irishbroadleft.com/	2,700 FB likes 25/10/2019
70	Meisneach	Ireland	http://www.misneachabu.ie/	No Facebook

My positioning interacted with the process of publication and platform selection in a limited way. As an activist I was familiar with a number of social media and web publications with a radical emancipatory agenda. This allowed me to mobilise my 'insider' knowledge (Irvine, Roberts and Bradley-Jones 2008) beginning with publications that I was familiar with and snowballing from there. At the same time, however, as a researcher I began keeping records, notes, observations and other materials, operating as an observer of radical political patterns and how radical politics was represented and presented by publications and platforms.

3.3.3 Sample of semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews 'look under the lid' of radical media production from the perspective of radical media actors: journalists, workers and producers who have agency and direction in the development of radical media. This enables us to pose important questions including: what do radical media producers themselves consider to be radical? What are the reasons for content choices? How do production processes operate? And what are the concrete political relations and influences on those who produce and labour in radical media publications?

A number of important steps are followed to facilitate an effective semi-structured interview analysis of radical media. The sample of 59 radical media publications and platforms compiled in the sampling and data procedure stage

provided the pool of possible interviewees. The first consideration for interview selection was that a spread of publication types would be assessed. This meant that different tendencies within radical media would be assessed which together would give a more complete whole picture of radical media. This was the primary selection criterion. It was also important to have a mix of publications based on the historical contextual analysis: older publications of the new left and early digital-era, and new radical media publications and platforms that have developed since 2008 and come to prominence since 2015.

Interviews were obtained with Uetrict in *Jacobin* magazine, the largest 'voice' on the US left. It was a critical radical media type and have been founded after 2008; Burns of *In These Times* an institutional radical media outlet, in operation since 1973; Nelson of *Red Pepper*, a mixed type publication emerging in the 1990s and combining feminist, anti-racist, environmental and socialist politics; Finnan in *Dublin Digital Radio*, a community media and counter-cultural radio site in Dublin, Ireland, which emerged out of the *Rabble* producers and audience in 2016; and Flood in *Solidarity Times*, an activist-orientated publication emerging in 2014 but with continuity from anarchist publishing right through the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s.

Semi-structured interview questions were developed. These focused on situating the case study participant in their political, historical and personal context and then engaging with how they conceptualised radical media, before exploring in detail the dynamics of content, production and political relations. The interviews were carried out between May 2016 and May 2019.

Topic	Questions
Background	<p>1) Could you give me a little background to the publication you are part of? When did it start, how has it developed over time?</p> <p>2) Could you give some background about yourself? How and why did you get involved in this publication? What did you do before?</p>
Content	<p>3) What type of content do you produce and why? For example, what principles guide your editorial line or what articles are accepted? Are there priorities? Are there pieces you will not publish, based on style, form or politics?</p> <p>4) What sources do you rely on and who is the subject of your content (who speaks and why)?</p>
Production	<p>5) What is your ownership and funding model and what is your decision-making structure? How and why are they in place? Are there any challenges and problems?</p>
Political Relations	<p>6) Is there a political tradition that you personally or your publication as a whole feel connected to or part of?</p> <p>7) How do you relate to politics outside of the publication? Do you informally or formally connect to other organisations such as social movements, charities, trade unions, political groups and parties, campaigns, etc? What do you or your publication prioritise?</p>

Contacts were established in Chicago in the summer of 2016 based on relationships from the education struggle in 2013, and I visited the city to complete two interviews, one with Uetricht of *Jacobin* and another with Burns

of *In These Times*. The interview with Uetricht took place on the waterfront of the north side of Chicago near his home. Uetricht spoke with confidence about *Jacobin*, about his own development as a socialist, the growth of Democratic Socialists of America and with familiarity with the Irish political context through the lens of *Jacobin*'s coverage of European politics. We had met three years previously. Uetricht was writing a book at the time on the Chicago Teachers Union and I was working in the school system and for the summer with the Union. The interview was an opportunity to reconnect with Uetricht, whose status had shifted since 2013: he was now a published author, an editor in the largest socialist media outlet in the USA and involved in the largest socialist organisation in the country. The interview with Burns offered insight into a different side of radical media publishing and new networks of radical politics. She was rooted in social movements on the west side of the city, and freelance journalists who were focused on beat reporting and the recording of police brutality, evictions and immigration detention.

Background research comprised three weeks that summer and a week in May 2017. In Chicago, Burns connected me with Tony Nelson, and the Centro Autonomo in Albany Park, where we discussed anti-eviction and housing struggles. Spanish-speaking activists and community members were detached from the Anglo radical media sphere more generally (we discussed radical publications in Mexico and Nicaragua) but we were both particularly interested in Irish anti-imperialism. I gave a class on the history of Irish housing struggles at the Centro, after which I went to a Black Lives Matter encampment with housing campaigners on Chicago westside.

From Chicago, I moved on to Detroit and Toronto. In Detroit I was involved in an exchange with anti-eviction groups linked to anarchist publishing and had dinner with members of the 1980s Irish Solidarity Group who had supported Sinn Fein and were also involved in *Labour Notes*. Detroit at the time felt like the centre of the end of the world, ravaged by austerity and systematic and structural racism. In Toronto I did an exchange with the Ontario Campaign Against Poverty. I experienced Toronto as a booming and deeply unequal city where labour and grassroots activists were working two jobs to pay rent while

pouring their hearts into organising. Geographic disparity and the complex web of power relations in radical politics were revealed throughout this field trip and helped contextualise my understanding of radical media analysis.

The following May, off the back of a bursary for a conference on radical democracy in the New School, I got to spend a week in New York. Here the division between local city radicalism and internationally focused activism was stark. Housing contacts organised a tour of local campaign groups, but I was not able to access the vibrant radical media and cultural scene. Throughout the first phase of interviews biographic positioning played an important role both in terms of access to and as a barrier to interview engagement. Recognition as a working-class scholar and a radical Irish man facilitated interviews with white working-class radical journalists and allowed access to learning exchanges with social movement participants, community and trade union organisers. Beyond this I was an unrooted, white man, who was understandably perceived as unknowing in relation to particular geographic experiences and racial and gender oppression. I would have needed considerably more time to create trust in order to establish fruitful relationships for further interviews. This barrier was compounded by financial limits around engaging in field research as, in spite of receiving small bursaries for conferences, I couldn't afford long periods of field work.

The summer of 2017 through to February 2018 shifted the interview process to Ireland and the UK. This was built around a trip to London and the south of England in the summer of 2017, which produced one interview, a radical journalism conference in Dublin in June 2017, and discussion leading to two interviews with Irish radical media practitioners in February 2018. The UK interview with Nelson from *Red Pepper* took place in a Hackney coffee shop near her office. I had engaged with Nelson through one of her colleagues who had attended the radical journalism conference we ran in Dublin. In email correspondence she was particularly drawn to the opportunity to discuss radical media production, seeing the interview as a useful reflective practice for herself as she had recently moved roles. Beyond this interview, my main access to radical media publications in London was via the London Irish

emigrant community. Radical media publications and platforms were riding the internal labour party leadership contest victory of Jeremy Corbyn and a 'rising left tide' and seemed uninterested in engaging with a working-class Irish media researcher or in having an informal engagement with the movements and radical political struggles of their nearest neighbour.

The radical journalism conference in Dublin initiated a slightly different process of radical media interaction. The conference in June was followed by months of discussion on the weaknesses and challenges of radical media in Ireland, the potential room for a new radical media project and the hopes and aspirations of radical politics more generally. As *Rabble* unravelled, and Unite the Union's proposed media co-operative failed to materialise, overworked and under-resourced freelance practitioners, academics and activists failed to establish a new project. I carried out two interviews at the tailend of this process. One was with Flood in *Solidarity Times*, a long-standing member of a significant, if declined, Irish anarchist organisation, the other with Finnan from *DDR*, who had also been heavily involved in *Rabble* and who was interested in a process of radical media renewal which took the question of financial sustainability seriously. Ireland was a place where radicals had won the water charges campaign and in the spring of 2018 were moving towards victory in the Repeal of the 8th campaign, but whose media infrastructure contrasted with this movement's vibrancy.

In Ireland, the tensions of a shifting epistemological positioning emerged. I was perceived increasingly not as a learner but as an 'expert' on radical media, at the same time as being perceived as a political leader, particularly in the housing struggle. This meant that a different expectation of the interviews and the uses of research was emerging, in which I was now above and outside radical media practice and politics and could use this expert position to develop media in a top-down way. I, uncomfortably, felt this as a process of individualisation and de-rooting from my collective class experience and political practice, and as something which disempowered collective solutions to the deficits of radical media in Ireland.

The semi-structured interviews saw a dual outcome. Semi-structured interviews provided a third angle from which radical media could be considered. Radical media actors, involved as journalists, workers and producers of radical media, with agency and direction in the development of radical media, have particular perspectives on what radical media are and how they can be conceptualised based on their experiences and reflections. This third angle is distinct from the theorists who conceptualise radical media from the outside and the collective statements of purpose of the publications, as the personal perspective and experience allows for tensions and differences within publications to be considered. The semi-structured interviews also provided a greater depth and generative value for understanding the tendencies, historical contexts and shifts in radical media over time. In particular, I was interested in understanding how capital and class conditions and the influence of radical movements impact radical media producers and thus radical media publications.

3.4 The Analysis of Radical Media

Three analyses of radical media were undertaken: a typology analysis of radical media based on the sample of models of non-mainstream media; content analysis based on the sample of radical media publications and platforms in the UK, Ireland and the USA between January 2016 and December 2019; and finally a thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews with radical media actors.

The goal of the analyses is to develop a totalised understanding within a political economic framework of radical media in the digital age considering the gaps in the conceptualisation of radical media and the gaps in the research of radical media publications and platforms in particular. Within this, each analysis addresses what radical media is, using the different angles sampled. A *typology analysis* has the goal of categorising concepts of radical media and the definition of radical media more effectively, *clarifying* its definition, characteristics and shifts. *Content analysis* has the goal of *surveying a wide sample* of radical media publications and platforms for how they conceptualise radical media, and how they perceive radical media content, production and

political relations, in order to understand the make-up of radical media platforms and publications today as a means of assessing how this is different from previous iterations of radical media. *Thematic analysis* of semi-structured interviews with radical media actors has the goal of *exploring and examining in depth* how radical media producers, journalists and workers within publications perceive their work: its production, the content that they and their publications produce and the political relations that the radical media publications have, as well as their own. Shifts are explored from the perspective of where they as radical media actors came from, what their backgrounds and the publications' backgrounds are, and how they historically position radical media today in terms of past practices.

Within a multi-methods design, the three analyses are discrete, with their own goals and purposes, analysing different aspects of radical media, while also being interlinked as part of a whole methods design. Considered together, the typology is the dominant method, and the first method in a sequence of analyses. The typology – specifically the establishment of radical media types – frames the analysis of radical media publications and the thematic analysis of radical media. Content analysis is used to analyse the 'About' sections, mission statements and principles statements, both to test the typology, comparing what theorists say with what publications and platforms say, and using the typology and the structure of types to map radical media publications. Thematic analysis uses the types developed and the mapping of publications as part of the selection of interviews and the structuring of themes.

The analyses of radical media address the three questions posed – how radical media can be conceptualised and exploring of the development of publications and platforms and the role of radical media actors– in accordance with a multi-methods design within a political economic theoretical framework. Each analysis addresses the questions in different ways and to different degrees.

The typology analysis of the sample of concepts, models, typologies and taxonomies of non-mainstream media places weight on the analysis of the concepts and definitions of radical media, with secondary analysis of what

radical media does and how it has changed in the 21st century. The typology analysis is the most comprehensive and primary analysis.

Content analysis is used to confirm the typological analysis of radical media: are the concepts developed in the typology corresponding to what radical media publications and platforms say about themselves? In addition, content analysis allows us to consider how publications and platforms function and how they have changed over time, and what the overarching tendencies and trends are for publications and platforms as a whole. Finally, the thematic analysis focuses on an analysis of the shifting role of radical media actors, the functions of radical media, production, content and political relations. Content analysis and thematic analysis are secondary and exploratory.

In the analysis of radical media, epistemological positioning influenced the primacy given to the typology analysis and the secondary and exploratory use of content analysis and thematic analysis. The lack of a clear definition of radical media was understood not only as an abstract limitation within communication research, but also as something with real political consequences. The understanding of radical as extreme and violent and the horseshoe conceptualisation which equated the radical left and the radical right, making equivalences between ethno-nationalism and the emancipatory politics of Black Lives Matter, needed, based on my belief in a normative basis for knowledge, to be politically contested.

3.4.1 Typology analysis

Typology analysis has become an increasingly popular form of analysis since the 1980s. It has been used in health sciences and medicine, in particular for reviewing policy, practice protocol and study outcomes (Grant & Booth 2009; Ranson et al. 2003), in business and management, in particular for systems reviews and methods reviews (Doty & Glick 1994; Denford 2013), in environmental research (Hass 1996), in social science and policy analysis (Luff, Byatt & Martin 2015) and increasingly, in the digital era, in communication and media (Brandtzæg 2010; Rosengren 2005; De Vreese 2005; Arora 2012; Büchel et al. 2016; Hallin 2016).

There are important distinctions between typologies and taxonomies. Typologies are used to conceptually separate a given set of items multidimensionally. A typology is argued to represent concepts rather than empirical cases. The dimensions are based on the notion of an ideal type, or starting definitions and meta-theories which guide the analysis. The central drawbacks are that categories can be, at worst, neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive, are often based on arbitrary or ad hoc criteria, are descriptive rather than explanatory or predictive, and are frequently subject to the problem of reification (Bailey 1994). Taxonomies by contrast classify items on the basis of empirically observable and measurable characteristics (Bailey 1994, p. 6). Although associated more with the biological than the social sciences (Sneath & Sokal 1962), taxonomic methods – essentially a family of methods generically referred to as cluster analysis – are more often employed in disciplines that centre classification schemes in their analysis (Lorr 1983; Mezzich & Solomon 1980).

The internal validity of a typology is defined by its coherence, parsimony and effectiveness in explaining the interactions and formation of a concept, phenomenon or subject (Howard, Agarwal & Hussain 2011; Luff, Byatt & Martin 2015). A typology has value in this study by virtue of its ability to categorise existing complex and divergent frameworks, concepts and models of radical media into an overarching categorical system that grounds the debates, tensions and underlying patterns of radical media into a firm conceptual framework.

Within typology analysis there is a distinction between descriptive and explanatory typology, and between multi-dimensional and uni-dimensional typology analysis. Denford (2013, p. 177–8), drawing on earlier work, suggests that in an ideal typology classes formed should aim to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive (Hambrick 1984), and that typologies contain constructs, hypothesise relationships between constructs and are falsifiable (Doty & Glick 1994). Evaluation of the success of a typology is based on the category labels being meaningful, the logic of the dimensions being clear and

the ability to completely and exhaustively classify being demonstrable (Gregor 2006).

In the field of communications and media studies, typologies have become increasingly significant, particularly in the 2000s digital era. Mirroring some aspects of the general use of typologies, but with media and communications particularities, typologies have been used to conceptualise media systems and media structures as a whole, including the state and media entities (Arora 2012; Howard, Agarwal & Hussain 2011; Hallin 2016), in the consideration of media framing (Scheufele 1999; De Vreese 2005) and in the analysis of media effects (Rosengren 2005).

Typology use in critical communications and the political economic analysis of communication and media is more limited. Atton's (2002) typology of alternative and radical media categorises key conceptual understandings of radical and alternative media and subdivided characteristics. The process for the development of this typology is a general historical and political analysis of radical and alternative media, and from this the formation of typological categories. It is unclear what specific steps move the research from a general historical and political analysis to a typology. By contrast, a number of recent studies have been sharper (Fish et al. 2011; Fuchs & Sandoval 2014b; Dulong de Rosnay & Musiani 2015). Typology analysis is used in these studies as a means of clarifying concepts and production relationships within digital political economic structures. Typology analysis is stronger, though, as part of a multi-methods design, in that types can be considered and tested, as well as used to frame other analyses, either quantitative or qualitative.

A typology of radical media is needed here as a limited and measured means, as part of a wider analysis, because the existing definitions and conceptual bases of radical media are confused and disorientated. Radical media have not been clearly defined and categorised, and over the course of the last decade there has been an increasingly unclear interchanging of a variety of concepts, such as alternative, radical, community, independent and anti-capitalist. An analysis of radical media as a whole from a political economic perspective would be greatly enhanced by having a degree of clarity on concepts,

categories and types of radical media that have been theorised. This in turn would help create a framework to map radical media publications and platforms, and examine changes in the digital age, as well as functions such as content, production and political relations. As such, the typology undertaken is a meta-typology of concepts of radical, alternative, community and other non-mainstream media in order to organise them conceptually in one clear radical media typology.

Downing's (2000) radical alternative media model, Atton's (2002) alternative radical media model, Curran's (2002) model of countervailing media, Fuchs & Sandoval's (2015) alternative media model, and Jeppesen's (2016) alternative media power model were compiled at the sampling stage. The first step in the typology is the analysis of each model of non-mainstream media individually. They are analysed from a political economic perspective, comparing the definitions and key characteristics of each model and then comparing these to the starting definition of radical media and political economic components of content, production and political relations.

The second point of analysis is focused on developing a typology based on the consideration of the commonalities and contradictions among the models. All of the models are compiled together, and compared for how they generally define media, and what they say about content, production and politics. Thirdly, the frameworks are analysed in terms of their historical context. Three theorists – Atton (2002), Downing (2000) and Curran (2002) – write at the peak of the anti-globalisation and *Indymedia* period, Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) in the period of austerity and anti-austerity movements, and Jeppesen (2016) at the beginning of the period of new social movements and polarisation. What differences exist between the models and can they be attributed to the time periods and context of the theorists?

At this point 'alternative' is compared to 'radical' in terms of each concept's normative value, its historical use, its use outside of progressive politics and the impact this has on its value as a definition, and its use by theorists. Finally, a political economic typology of radical media is proposed. Four radical media types – critical radical media, community radical media, institutional radical

media and activist radical media – are formed, discussed and considered within their theoretical and material historical context. The typological analysis then organises these types as categories, to examine distinctions, scales and interactions between radical media types.

There are a number of important outcomes expected from the typology analysis. A greater understanding of the existing models of non-mainstream media should be derived. There should be a clearer understanding of the period of radical, alternative and non-mainstream media conceptualisation and the historical context of these theories within the digital age. 'Alternative' has been too broad a concept and the field has suffered from a lack of concise definition. The typology of radical media and the types – critical, community, activist and institutional – should move this forward greatly. In addition, the definition facilitates the next phase of analysis, the qualitative content analysis of radical media publications and platforms, establishing a framework from which to analyse the current field.

3.4.2 Content Analysis

Content analysis can be considered a general conceptual term (Neuendorf 2016) which refers to systemic analysis of content, word, textual, audio and verbal artefacts. Krippendorff (2004 p. 12) has additionally defined content analysis as 'a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use'. Content analysis more specifically refers to a research method in which texts are coded and categorised as part of qualitative research, to analyse the meaning of said texts or as a mixed-method design which allows for the conversion of text into statistical data and the comparison of texts and other sources of data (Neuendorf 2016).

Different theoretical perspectives have developed different broad conceptual understandings of content analysis, as well as specific content analysis methodologies. For example, social science and psychological content analysis focuses on narrow parameters of content categories, which can be converted into statistical variables and analysed through quantitative methodologies,

while content analysis in constructivist paradigms focuses on qualitative analysis of textual meaning(s). Content analysis contrasts (although there is a degree of crossover, epistemologically, theoretically and methodologically) with discourse and textual analysis, which aims for a close reading of texts in order to have qualitatively rich and deep analysis of the meaning of texts (Fairclough 1992).

Content analysis depends on inductive assumptions and constructs which frame the analysis (White & Marsh 2006). The analytical constructs may be derived from (1) existing theories or practices; (2) the experience or knowledge of experts; and (3) previous research (Krippendorff 2009, p. 173). Inference is especially important in content analysis. Importantly, for inference within content analysis two clear domains, the texts and the context, are considered independent. The researcher should draw conclusions from one independent domain, the texts, to the other, the context (White & Marsh 2006). Additionally, White & Marsh (2006) raise the central importance of considering the source and recipient of messages when carrying out content analysis: who is sending the message or text, who is receiving, and what is the context of their operation. Krippendorff (2004) critiques the distinction between qualitative and quantitative content analysis, arguing that all content analysis is qualitative to a degree because the initial analysis of texts and contexts is qualitative. What differences do exist are in terms of goals and end product of a content analysis. A qualitative content analysis will set out to analyse content with the goal of producing qualitative data, while a quantitative content analysis will set out to end with a numeric data set.

There are a number of ways that content analysis can be considered within the political economic framework and the multi-methods design. Political economic analysis, from Marx (1965) through to the culturally influenced analysis of Benjamin (2008) and Hall, in particular with his analysis of coding and decoding (1982a), through to the digital theories (Fuchs & Mosco 2012) and Fenton (2016b) in particular, have positioned content within media as materially contingent and ideologically and politically loaded. This means that content, texts and messages are embedded in processes of ideological power

construction and political, social and economic institutions which sustain and reproduce these structures. In the digital age there is increasing room for user-generated and prosumer content (Fuchs & Mosco 2012), but these are still fundamentally organised by and as a part of capitalist material and ideological reality (Fenton 2016b). A content analysis of 'About' sections, mission statements and principles statements of radical media is an analysis of how publications and platforms (collective media projects) represent their opposition to this capitalist mode of media production and ideological formation, and how they present the role of their specific publication within wider radical media.

This analysis is primarily a qualitative content analysis. Specifically considering the approaches outlined by Hsieh & Shannon (2005 p. 1), the content analysis uses two approaches: firstly, a summative qualitative content analysis which involves 'counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content, followed by the interpretation of the underlying context'. This is used to analyse the content produced by radical media publications and platforms, with this then compared to the typology; secondly, using the typology outcomes and summative content as a coding guideline, a directed approach is used in order to analyse the publications and platforms to specifically consider their types and to map the entire radical media publication and platform sample.

NVivo frequency analysis and relational analysis are used for the summative content analysis of the sample. Frequency analysis in NVivo assesses the number of times words and phrases occur in the text using a coding query. Two coding queries were used in this frequency analysis. The first searched the entire sample for code frequency; this ranked the most frequent words and phrases in the sample as a whole from highest to lowest. The second coding query grouped overlapping words to create a concept frame; for example, the words may have the same roots – such as journalism, journalistic or journalist – or may have similar meanings, such as 'work' and 'labour', so they were grouped into one code each. The frequency analysis also allows for an examination of the sentences in which a word or phrase was found, allowing for a limited contextualisation of the word or phrase.

To further contextualise the frequency analysis, a relational analysis takes place. Within NVivo, coding queries can be used to analyse how words relate to each other. This relational analysis allows for an understanding of interactions, crossovers, tensions and contradictions within radical media, and between radical media types. Using a third coding query, specific relationships between concepts were examined, for example where one word or phrase was repeatedly used alongside another. This gives a greater contextual basis for the analysis. The frequency and relational analysis is compared to the radical media types. This helped confirm the accuracy of the typology, and whether it stands up in a sample of publications between 2016 and 2019.

NVivo nodes are developed and scoring takes place of each publication at this point. NVivo nodes are organised as a conceptual hierarchy. For example, 'Radical' will be the first-tier node. Then 'Critical', 'Community', 'Institutional' and 'Activist' will be the second tier. Then there will be sub-nodes under each category. Each individual publication is analysed line by line and scored with a cumulative scoring system; each node found in each individual publication sample gives a score of 2. For example, the 'About' section for *Jacobin* is analysed. Two radical critical media concepts are highlighted in red. No other nodes are identified and the total tally is 2 'critical' (2CR), resulting in an (X,Y) result of (0,4) and a category 'critical'.

Publication	About Section
Jacobin	Jacobin is a leading voice of the American left (1) , offering socialist perspectives (2) on politics, economics, and culture. The print magazine is released quarterly and reaches over 15,000 subscribers, in addition to a web audience of 700,000 a month.

Figure 3.4.2.1 Example of one-type text scoring

A more complex scoring process occurs when a publication has multiple types of radical media present in its text. The analysis of publications with multiple types works on an X–Y scale. On the X axis, from right to left, is institutional radical media to activist radical media. On the Y axis, from top to bottom, is

critical radical media to community radical media. If a publication has multiple Critical concepts and multiple Activist concepts it would not be contradictory, but if a publication had a high Critical and high Community score (on the same Y-scale) they would cancel each other; similarly on the X-scale with Activist and Institutional. *Irish Broad Left* offers an example of a complex scoring. There are examples of all four types in the 'About' section: critical, activist, institutional and community. The publication comes out as mixed as a result ,with a score of (0,2).

Name	About
Irish Broad Left	Irish Broad Left was launched on February 1, 2019. It is a broad and open forum for news, discussion and debate among Irish left activists, grassroots campaigns, community groups and NGOs, academics, political representatives and other individuals.

Figure 3.4.2.2 Example of multiple-type text scoring

Fifty-nine publications are then categorised and graphed. This moves the analysis from the individual publications and platforms to establish an overall picture of the composition of radical media types as a whole.

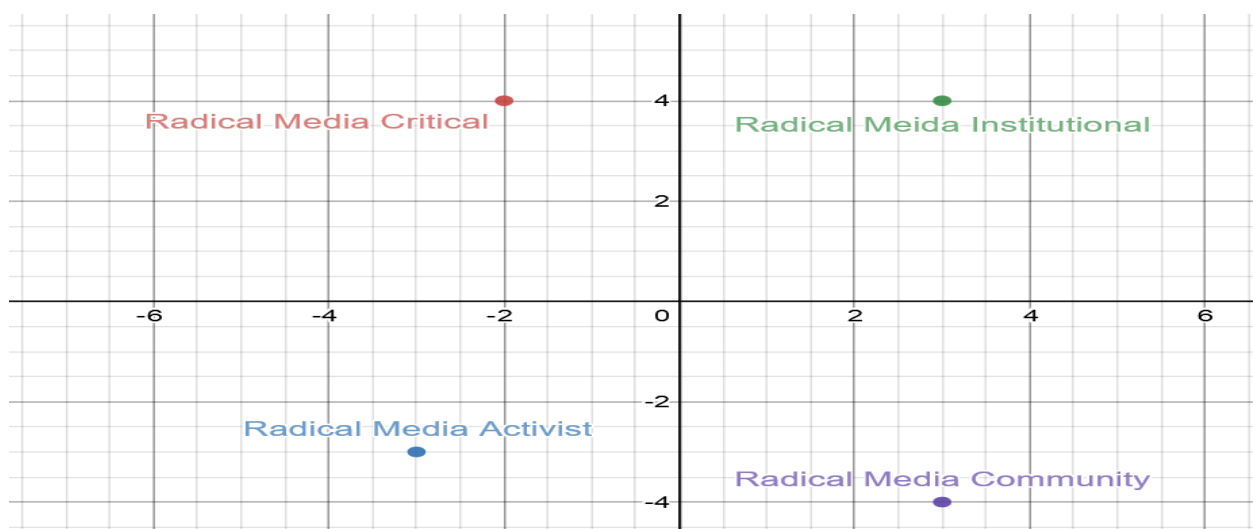


Figure 3.4.2.3 Graphic representation of radical media types

This graphing allows for all 59 radical media publications to be visually represented and analysed. The political composition of radical media is analysed in terms of how publications group politically, what tendencies there were politically among the publications, and what the dominant and minor political forces among the publications were. The geographic composition is then analysed, examining where each publication was based and whether there were dominant trends or relations where certain types of publications were located in certain places. Finally, the historical composition of radical media was analysed, considering how the make-up of radical media from 2016 to 2019 would compare to other periods of the digital era and the longer history of radical media.

A number of important outcomes are expected. The content of radical media publications and platforms between 2016 and 2019 should be comparable to the typology of radical media covering the period from 2000 to 2019. In addition to the analysis of types and distinctions, the qualitative content analysis would be expected to produce an understanding of the ways in which different publications adopt similar models and methods as radical media. There would be expected to be a degree of mixed types as a result. Finally, the content analysis of publications from 2016 to 2019 would be expected to demonstrate the specific dynamics of their period, which are distinct from those of the previous periods of the digital era; radical media as a whole should have shifted from the anti-globalisation and anti-austerity period. These changes are explored in the analysis of the publications' political, geographic and historical composition.

3.4.3 Thematic analysis

The final analysis is a thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews of radical media actors. Thematic analysis provides a means of exploring the ideas of radical media actors and the contexts in which they have developed their ideas and practices within radical media publications and platforms.

Thematic analysis has grown in popularity in the 1990s and 2000s as a rich analytic approach that places emphasis on depth of analysis and contextualised understanding. Thematic analysis has been associated with psychology, health

and social science disciplines in particular. It has more generally been linked with a range of theoretical and philosophical frameworks, such as phenomenology, post-structuralism and critical theory. Thematic analysis is additionally a technique used in multidisciplinary research, mixed- and multi-methods design, because it can both confirm and generate theory and data. Thematic analysis involves identifying patterns, concepts and ideas within data. Thematic analysis is multi-staged: themes are noted as data is collected – in this instance during semi-structured interviews – and in relation to the contextual data derived in the sampling process, during transcription, reading and re-reading, analysing and interpreting the data. The overarching research questions offer a first framework within which themes should be considered, then specific theory-driven points of analysis, and then the terms of the outcome of the analysis themselves. Braun and Clarke (2006), for example, maintain that a theme should capture something important about the data in relation to your research questions, and represent some level of patterned meaning or response within the dataset. In contrast to the content analysis, the relation to overarching research questions drives the formation of themes, not the frequency of specific concepts (Evans & Lewis 2018; Atkinson, Coffey & Delamont 2003; Joffe 2012).

The thematic analysis undertaken here has specific theoretical, methodological and sampling considerations based on its use as part of a political economic framework and multi-methods design. A thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with radical media actors is deductive, in that a political economic framework sets out a starting meta-theory on the general development of material, social, political and cultural forces. Within this, a political economic analysis creates assumptions and positions arguments on the conditions that radical media actors operate within and the relationship they have with, and as part of, radical media. Radical media actors are expected to be impacted by and bound by changes in the development of capital and the conditions of class that this imposes, and to operate through specific processes of production, content development and political relations.

In addition to this general framing, the specific research questions and semi-structured interview sampling, as part of a multi-methods design, frame how themes are developed and explored. The research questions ask how radical media are defined and conceptualised, how they function (specifically, the content, production and politics) and what shifts have occurred in radical media and why. These form the basis for semi-structured interviews on the basis that both closed answers to these question are needed and that openness and an exploration of new ideas, angles, concepts and considerations will emerge in the interviews (Schmidt 2004; Dearnley 2005; Galletta 2013; Newcomer, Hatry & Wholey 2015; Grindsted 2005; Woods 2011; Morse 2012). The priority then is to get at the particular conditions, tensions, relations and shifts of production of radical media, and the agency of radical media actors in making these shifts happen.

The first step was to transcribe the semi-structured interviews. Interviews are examined individually, exploring ideas, themes, discussions from each interviewee rather than as a collective whole. A particularly important part of this process involves identifying information that is relevant to the analysis and information that is not useful – conversation that sidetracked and moved into topics not connected to the research questions or interview questions. From here the interviews are collated based on subject. Broadly this follows the interview structure: background to the participant and publication; concepts of 'radical'; and content, production and political relations.

The next step is to connect themes to these subjects. Themes are drawn from the outcomes of the typology and content analyses, and informed by the background information on the interviewee's focus and the context: the general shifts in digital media, the conditions of work as a media journalist, worker or producer, the impact of recent events such as the financial crisis, austerity, new social movements, and the foundation and basis for the specific publication.

Concepts of 'radical' were thematically gauged in terms of 'radical' as a general concept and how the concept of 'radical' related to media and the specific publication they were involved in. Content focused on what was produced and

why, what was considered important and valued in content production and why. Production and political relations are thematically at the core of the analysis because they represent the internal and underlying processes and perspectives of the publication and media actor, which are hard to assess via theorists of radical media in the typology analysis, or via the public statements of publications and platforms assessed in the content analysis. Production themes focused on finance, labour, volunteering, journalism as a profession, technological changes, digital use and decision making; political relations focused on how the publication related to other entities – other publications, political parties, trade unions, campaigns groups, movements – as well as ideas. After this the themes are sharpened. What tensions existed, what ideas and themes initially emerging out of subject considerations speak to or have particular relevance to and give particular insight into radical media today and its changes in the 21st century? As such, concepts and content themes were positioned in terms of dialectics and political orientations.

3.5 Limits of the Methodology

There are a number of important limits to the methodology design, including the research framework, selection of data and the choice of analyses. The typology analysis is the primary analysis carried out, while the content and thematic analysis is secondary and exploratory. The typology analysis draws on abstracted and, to a degree, de-historicised models of non-mainstream and alternative media, meaning that the typology analysis is to a degree abstracted and de-historicised. Placing the source models in their historical context, offering supporting historical analysis of publications and platforms in the literature review, and examining publications and platforms and radical media actors does, to a degree, enrich and provide context for the typology analysis, but the application of the typology to specific countries and radical media contexts is qualified by these constraints.

Confining the selection of publications and platforms to three countries – Ireland, the UK and the USA – also brings with it particular limitations. It is argued that publications from these three countries are defined by common histories of radical political struggles, facilitated by a common language, which

creates an interrelatedness in radical publications and platforms, while local, national and regional particularities remain. When attempting to apply findings from this study to other contexts, these particular features of the countries selected and the particular histories and dynamics of publications and platforms in other contexts have to be considered. The analysis of publications and platforms can be extended to cover other countries with a common language system and British colonial history, such as Canada, New Zealand and Australia. It can be used as a basis of comparison for southern and northern European radical media which share some similarities as centres of global capitalism. Finally, comparisons to media and radical politics in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia, each of which contains a range of regional, national and local variety, would add further depth and would begin the process of developing a global analysis of radical media today, which moves beyond an Anglo-centric lens.

The selection of radical media publications, platforms and actors over a short time period, between 2016 and 2019, means that findings from the content and thematic analysis are, to a degree, specific to this historical moment. Particular shifts in capital, labour, social and economic conditions have occurred in this period in relation to the financial crisis and austerity. The period is also marked by social oppression and the formation of particular counter-forces, including Occupy, Black Lives Matter, water and housing campaigns, and social democratic reform efforts such as those of Bernie Sanders in the USA and Jeremy Corbyn in the UK. Secondary research situates radical media in this period within a wider history of radical media practice in a supporting manner, rather than as a comprehensive historical comparative analysis. Additional primary research, such as interviews with *Indymedia* participants, and publications from the New Left and civil rights eras in particular, would allow for a greater historical depth and possible comparative analysis.

The 'About' sections, mission statements and principles are specifically chosen as a sample which articulates the collective normative and 'official' positions of radical media publications and platforms. It was possible to collect this content from all individual publications and platforms and it therefore allowed for the

widest possible example of radical content which could be consistently gathered and used to test the typology categories. Naturally, there were limits to this gathering approach. Indeed, the public statements of publications and platforms may diverge from the day-to-day content of publications and platforms. For examples, publications may 'tone down' their mission statements because of funding constraints or publications may state that they are inclusive of all voices but mostly platform straight white men. On the other hand, publications may offer a more diverse range of perspectives, voices and opinions than the mission statement would indicate. The analysis of 'About' sections, mission statements and principles, while useful as wide example of content, capturing the publications' and platforms' collective positions to test the typology categories, would in turn benefit from the inclusion of, for example, editorials, articles and other examples of content produced, which could be compared to the mission statements and 'About' sections.

Additionally, there were limitations to the interviews collected. Interviews were obtained with Uetrict in *Jacobin* magazine, Burns of *In These Times*, Nelson in *Red Pepper*, Finnan in *Dublin Digital Radio*, and Flood in *Solidarity Times*. Obtaining interviews across all five radical media types categorised in the content analysis was the primary basis for the interview selection, with this used to provide more detail and context to the typology categories. Having publications and platforms from all three countries was also considered important. That said, the number of interviews collected was small. How applicable these findings are as such curtailed by this small selection. This impacts on what inferences can be made about radical media production and political dynamics, and on how far the conceptualisation of radicalism and its categorisation is supported by engagement with radical media actors. Expanding the number of radical media actors interviewed in each category and further expansion to include audiences, radical movement participants and freelance journalists would be an important basis for future research.

Finally, my personal investment in radical media and politics brings its own limitations. This research aimed to engage my subjectivity and research-embeddedness while retaining rigour and reflexivity in the development of the

theoretical framework, methodological design, data collection and analysis (Irvine, Roberts & Bradbury-Jones 2008; Jootun, McGhee & Marland 2009). That said, such embeddedness bring with it challenges and limits. Embeddedness means at times being too close to the subject. For me, becoming politicised in and through the experience of austerity and my involvement in community organising meant that I was biased towards community and rooted expressions of radicalism in particular, and less engaged with journalism as a field. Such a position and embeddedness can be built on rather than discounted by engaging with and collectively developing critical research on radical media, which engages multiple radical and critical strands of theory and practice. This could maintain the critical, rigorous but invested relationship to the subject, retaining the personal insights but contesting the blind spots and expanding the range of inquiries that can be developed.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

3.6.1 Emancipatory research methods and ethics

A transformative-emancipatory multi-methods design, as part of a political economic analysis which centres research for social justice and change, frames the ethical considerations of the study. General considerations should be made regarding gender, race, class, oppression, vulnerability and emancipatory research methods within the study of radical media. Firstly, consideration must be given to the dynamics of affected and oppressed-led radical media.

Interviews come with internal and external conflict considerations, both in terms of structural violence and violence in the scenarios of campaigning and while articulating and striving for substantial social change. The potentially traumatic content, but also the frustrations, tensions and processes of coping while trying to develop and sustain radical projects, heighten a more general responsibility of care throughout the qualitative research process. Within direct inquiry and research as such, a number of steps should be taken. These should include clear pre-engagement, outlining the potential challenge of subject material as well as addressing these during the process, and subjects should be checked in with afterwards to assess the impact of the research.

Confidentiality and anonymity are important for subjects, both because difficult

topics may place strain on relationships and because there is a potential that illegal activity may be discussed, particularly at the interface between radical media and social movements. Gender and racial discrimination and violence, both within and between organisations, and secondarily via the relationships between radical media and communities and social movements, means clear support and care dynamics must be considered as part of the ethics process (Strier 2006). It is also important, within the political economic tradition, in particular Marxist humanism, to consider producers and workers of radical media and those connected to publications as subjects with social and political agency who are organised and acting on the world. They have worked through, and offer a depth of knowledge on, the emancipatory process itself, as actors of and participants in emancipation, in their role as radical media producers.

Emancipatory research methods offer an important ethical mechanism, highlighting power imbalances within the research process as embedded in the construction of theory, research questions, design and research methods. To overcome power imbalances there is a need for a process of mutual exchange between research and subject; that is, a provision of resources in return for information. This shifts the process to a participatory research model rather than a position of research detachment (Lynch 1999).

3.6.2 Internet-based research ethics

Content analysis, although not directly engaging with participants, involves a number of important ethical considerations. These are generally defined in terms of the ethics of secondary research with internet-based research (IBR) (Convery & Cox 2012). The major IBR research considerations centre on consent and confidentiality of information. The level of consent and confidentiality is contingent on considerations of what is private and what is public information in the internet domain. The first major ethical consideration is consent and confidentiality in the use of data. Articles and media content which are publicly accessible imply access and use, and waive informed consent. Access rights for data use are generally considered waived also. Consent and confidentiality are considered important when internet content is considered private rather than public. Although social media are often judged

to blur this ethical consideration, particularly when taking into account comment trends, forums and discussion groups, as well as private messaging, this research is focused on publicly accessible and published written content for its content analysis – as such, public content.

Data storage and data access can have important ethical considerations: how will content analysis be stored and used, who will have access to such research? At a minimum, there is a need for secure storage and approved access to data sets and the implementation of data protection guidelines. Beyond minimalist approaches to ethics which focus on the prevention of misuse of data and information gathering, the use of and open access to such data may be a consideration of an active ethical approach. From a normative or emancipatory research method approach, the research should be used for common good and accessible for meaningful use and dissemination. Participants should be informed about research publications which emerge out of the work, with the accessibility of such research an important consideration (Convery & Cox 2012).

3.6.3 Semi-structured interview protocol

There are a number of issues that must be considered regarding the qualitative data analysis, specifically the sampling of semi-structured interview (SSI) (Galletta 2013). Firstly, in contacting subjects for qualitative research and organising meetings, either face-to-face or videoed, there is a need for full disclosure of the aims, objects and theoretical basis for such research, and of the use of the data which will be gathered in the research. Interviewees must be able to give informed consent to taking part. Therefore the length and types of question which will be asked must be outlined, and their capacity to opt out of questions and subjects must be clearly indicated; there must be clear communication of question subject areas and issues. Semi-structured interviews within a political economic framework set out to probe production dynamics, labour, power and social relations. This can reveal personal, social and political tensions within publications and between publications, as well as wider social and political tensions, and thus the use of this data is highly contingent on participants' wishes. An important pre-publication ethics

consideration for the case study research should focus on two components: the option to anonymise information for participants and the opportunity for participants to check the accuracy of quotes and the analysis derived from them. The option should be given of either editing or withdrawing interviews or components of interviews if necessary (Galletta 2013).

Chapter Four: Typology Analysis of Radical Media

4.1 Introduction

The emergence of mass popular radical social movements, such as the anti-globalisation movement and anti-war movements in the early 2000s, and the growth of radical digital publications such as *Indymedia* brought to an end the neo-liberal hegemony of the 1990s. This growth in radical movements and media was met by at least three theoretical shifts: the growth of social movement studies (Davis, McAdam, Scott & Zald 2005; Flack 2004; Hetland & Goodwin 2013), the return of political economic analysis (Fuchs & Mosco 2012), as well as specific case studies and analyses of the specific form and characteristics of radical and alternative media themselves (Downing 2000; Curran 2002; Jeppesen 2016). These changes have helped establish a set of critical frameworks for the analysis of counterpoints to corporate media.

Jeppesen (2016) argues that a major problem faced by theorists today is the lack of definitional clarity and the contradictory concepts and terms used in the analysis of media outside of the corporate and public sector. Particularly challenging are the hazy and often contradictory distinctions between concepts such as community, alternative, independent, radical and citizen media. Rather than burrow into a rabbit hole of definitional debates, often the field of alternative media studies has simply de-emphasised definitional and categorical considerations, positioning alternative media and its other interchangeable conceptualisations as a general catch-all for media outside of the mainstream and corporate sector. This is less than satisfactory. A lack of definitional and categorical clarity limits our capacity to analyse radical media in general as it remains unclear what the boundaries of our subject are. This additionally creates a challenge in understanding specific shifts in production and politics in the digital era and the relationship between radical media, capital, class and movements.

The definition of radical media in the introduction and the history of radical media theory in chapter one move us some of the way towards clarity. To define radical media in terms of change at the roots, progressive politics and emancipation positions radical media within a broad and diverse historical

practice. Theorists such as Marx (1972/1973), Marx and Engels (1965), Gramsci (1971; Anderson 2017) and Lukacs (1972) considered radical media in relation to the questions of working-class political power, in opposition, therefore, to capital as a material and ideological force. After World War II, the Frankfurt School (Adorno & Horkheimer 2007) along with Benjamin (2008), Hall (1980; 1982) and Bourdieu (1982a; 1982b) considered questions of radical media in terms of culture. Contemporary theorists, in particular, within a political economic framework, Castells (2007; 2011; 2012), Fuchs (2012; 2014), Fuchs and Mosco (2012; 2016), Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) and Fenton (2016a; 2016b) considered radical digital politics.

Radical media, even with this firmer starting definition and clearer historic lineage, still lacks a clear political economic definition that is considerate of its content, production and political relations and represents these in a sufficiently narrow conceptual manner. Typology analysis is a means of providing this clarity. Typology analysis focuses on cohering concepts and ideas of a subject into categorical models. As outlined in the methodology, a sample of models non-mainstream models has been compiled.

The models sampled include Downing's (2000) model of radical media, Atton's (2002) model of alternative radical media and Curran's (2002) model of countervailing media, along with Fuchs and Sandoval's (2015) model of alternative media, and Jeppesen's (2016) model of alternative media power. These models are firstly analysed for key features and what they propose are the characters of said media; they are politically economically analysed, to help us understand the general features of radical media and the characteristics of its content, production and political relations.

These political economically analysed models are then brought together as a typology of non-mainstream media models in the digital age. Commonalities and contradictions in how the models generally define media and how they particularly consider content, production and politics are explored. Additionally, historic differences between the early 2000s, the financial crisis and late 2010s theories are considered. After this, a second analysis takes place focusing on clarifying the difference between alternative and radical media. At this

juncture, a radical media typology is proposed building on the entirety of political economic analysis thus far but with particular weight given to the Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) consideration of anti-capitalist media in their model, Fenton's (2016b) concept of radical digital politics from chapter two and Jeppesen's categorical structure which provides the infrastructure for an effective typology. Four radical media types are outlined: radical critical, community, activist and institutional media. This offers a comprehensive analytic framework from which concepts of radical media can be positioned. Finally, a categorical and a scales typology are compared as distinct ways of analysing concepts of radical media.

4.2 An Analysis of Models of Non-mainstream Media

4.2.1 Downing (2000): Radical Alternative Media Model

Downing Model of Radical Alternative Media	Political Economic Interpretation of Downing's Model
<p>Broad culture definition of radical alternative media: (p. 3) 'radical alternative media constitutes the most active form of the active audience and expresses oppositional strands, overt and covert, within popular culture.'</p> <p>Leninist agitprop model of radical alternative media: short-term information tactic run by centralised and hierarchical party. Brings immediate problems to public notice (agitation) and has a longer-term strategy to create a radical-political world view.</p> <p>Self-management and anarchist model of radical alternative media: emancipatory vision of self-organisation, more likely to be small, democratically run, prefigurative.</p>	<p>Overall conceptualisation of radical media: Downing considers radical media as a subset of radical culture.</p> <p>Radical media content: Wide range of radical cultural content: plays, theatre, journalism, radio shows, analysis pieces.</p> <p>Production: Rejects Leninism, promotes self-managed, democratic and prefigurative model.</p> <p>Political relations: Social movements, a self-organising working class and anarchism.</p>

Figure 4.2.1 Downing Model of Radical Media

Downing (2000), in *Radical Media: Rebellious Communication and Social Movements*, made the first significant attempt to systematise a categorical model and definition of radical media in the digital era. In his analysis, radical media exists within a more broadly defined concept of radical culture. Radical culture is considered as the active audience within popular culture. Radical culture is also the oppositional force within popular culture, the counterweight

to commodified capitalist and consumerist culture. Downing (2000) draws on two theoretical strands here: cultural studies, in particular with the idea of popular and subcultural opposition, and social movement theory, in particular the distinction between moderates and radicals (Fitzgerald & Rodgers 2000). Downing sees culture as a unitary field in which radical media sits. Radical media is defined as a form of communication that facilitates politics that pushes the boundaries of acceptable and moderate culture and politics.

Considering radical media production, Downing argues that there are two distinct models of radical media: the Leninist agit-prop model and the self-management and prefigurative model. Leninist agit-prop is considered top-down, and Downing (2000) goes even further, considering it 'controlling', 'manipulative' and 'corrupting'. He equates it to Soviet oppression and the inherent totalitarianism of centrally organised projects. In contrast, the self-management and prefigurative model centres on democratic decision making and a horizontal structure, which is empowering in the here and now.

Additionally, this process of learning and doing forms the basis of a wider transformation in society. Radical media is part of the wider transformation in the way that it facilitates and exemplifies prefigurative practice, that being the organisation in the here and now of the most liberating, democratic and just practices which set the example of what a society as a whole should look like. This positions radical media within the wider radical transformation of society. Such self-managed and prefigurative models can create a wide range of radical content, manifesting in the broadest range of popular and subcultural forms, from theatre to print, radio to poetry. The capacity of radical media and culture to be expressive, experimenting and liberating is thus emphasised.

Additionally, radical media's political relations are centred on social movements and social movement politics, on the ebbs and flows of oppositional forces and efforts to build a more fair and equal world.

Downing's (2000) model of radical media is embedded in the historical and political context of the late 1990s and early 2000s, specifically within a Western post-Soviet world-view. Underlying Downing's (2000) analysis is a firm anti-communism. This means that Downing (2000), in an understandable

search for a media that is anti-totalitarian, problematically equates any and all leadership and centralised organising with Soviet state repression. This also means that Downing (2000) discounts communist theorists and periods in which communism dominated radical media – in particular the First and Second Internationals and the interwar years – despite this rich history of theory and practice. In addition, a constant effort is made to engage the type of positivism embedded within social movement theory, in which there are quantitatively moderate and radical forces. Radical is the most active and most oppositional of these forces, defining itself as a reaction in the first instance against a largely unnamed hegemonic force (Downing 2000, p. 1). In this model there is a lack of a distinct radical media which has definition and value in itself. In addition, Downing argues that (2000, p. 86) there are repressive radical media, which includes the Soviet but also the Islamic revolutionary forces in Iran, which overthrew the Shah, fascists and the far right. The far left and the far right are equated to a degree in their use of radical media for agitation, propaganda and their need for control (p. 93).

Downing (2000) therefore universalises aspects of a process such as prefiguration while decontextualising politics and power. This is a contradictory exercise. An abstracted consideration of repression and domination is not extended to an extreme centre (Ali 2018) or to examples of repressive practices in liberal democracy or the ways in which repression and internal suppression have occurred within prefigurative spaces. Centralised control is seen as a universal harm, deconstructed from its use by different organisations at different times and the political distinction between schools of political thought. Overall, a narrow framework for radical media is created; it is not communism, not moderate, and therefore focused on smaller, subcultural and anarchist currents of democratic and prefigurative media production, which are ethically and morally pure, but also marginal.

4.2.2 Atton's (2002) Alternative Radical Media Model

Atton's (2002) alternative radical media model	Political Economic Interpretation
<p>Alternative as a concept captures a broad oppositional media. It is counter-cultural, anti-capitalist, democratic and prefigurative. Radical as the goals and process of social change (far-reaching).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Content is politically radical, socially/culturally radical and has news value. 2. Content form: Experimental graphic, visual presentation, variety of presentation and binding and an aesthetic focus 3. Technology innovations/adaptations 4. Alternative sites for distribution, clandestine/invisible distribution networks, anti-copyright 5. Transformed social relations, clear roles and responsibilities – reader-writers, collective organization, de-professionalization of journalism, printing, publishing 6. Transformed communication processes – horizontal linkages and networks 	<p>Atton combines a political economic and cultural materialist analysis. Alternative and radical are intertwined within an oppositional and social transformational media.</p> <p>Radical content: Has political, social, cultural and news value, and has a variety of experimental forms</p> <p>Production: Technology distribution processes of production are considered by Atton (2002). Overall a focus on experimental, horizontal and democratic aspects of a radical alternative media production</p> <p>Political relations: Radical media related to social movements</p>

Figure 4.2.2: Atton's (2002) Alternative Radical Media Model

Atton (2002) alters Downing's (2000) analysis in a number of important ways. For Atton, radical media becomes a subfield of a wider alternative media. Alternative media is defined broadly by oppositional, counter-cultural, anti-capitalist, democratic and prefigurative media. The consideration of culture and anti-capitalism brings a firmer materialist analysis to this research. The democratic and prefigurative elements of alternative media establish specific

internal dynamics with particular attention being given to technology, content, form, social relations, communication processes and distribution.

Alternative content is multidimensional; it has value as social, cultural and political content. Alternative content also has news value; this refers to specific content which examines current affairs, events, and topics of public interest. In Atton's work (2002), radical production is considered in terms of labour and ownership. Additionally, the internal dynamics of alternative media distribution are considered in terms both of ownership and processes of democratic decision making. The political relations of radical media are likewise (Downing 2000) embedded in social movements.

Radical is a process within alternative media, of setting values, goals, strategies and tactics for broader social transformation. Radical moves away from being a subcomponent, or a specific smaller sample of publications and platforms, to being a dynamic within a large-scale alternative media politics. Atton's analysis draws on Marx (1965), Gramsci (1971) and Foucault (1984, p. 81) in its consideration of 'insurrections of subjugated knowledges' to present alternative media as both an oppositional force and the creator of alternative ways of being, doing and relating. Atton (2002) is offering a more coherent principled understanding of what alternative looks like, positioning it within a political historical context; progressive and left politics (which excludes the right) in contrast to the principle-less basis in which Downing (2000) emphasises radical as active and radical as not-moderate.

Atton's (2002) analysis of alternative media is far more theoretically coherent and comprehensive than Downing's (2000) analysis. While content and production are well articulated, the consideration of social movements is again general, despite these being, for Atton, the core political consideration and political context for radical and alternative media (2002). What then constitutes the social movements that Atton (2002) speaks of? Are there specific dynamics of alternative media within or in relation to social movements? Are there different types of movements, and different types of alternative media? Have there been changes to alternative media in the past 30 years and do they relate to changes in movements? These are all unclear in

Atton's (2002) work, in which social movements are a general body of motion and a force of change without any consideration of the specific dynamics and relations within social movements and between alternative media and social movements.

4.2.3 Curran's (2002) Countervailing Media Power Model

Countervailing Influences	Political Economic Interpretation
<p>1 Cultural power: Non-elite groups can develop alternative understandings of society, transmit collective allegiances and radical commitments from one generation to the next, through personal interaction, social rituals and the institutions under their control or influence.</p> <p>2 State empowerment: The democratic state is the principal means by which people can change society.</p> <p>3 Media regulation: Through the state, the public can influence who controls the media, how it is run and for what purpose.</p> <p>4 Source power: A further way in which non-elite groups can influence the media is by establishing organizations which are used as sources of news and comment by the media</p> <p>5 Consumer power: People can influence the media by their allocation of time and money.</p> <p>6 Producer power: Subordinate groups can gain a media voice through owning their own media enterprises.</p> <p>7 Staff power: <i>The peripheral public can also be represented by media staff whose professional self-esteem rests on the claim that they serve society.</i></p>	<p>Countervailing media power consists of non-elite cultural radicalism, the use of the state to develop progressive media plurality, alternative sources and consumer, producer and staff power.</p> <p>Content: Limited analysis of radical content – cultural production is grounded in alternative values as well as working- class politics and identity.</p> <p>Production: Direct ownership of production by the working class, sources, consumers and staff are all important. State regulation and empowerment of alternatives by the state.</p> <p><i>Politics: Working-class, radical cultural politics and the necessity of political support from a social democratic state</i></p>

Figure 4.2.3 Curran's (2002) countervailing media power model

Curran (2002) offers an analysis of media counter-power media as that which is in opposition to and building independently from the powers of dominant,

capitalist and corporate media. Curran's (2002) predominant focus is on a historic analysis of the development of the press in English, considering the interplay between the liberal press, the state and radical media in the 19th and 20th centuries. His model of countervailing media power builds on this historic analysis, re-centring it for a consideration of media in the 21st century. The analysis focuses on ways in which the working class and labour can break the power of the dominant capitalist and corporate media and become the hegemonic media form.

Countervailing power is the term used by Curran (2002) to describe media which is a concrete mass opposition and counterweight to the dominant capitalist media. Countervailing power takes a number of forms; cultural power refers to the general ideological and cultural counter-institutions constructed in opposition to dominant power. These are built within popular cultures and subcultures as an oppositional force and transmitted over time and intergenerationally among the working class and marginalised. This broad cultural power is supported by a number of processes within counter media production.

Countervailing media power ownership consists of the working-class control of media production, the collectivisation of media labour, producer power of publications and platforms and journalist and worker staff power as having specific agency operating within publications and platforms. In addition, countervailing media power is dependent on control of media source and consumer power – the power of consumers to withdraw from mainstream and capitalist media and consume the countervailing alternative instead. Curran (2002) identifies democratic organisation of the state, electoral politics and media regulation as key additional factors in building countervailing media power. These offer a degree of protection to countervailing media, limiting the power of capitalist media and helping countervailing media to be built up.

Curran (2002) moves the centre of analysis away from Downing's (2000) focus on prefigurative process and Atton's (2002) examination of alternative media, to a consideration of media power. This model centres the material organisation of media, the ownership of production, distribution, and media

sources, and considerations of labour power in terms of, staff, and consumers. This ownership and labour power is interlinked to ideological cultural power creating a substantive model of media in opposition to the capitalist press and media. Curran (2002) is closer to Atton (2002) than Downing (2000), as media is considered not a marginal or counter-cultural phenomenon but a mass counterweight to bourgeois press and politics. Curran backs this up by examining processes of radical media formation in the 1800s and the limits and challenges to mass corporate media in the 20th century. Curran (2002) also goes further than Atton (2002), arguing that countervailing media can supplant the existing liberal and conservative press and the capitalist model which sustains it to become the dominant media force.

Curran (2002) offers a particularly unique contribution to the analysis of the media, in that he considers the state and its relationship to radical and alternative media. Downing (2000) rejects state approaches, a response which can be associated with his anti-communism, while Atton (2002) simply lacks a considered analysis of the state. For Curran (2002), the actual existing state is a contested site of power, between capital and the people, between conservatism, liberalism and progressive politics. In an ideal scenario the state would operate as a progressive and positive force, facilitating the development of progressive media. There is, to a degree, a lack of clarity in Curran's argument as to whether progressive state support for countervailing media is an ideal or a concrete necessity in the face of capitalist media opposition, media barons and anti-left political power. It is possible that Curran (2002) does not feel that movements or reorganisations of media from outside the state are sufficient in the face of opposition and therefore the state is needed as a support.

The history of radical media practice, no less in British radical media history, gives cause for caution here. There is a long history of the state acting in a regressive and repressive manner against radical media publications. This is an important concrete consideration in Britain where the radical media in the 1840s was repressed and then taxed as a means of curtailing its activity. In the 1920s radical publications were closed and printing presses ceased. This

pattern is also reflected in the history of radical publishing in Ireland and the USA.

Most likely, Curran (2002) is considering a countervailing media in England in terms of the election of a progressive government, which regulates and constrains capital in an effort to create a media plurality. This would even up the power imbalance within the media and create the conditions for an expansion of radical media. This would be, in Britain, under a progressive Labour Party, with trade union, worker and wider working-class support. This is an important consideration today, where the British Labour Party was led by socialist Jeremy Corbyn, and the wide field of countervailing media in Britain could potentially be interacting not with a hostile Tory government but a progressive Labour one. A second word of caution arises here. The history of the British Labour Party's relationship to the media while in government and how it has supported or hindered a countervailing media remains at best a conflicted one. The interwar period in particular saw the Labour Party help in the suppression of communist radical publications –both through legislation while in government and bureaucratic manoeuvres in trade unions (Harrison 1974).

4.2.4 Fuchs and Sandoval' s (2015) Alternative Media System

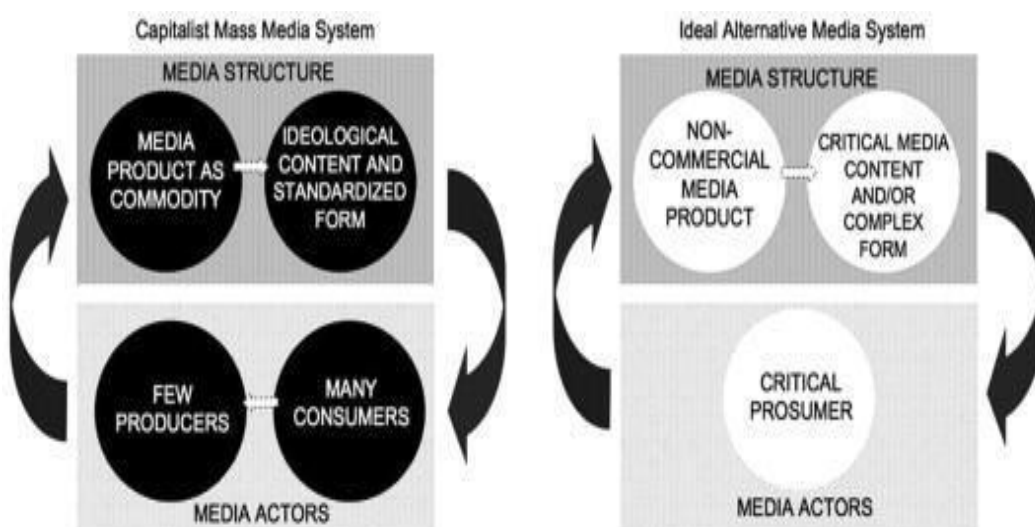


Figure 4.2.4 Fuchs & Sandoval' s (2015) Alternative Media System

Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) outline a Marxist model of alternative media, contrasting it with capitalist mass media systems. Capitalist mass media systems turn media into a commodity product that has exchange value. It produces content which is ideological, supporting the bourgeoisie, in a standard set of styles and forms which are justified as objective representations of news and reality more generally. Capitalist media sees concentrated media ownership, with a small number of producers and a large audience or market of consumers.

Alternative media by contrast is ideally based in working-class and opposition power. A non-commercial media product is produced, with the logic being the expansion of knowledge rather than exchange value and profit. Alternative media is owned by the working class with the labour of alternative media benefiting the labour class without profit motive. The content produced is primarily focused on critiquing capitalism and structures of oppression as a whole, while also producing novel and complex alternative content, which expands the understanding and knowledge of the class. Producer and consumer fuse in this ideal alternative media model. The working class own the media collectively and many producers interact with consumers in a feedback loop, developing the media project together.

Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) offer a number of critiques of the 'participatory' media model, the term they coin for versions of and concepts of alternative and radical media which focus on small-scale, decentralised and prefigurative production. They make three key arguments: that participatory media fragments the public sphere, that small-scale production limits and wastes vital resources, and that a process of self isolation and exclusion occurs with alternative media placing a purity test on itself that slides towards subcultural exclusivity (Fuchs & Sandoval 2015, p. 3). In addition (Fuchs & Sandoval 2015), they argue that the idea that only prefigurative participatory media can be alternative excludes a range of professionally or editorially organised publications, such as *New Left Review* and *Monthly Review*, which provide valuable radical analysis and content which critiques capitalism. Finally,

participatory radical media is not necessarily emancipatory, since horizontal processes can be co-opted by capitalist and repressive media formations.

The analysis here is that process does not define emancipation; the ideology, goals, position and organisation do. The demand for public healthcare is emancipatory; it is also defined by directionality and validation and cannot simultaneously be a demand for private healthcare. Instead, if process alone is the mark of a radical or alternative position, then the absurd position that budget cuts could be radical if they were decided on through a horizontal participatory model of decision making, and horizontal production, distribution and communication flow can therefore be considered. In the field of media and communication studies, then, fascist hate speech publications could be alternative if they operated a horizontal decision-making model.

Fuchs and Sandoval's (2015) alternative media model is similar in ways to Atton's (2002) and Curran's (2002), in that they emphasise the broad use of the concept 'alternative' and they focus on large-scale production as a counterweight to and contender with the mainstream and capitalist press. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) shift how labour is understood compared to Atton (2002) and Curran (2002). Atton (2002) relies on decision-making processes as a defining dynamic of labour, while Curran (2002) places emphasis on the legacy media organisation structures dividing labour power into staff, producer, source and consumer. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) identify the digital era as shifting this, seeing the potential for producer and consumer integration, an idea already being commodified and extracted by social media corporations, but potentially emancipatory within an anti-capitalist struggle. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) offer less consideration of how this new anti-capitalist alternative media is built, and what conditions in the present offer opportunity for transformation – considerations that would add further depth to the model.

4.2.5 Jeppesen's (2016) Alternative Media Power Model

Name of Theory	Key Text	Content	Process	Social Movement
DIY/Subculture Media	Birmingham School; Dick Hebdige's <i>Subculture: The Meaning of Style</i> (2012)	Self-representation , counter culture & subculture content	Individual or small scale Loose structure Do it yourself ethos	Public-sphere, alternative spaces, music, art
Community Media	Community for Social Change/3rd World Marxism/Community Organising Kidd, Rodriguez and Stein: <i>Citizens Media</i> 2001	Voices of those affected, self-representation	Participatory media, community involved, co-ops, skills share	Self organisation of community, member based organisations
Critical Media	Frankfurt School: Critical Theory, Marxism Fuchs: <i>Critical Media & Information Society</i> 2011	Anti-capitalism –counter hegemonic, intellectual intervention	Prefer large-scale and reach, professionalised or high intensity volunteer, vertical or horizontal	Organic intellectual, party steering, anti-capitalist movements
Autonomous/Radical Media	Anarchist & Autonomous Theory, Social Movement Theory Downing: <i>Radical Media</i> 2001	Self movement representation , anti-oppression position/analysis	Horizontal, prefigurative, skill share and high skill, small to large scale	Social movements , inter-relations of movement, independent autonomous spaces

Figure 4.2.5 Jeppesen's (2016) Alternative Media Power Model

Jeppesen (2016) develops a quasi-typological analysis of alternative and radical media. This analysis is grounded in considerations of the theoretical influences on alternative media and the histories of alternative media practice. Jeppesen (2016) offers a comprehensive review of radical and alternative

media literature. In addition, she offers new case study material focused particularly on practices and processes of alternative media production and the relationship between practices of alternative media(s) and social movements.

Jeppesen (2016) rejects the inclusion of right-wing, nationalist and fascist media in some definitions of radical media, defining alternative media in the positive sense in terms of social justice and freedom, which is in opposition to hate media. Jeppesen (2016) also defines and develops a more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between alternative and radical media, addressing radical media as a subfield of alternative media, specifically the vertically organised, prefigurative anarchist-influenced media often embedded within social movement politics.

Jeppesen (2016) proposes three dimensions of alternative media: alternative content, alternative practice and a relationship to social movements.

Alternative content is what is produced: the words, stories, articles, pieces and other content of alternative media. Alternative practice focuses on the internal dynamics of radical media publications and platforms: how they make decisions, organise their production, distribute power and relate socially. A relationship to social movements positions alternative media within social movement as political forces of transformation and change. These three dimensions are directly comparable to the political economic dimensions of content, production and political relations. The use of practice and social movement instead of production and political relations most likely reflects a difference in theoretical framework compared to this thesis, with Jeppesen (2016) using an anarchist and intersectional feminist model compared to a Marxist humanist political economy in this thesis.

Jeppesen (2016) outlines four types of alternative media from here:

DIY/subculture media, community media, critical media and radical/autonomous media. Jeppesen (2016) argues that DIY and subculture alternative media are theoretically influenced by the Birmingham school of

culture theory. Hebdige's (2012) *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* is identified as the key text. DIY and subculture alternative media expresses a trend within alternative media which focuses on individual self-expression and micro-scale projects. Additionally counter-cultural self-representation has distinct features, between the social and personal of DIY media and alternative media focused on action, strikes, political party organising and cultural agitation. The Birmingham school offered a theorising of subcultures specifically as a form of counter-hegemony and a cultural material resistance by the precarious, young people and the working class. This resistance didn't need to be explicitly formed as collective political projects; instead the personal and social lives of the subaltern could be considered an alternative basis of power and media.

The second major trend Jeppesen (2016) outlines is community media. Community media has its roots in Latin American and global south Marxism and socialism, in particular the works of Freire (1971) and Fanon (2007) and the assertion of citizen journalism by Kidd, Rodriguez and Stein (2002). The content of community media focuses on the collective representation and articulation of the voices of those oppressed. Media is considered an educational tool, which contributes to the empowerment and organising practices of the oppressed. In comparison to subculture media, there is no division between culture and politics within community media, where both are integrated into the material and linguistic expression of the community, class and oppressed.

The third and fourth types of alternative media that Jeppesen (2016) outlines are critical alternative media and radical & autonomous media. Jeppesen connects critical alternative media to the Frankfurt school (Benjamin, 2008) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2012) in terms of modern alternative media analysis. Jeppesen connects radical autonomous alternative media (2016) to Atton (2002) and Downing (2000) theoretically, to the anti-globalisation movement

politically and to a longer tradition of anarchist theory and practice. According to Jeppesen (2016), there are sharp divisions between the primacy of content as ideological and counter-hegemonic intervention in critical alternative media and the primacy of transformative practice in radical & autonomous alternative media. Jeppesen (2016) also links critical alternative media to hierarchical, large-scale production and radical and autonomous alternative media to horizontalism within social movements.

Jeppesen's (2016) framework is important in a number of ways. It moves from an analysis of alternative and radical media to a meta-typology or meta-categorisation of *theories* of alternative media. Jeppesen (2016) is trying to clarify how alternative media has been defined and conceptualised, as a starting point for further analysis of alternative media publications. Jeppesen (2016) contextualises alternative media theoretically, identifies content and processes of production and identifies the political context of social movements. Jeppesen (2016) is also trying to bridge divisions within the field, considering the different models as tendencies rather than points of theoretical exclusion. Jeppesen (2016) identifies a new model of community and citizen media, bringing important globalised analysis with the introduction of the Latin American communication studies field. Jeppesen (2016) also allows for the subcultural media forms, DIY and punk and radical political forms to be distinguished.

4.3 A Typology analysis of non-mainstream media models

4.3.1 Comparing Models

	Commonalities	Contradictions
Overall Definition	Alternative and radical media is oppositional, independent, socially Transformative, anti-Capitalist	It is disputed if the state is involved, if agit-prop, communist, critical theory can be included and if radical is a subset or subculture within alternative culture more generally
Content	Culture content Working class and oppressed Voices	Is it media if the content is political, social, or has news value? Is critique alone radical content?
Production	Not commercial, not corporate	Divisions over centring prefiguration and participation, defined by process of decision making or ownership and if Leninist and party models can be included
Politics	Social movements	Divisions over class versus oppression, the role of the state, parties and cultural spaces.

Figure 4.3.1 Typology of Non-mainstream Media Models

The five models of non-mainstream media considered above offer a rich array of definitions, characteristics and considerations of media outside the mainstream. In order to develop a clear definition of radical media, it is important to consider the contradictions and commonalities of existing models of opposition media, both in how they generally define media outside the mainstream and how they consider, from a political economic perspective, content, production and politics. This consideration of commonalities and contradictions gives a great picture of conceptual models as a whole, a picture of the entire intellectual production of the digital era which has been made to cohere into models and frameworks.

The conceptual models of Downing (2000), Atton (2002), Curran (2002), Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) and Jeppesen (2016) offer important points of commonality in their definitions of alternative, radical and anti-capitalist media, although they place emphasis on different aspects of these definitions. Generally, alternative and radical media is theorised as oppositional, independent, anti-capitalist or at least anti-corporate and socially transformative. There is a degree of evidence for these commonalities in the history of radical media theorising and radical media practice. A dual definition of radical media as oppositional and alternative, opposing corporate media and positioning a vision of social transformation, has been evident from the *Northern Star* to the *Appeal to Reason*, from *Black Panther* to *Indymedia*. This also wrestles with the core concern of radical media theory, that of creating an opposition to capitalist material, political, cultural and digital power and the formation of the basis for a transformative alternative politics.

Independent ownership is a key point raised by Fuchs and Mosco (2012); theoretically, it is also repeated by Downing (2000), Atton (2002) and Curran (2002) as a key marker of what their versions of alternative, radical and countervailing media look like. Independent ownership as a concept is defined by being a negation rather than a positive affirmation of how ownership can and should work. A media that is independent is independent of a negative force, namely corporate or capitalist media, rather than a clear state of who owns and how ownership works in non-mainstream media. It is less clear what a positive normative conceptualisation of ownership is from these models. Who owns an independent media source/body? Is it enough to be independent of corporate or capitalist media, or should there be a clear community of interest who own the media? Fuchs and Mosco (2015) and Curran (2002) are clearest on this, suggesting that independent means that the working-class should own the media, using it for a politically progressive purpose, whereas Downing (2001) is the least clear, positioning independence as part of a process of opposition.

The idea of independent ownership sits uncomfortably with the contradictions of the post-*Indymedia* era, where much activist and social movement media

content occurs on corporate digital platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. These are sites of radical content which are independent in terms of the types of content produced by the user being independent or not directed by a corporate entity, but are not independent in terms of ownership. Curran (2002) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) seem clearest in their theoretical opposition to corporate ownership, while the models of Downing (2000), Atton (2002) and Jeppesen (2016) de-emphasise the issue of ownership in favour of process.

There are important points of contradiction in how media is defined within different concepts and typologies of radical and alternative media. The state's involvement is rejected by Downing (2000) and Atton (2002), while being promoted by Curran (2002) and left unanalysed by Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) and Jeppesen (2016). In addition, the model of Leninist agitation propaganda is rejected firmly by Downing (2000) and Atton (2002), with their models only accounting for prefigurative and horizontal models of media organisation. This exclusion remains problematic: it is unclear what is being excluded specifically. Agitation propaganda has a long history as a model of radical media content and production; it was used by anarchist publications in the 1880s such as *Mother Earth*, during the interwar period by communists and in the 1960s and 1970s as part of a new era of diverse radical identities and publications. What is most likely, if we look at Downing specifically (2001), a rejection of Leninist agit-prop (a radical media methods) is a disowning of communism and revolutionary vanguards (a political-historical process) and an interlinking of these within Soviet violence. It is also possible that this rejection of Leninist agit-prop, in the particular context where Downing (2000) and Atton (2002) were writing, was rejection of the small Trotskyist and communist organisations who organise via a central committee and produce papers sold at protests and demonstrations. Curran (2002) largely sidesteps this entrenched division. Fuchs and Sandoval characterise this as debate of types and contradictions of micro-politics when it is more important to focus on the idea of a mass transformative alternative media (2015). They dismiss totally the prefigurative model, while Jeppesen (2016) tries to bridge the division by considering different tendencies of alternative media within an overarching

categorical framework, giving support for a range of approaches without teasing out the contradictions.

There are important commonalities and contradictions evident when characteristics of the models – in particular, content, production and politics – are analysed from a political economic perspective. All models in some sense argue that radical and alternative media produces alternative cultural content and content pertaining to working-class and oppressed voices. In that sense, aspects of the early radical media theorists such as Marx (1965) and the culture studies era, in particular the work of Hall (1982), are echoed in the analysis of the digital media theorists. This content is produced in non-corporate media entities and the politics is interconnected to social movements. Beyond this, there are more contradictions than commonalities. Atton (2002) raises social, political and news value as an aspect of content, while Downing's (2000) prefigurative model narrows this to content which is self-representative and the voices of those affected. Jeppesen (2016) attempts to more readily bridge these differences of production and content, considering four categories of alternative media: critical, radical, community and DIY. These categories have their own dynamics of content and production, allowing the range of types to co-exist. Despite this, Jeppesen (2016) considers production more narrowly than Curran (2002), who considers staff power and distribution, and Fuchs and Sandoval (2015), who prioritise production and who create a new concept, 'prosumer', merging producer and consumer. Jeppesen (2016) focuses on process and decision-making instead of modes of production and labour power.

All models are concerned with the political relationships of non-mainstream media in terms of their relationship to social movements. It is unclear what social movements are within the various models. A number of questions therefore emerge: what are the boundaries of social movements, when is a movement a movement and not a campaign, and who is the subject of change within a movement? Finally, are trade unions and political parties part of social movements? The social movement seems to be used as a general signifier for a body of people, particularly a large group taking action for social change.

Non-mainstream media should generally be interrelated to social movements, embedded in and driven by them. In addition, Curran (2002) produces the only model which accounts for the state and considers whether social movements and non-mainstream media have a relationship to the state. Finally, all models refer to culture and cultural spaces, but it is unclear if media are cultural spaces or if they are separate; if they are separate it is unclear how they interact.

4.3.2 Historic and Political Context

The conceptual models of Downing (2000), Atton (2002), Curran (2002), Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) and Jeppesen (2016) can also be analysed in terms of their specific historic contexts within the digital media era and in terms of the political orientation of these models. Downing (2000), Atton (2002) and Curran (2002) developed models in the early years of radical digital media theorising and production. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) write at the end of, and reflecting on, a period of global financial crisis and austerity, and during a period of expanded digital media corporation power. Jeppesen (2016) writes in the context and with consideration of new social movements and political polarisation. Are there differences between these models that can be explained by the context in which they write?

In the early 2000s, *Indymedia* emerged as a mass radical digital platform, with hundreds of writers and millions of readers in the United Kingdom, Ireland and the United States of America. Newspaper and television corporate media dominant in the 1990s (Mackay & O'Sullivan 1999; Curran 2002) were suddenly under threat. An alternative production model, based on the web, was able to not only circumvent the mainstream media corporations, but critique the neo-liberal and military-industrial consensus which such corporations were perceived to foment, undermining the idea of journalist objectivity and media neutrality in its reporting and analysis of current events.

In 1999 the Battle of Seattle raged and the World Trade Organisation was forced to shut down its talks. Within this context there was a growing awareness of globalisation, corporate power and neo-liberalism as negative and destructive forces in society, and with this the potential for new modes of challenge, including alternative media.

This common context is not reflected in common theoretical frameworks. Downing's (2000) work most closely aligns with this context. Downing (2000) wrote at a point in time where there was an emphasis on horizontal decision making, volunteer production and prefiguration, the interplay between transformation in the projects of the moment and this setting an example for the transformative future. Despite this, Downing (2000) does not use studies of the early 2000s, or of *Indymedia*, to account for the model of radical media proposed. Instead, Downing (2000) looks to models and examples from the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, identifying (underground) media facing opposition and repression as laboratories of experimentation and hope.

Atton (2002), to a degree, engages with and responds to the digital era, identifying opportunities in radical and alternative production and distribution. Atton (2002) also fits with the zeitgeist of the time, considering a distribution of labour, content production and distribution across digital parameters. Atton (2002) builds in a consideration of radical and alternative media as experimental and dynamic, which means that new technologies would be adopted rapidly by such sites of production. Curran (2002) explores 1800s radical media history in Britain, and positions the state as a key force in media transformation, and traditional concepts of labour power and distribution and consumption as core tenets, moving against the prefigurative modelling and techno-utopianism of the time.

Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) theorise in response to their own historical context. The 2008 financial crisis placed capitalism, class and austerity on the agenda, and opened up the field of communication to critical structural analysis and alternatives to the system as a whole. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) focused directly on capitalism and the shifts in digital capitalist communication at a moment of a systemic crisis of capitalism unseen since the 1930s. Their model of alternative media is counter-posed with and created out of the contrasting of capitalist media with an ideal non-capitalist media. They also offer a strong critique of the previous wave of digital theorising, movements and radical digital media. They reject prefiguration and argue for mass alternative media, connected to mass working-class power. They also firmly identify the growing power of social media corporations as a new digital class struggle, in which ownership of the means of digital production is a central concern.

Jeppesen (2016) writes after the financial crisis, the flurry of anti-austerity movements and occupations and in the context of new social movements and practices. Jeppesen (2016) writes with a long historic view, attempting to theoretically ground models of alternative media, considering their content and practice as well as their relationship to social movements. There is an attempt overall to learn from the range of theorists of the past and theorise alternative media more concretely. The 2016 context makes Jeppesen (2016) more considerate of the use of 'alternative' by the right, thus defining alternative media as progressive politically, in counter to the right – an important distinction born of a period of political polarisation and rising fascist and alt-right media.

All of the theorists outlined, who develop models, categories and types of non-mainstream media, write to a degree within their political and social context. When considered in terms of the digital media theorists outlined in chapter one, which include Castells (2007; 2011) and Fenton (2016), a more complex

pattern emerges. It can be argued that three dynamics interact and help contextualise the theorists and their models. Distinct phases of digital media production and alternative movements and media – the anti-globalisation and prefigurative (2000–2005), the financial crisis, anti-austerity and shift in digital ownership (2008–2015) and the new social movements and political polarisation (2015–2019) – are interjected by the philosophical, normative and political assumptions of each theorist.

Downing (2000), Atton (2002) and Jeppesen (2016) considered together give more weight to prefiguration and social movements, as they are influenced by anarchist, intersectional and post-modern theorists. Jeppesen (2016) shifts moves away from the early theorists in giving more weight to models outside of the prefigurative, accounting for the other approaches, in particular critical and community. In acknowledging these approaches within alternative media, Jeppesen (2016) is responding to changes in theory over the 2000s.

Community media and critical media were theorised by Kidd, Kidd, Rodriguez and Stein (2009) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2009; 2012), and even though Jeppesen (2016) is critical of these models, her aim is to build a broad model and she therefore includes them.

Curran (2002) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2015), by contrast, are influenced more by Marxist thought. Curran (2002) appears as a theorist in an older normative tradition of British radical thought, from historians such as Ralph Miliband, whose focus was on the relationship between the state and socialism. Curran's (2002) *Media and Power* is more of a historic analysis, with lessons from history applied to the hypothetical model of alternative media power in the 21st century. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) both engage classic theorists, particularly in the field of classical critical theory and Marxism, while taking this Marxism strongly into a digital context. Digital labour, power and the structures of capitalism are reconsidered and classic mass worker media alternatives are

considered in terms of digital production. These can be considered theoretical developments but also, when viewed in terms of the journal *Communication, Capitalism, Critique*, are political interventions aimed at steering critical communication studies and the analysis of capitalist and anti-capitalist media in a modern Marxist direction.

4.4 Alternative and Radical: Media Concepts in Contrast

The collection of models examined refer to a wide range of terms for non-mainstream media. Radical, alternative, independent, countervailing, community, DIY, dissenting and anti-capitalist are just some of the terms used. Of the terms, alternative and radical are particularly distinctive overarching concepts which remain unclearly defined. Downing uses radical in a broad cultural sense, while Atton (2002) considers radical more narrowly and focuses on the wider expressions of oppositional media under the category of alternative media. Curran (2002) considers a historic radical media subject, the Chartist press, but addresses modern media in terms of countervailing power.

While early digital theorists more readily deployed radical as a concept to refer to media outside the mainstream, the corporate and liberal bourgeois press, later theorists seemed to de-centre it. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) choose the term alternative media instead of radical media, considering it more generally used and understood and therefore more useful for their modelling of an ideal anti-capitalist media. Jeppesen (2016) places radical within a subset, as autonomous and radical, narrowing its definition to focus on a smaller specific type of anarchist and autonomous media, within a broad alternative media which includes critical, DIY and community forms. Is alternative a better concept to use than radical, or should radical be considered as a minor force within a broader alternative media field?

There are a number of reasons why radical can be considered a better framework from which to analyse the media outside of the mainstream, corporate, and political right. Firstly, radical offers a clear normative state and positive assertion of what media is and what its values are, while alternative

does not. Radical, as defined in this thesis, refers to radical change at the roots (Davis 1990; 2011; Williams 2013; McGuigan 2014), radical as politically progressive (Fenton 2016b) and radical in terms of the concept of emancipation. This sets out a goal of radical media, to contribute to the transformation of society focused at the roots of society. A broad range of strategies and tactics need to be deployed for this to be achieved, and a range of perspectives encompass this, from reforms to militant revolutionary tactics. In addition, radical media is part of left politics and an attempt to understand what a transformed society looks like: a society emancipated, liberated from harm, bondage and restraints, and liberated in the fullest sense, implying economic, social and political freedom.

Alternative, by contrast, defines itself as different from the dominant capitalist and media material and ideological practice. Difference can be at best a statement of media plurality against the historic development of oligarchic ownership and practice, in favour of all voices being heard. It can at worst be a statement of the horseshoe, with alternative being that which is outside the mainstream, from far-right hate speech to radical left politics. Neither plurality nor horseshoe offer a clear, positive normative value for an understanding of media, in which media has a stated ideological and moral position on what it analyses and how it interlinks with politics.

From a political economic perspective, radical can also be clearly historically grounded and a long history of its development traced, while the historical use of alternative is more limited. Radical movements, radical media and radicals have a history dating back to the late medieval peasant, cooperative and political movements, through to early working-class and emancipatory revolutionary traditions, through socialism and anarchism, and into the new left and 21st century socialism. Alternative, by contrast, is squarely dated within a counter-cultural pattern of consumption, and subcultural politics, developing particular resonance within the late 1990s and early 2000s. Indeed, it emerged out of alt-rock, an initially anti-corporate rock counter-culture, punk and then a more general alternative cultural aesthetic in the 1990s (Hesmondhalgh & Meier 2014). Considering the two terms, radical and

alternative, from a historic material analysis, the majority and minority position of Jeppesen (2016) should be reversed. Radical is the concept with a long history of use, referring to a range of dynamics, theories and models, publications and practices, while alternative is narrowly positioned as a specific subcultural, particularly 1990s, practice (Hesmondhalgh & Meier 2014)

Additionally, the consumerist co-option and the emergence of the alt-right raise serious questions over the continued use of alternative to describe progressive media. That alternative has increasingly been integrated into consumerist society makes its value as an outsider and anti-capitalist expression diminished, with a new alternative capitalism offering great variety of consumption without a fundamental challenge to capitalism.

Hesmondhalgh & Meier (2014 p. 5), as we have seen, the rock counterculture linked a critique of corporate business to alternative aesthetics, and punk took up in earnest the challenge of providing an alternative institutional infrastructure to that of shareholder-led multinational entertainment conglomerates. Yet the counterculture also fostered a new kind of capitalism that was more willing than ever to produce goods and services that at least purported to be critical of capitalism and/or modernity.

Vice magazine offers a particularly powerful example of this in the sphere of media production. *Vice* took alternative culture, including punk aesthetics and investigation and reporting from the height of anti-globalisation, and turned it into a highly profitable capitalist alternative media model. While radical can in turn be co-opted, it retains a historic legacy and normative positioning that make it, at least for now, a better representation of anti-capitalist and progressive media.

The emergence of the alt-right (Neiwert 2017) and the development of right-wing media sites offers a second complication to the use of alternative as a descriptor for progressive media. The alt-right adopted much of the aesthetics and anti-corporate language of the alternative media period, redirecting its energy into the substantiation and development of a new set of political forces

on the national conservative right. In the USA, this has focused on emboldening white supremacy, with organised neo-Nazis and the remains of the Tea Party acting as a pressure force moving conservatism to the right. Moreover, Generation Identity in Europe and a range of far-right parties and youth organisations have adopted an alternative aesthetic (and language) as part of recruitment and development.

As such, the use of alternative is at best contested. Some efforts have been made to explain the common use of alternative by the far right and left as an example of the political horseshoe, two extremisms with similar processes, both outside the mainstream. Unfortunately this fails to account for the co-option of alternative as a consumer brand before the alt-right co-option. A different way of considering the weakness of alternative as a concept for progressive media is that alternative, in failing to provide a normative basis or clear political position, was an empty signifier to be filled. It was dominated by the left during a period of progressive counter-cultural movements and then anti-globalisation, but has since been lost to capitalist realism and far-right hate speech. Therefore its basis as a definitional framework for the analysis of progressive and anti-capitalist media today is greatly weakened. A normative and historically grounded concept such as radical is more useful.

Finally, critical media theorists, particular Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) and Jeppesen (2016), since the financial crisis of 2008 use alternative because they see it as a broad concept that can capture important anti-corporate media tendencies, while radical and other concepts have been either too narrow or limited in their use. This is not a strong form argument for alternative as a category; instead the concept is used in the absence of a better, more clearly defined and sharper conceptualisation. Radical, when historically grounded and considered as a normative statement, offers this sharper, clearer concept and can effectively replace the hazy and problematic alternative.

4.5 Typology of Radical Media

Radical media in this thesis has been considered an important, under-researched subject. Radical media has been thought of broadly: a subject which captures the history of media in opposition to capitalism and as the self-organisation of media by the working classes and the oppressed. In this chapter this broad understanding of a media outside the mainstream has been further explored in terms of a range of models of non-mainstream, alternative and radical media. These models have attempted to clarify and define non-mainstream media. Inconsistencies remain. There are both common points and contradictions between models, differences between early models which emphasise a radical prefiguration and later models which emphasise mass multi-tendency alternative media, and differences between political-economic and anarchist-influenced theoretical frameworks. Additionally, alternative media as a concept is increasingly problematic, lacking normative position, having a history of use within counter-cultural theorising and its double co-option, by both capitalists and the far right. It is argued then that radical needs to be asserted not only as a broad concept but in terms of specific and clear characteristics. A new typology of radical media is proposed as such.

4.5.1 Existing Models

Fenton's (2016b) consideration of radical digital politics considered in chapter one, Fuchs and Sandoval's alternative media model (2015) and Jeppesen's alternative media categorical model form the basis of a new radical media typology. Fenton (2016b) provides the general normative basis for a radical media typology. Radical digital politics is defined by change at the roots and progressive politics by Fenton (2016b), and this is positioned within a context of everyday politics, the lived experiences and emotions, in particular the pain and rage felt by neo-liberal subjects, and the process of being political, of collectively organising to act on and change the world for the better. Radical media is how this radical digital politics is communicated, and within this thesis specifically as part of two organised media forms, publications and platforms. Fenton's concept of radical, as discussed in the introduction and literature, connects to a longer history of the use of 'radical', including its relationship to

emancipation. This clearer definition of radical is a firm starting point for a typology of radical media.

The second debate from the models of radical media concerns to what extent something is or can be radical. Downing (2000), Atton (2002) and Jeppesen (2016) box radical off as a subcomponent of a wider alternative media sphere. Downing (2000) sees the radical as the push beyond the accommodating moderate, defining radical in terms of action, radical media in terms of an action media. In Atton (2002) the radical is more clearly a revolutionary political tradition and radical media a media of revolution, and to Jeppesen (2016) it is an anarchist and autonomous protest and street politics tradition and radical media a media of street politics. Both Jeppesen (2016) and Atton (2002) implicitly accept a basic premise of Downing (2000) that radical media is a smaller minority tradition, on the edge of the political map, important because of unique, experimental and prefigurative practices, and alternative media captures a wider, more diverse and more moderate media form. If alternative is rejected here, then the task is to take radical out of the margins and fringe and locate it where Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) position anti-capitalism: as a mass opposition to capital and a point of self-organisation and collective ownership of the means of media production by the working classes and oppressed.

Finally, although Jeppesen (2016) conceptually limits radical, her model of alternative media is a key final means of developing a radical media typology. Jeppesen creates a framework in which alternative media has four tendencies, each with its own unique theoretical tradition, content, practice and relationship to social movements. This is the skeleton of a radical media typology. This framework can be first reconsidered in terms of a political economic analysis. A political economic analysis would retain the 'key text' category, as theoretical background is an important dimension of political economic analysis. It would additionally keep the 'content' category, as this describes ideological production from a political economic perspective. 'Practice' and 'social movement' would change. Practice is a description of the relations and organisation of processes, decision making, democratic structures

and other internal processes. A concept such as production would more clearly fit a political economic framework, as ownership and power are derived from the organisation of production. 'Social movement' would be characterised more broadly within a political economic analysis with a concept such as political relations – how media relates to political organisations, which are also part of movements, and histories of theories and political traditions.

4.5.2 Radical Critical, Community and Activist Types

Jeppesen (2016) outlines alternative media in terms of community, critical, DIY and autonomous radical media. Critical media expresses the range of socialist analytical publications, journals and platforms. Critical media as outlined by Jeppesen (2016) has developed in the Marxist and socialist political traditions, which have already been considered in the chapters on the historical theories and practice of radical media. As such, critical media is adopted in a radical media typology. Critical radical media within this typology describes a tendency within radical media for publications and platforms which focus on critique, analysis and intellectual counter-hegemony. Critical radical media, in this typology, articulates radical critiques of capitalism and structural oppression and considers the need for a counter-hegemonic framework of ideas and organisational forms that can counter bourgeois ideology. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) see a critical media as emancipatory and coming from a production process which is editor and worker driven. Marxism is the biggest influence on a critical radical media type. Jeppesen (2016) characterises the critical theory of the Frankfurt school as the biggest influence, but a range of Marxist influences exist, such as Lenin and Gramsci (1971), as well as Marx and Engels (1965), who argue the need for the workers' movement to have its own intellectual development. Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) also directly quote the socialist journals *New Left Review* and *Monthly Review* as fitting their conceptualisation of critical media. These new-left publications and their relationship to academia have had a significant influence on the concrete development of the radical critical media form, which can also include Hall's (1982b) development of cultural studies and engagement with *Marxism Today* and *The Great Moving Right Show* (TV programme). Critical radical media is

usually Marxist, but not necessarily so; the critical journal has been adopted in anarchist intellectual production (Streitmatter 2001) and there is a long tradition of politics, ranging from social democratic to intersectional, feminist, black power and anarchism, in which journals, theoretical magazines and popular critical publications were produced.

Similarly, community media is radical in the sense of its particular focus on change at the roots of society. Jeppesen (2016) positions community media within Latin American social movements and the left. This is well suited as a second radical media type capturing theories and practices of radical media from below, critical pedagogies and anti-colonialism. Additionally, community media focused on the voices of those excluded and marginalised was an important undercurrent of 1990s and early 2000s radical media practice, supporting its position within a radical media typology. Community media can be considered radical in the sense that it focuses on processes of emancipation and deep change beginning at and developing from the roots of society. Jeppesen's (2016) understanding of community media as an educational, empowerment and organising practice of the oppressed, within the anti-colonial tradition of Freire (1971) and Fanon (2007), is a significant consideration of radicalism. The anti-imperial and Marxist tradition to which Freire (1971) and Fanon (2007) belong has seen the development of significant non-European publications and a more general emphasis on struggle from the margins and below (the community) in the realisation of social transformation in/through which community radical media is positioned. Additionally, if we consider Hall's (1982a; 1982b) consideration of the popular and subcultural as practices of resistance and empowerment of working-class and marginalised communities, we can start to consider a range of cultural media practices as consistent with a radical community media type. These popular cultures and subcultures construct themselves around their ability to transmit subjugated rituals and practices collectively through the working class, oppressed and marginalised. Community radical media as such becomes a means of collectivisation and bottom-up resistance to dominant and bourgeois cultural and material power.

Jeppesen's (2016) concept of DIY, by contrast, is problematic as a radical concept. The content, counter-cultural processes and relationships to social movements can be radical, as Hall (1982b) identifies, but they can be and have been used within a capitalist framework and by the right, as identified in the analysis of the conceptual origin of alternative. In addition, DIY media specifically conceptualises itself as a form of individualised production, experimentation and expression. This goes against the definition of radical media as a collective political project and the wider history and consideration of mass political action as radical because of its capacity to transform the entire system. DIY, as a result, is excluded as a radical media type.

The category radical and autonomous media outlined by Jeppesen (2016) can be reconsidered as an activist radical media type. The features of protest, social movement and campaigning which characterise the autonomous and radical media type under Jeppesen (2016) fit with a conceptualisation of activism. Activism has described many of the activities of these media and movements since the 1960s, but in particular in the 1980s and 1990s. Activism captures a direct-action-focused set of organisations which are structured more fluidly than traditional parties and trade unions. They have been focused on a diverse range of issues, either collected together as a general progressive activism or as specific activations, for example environmental activism, housing activism, feminist activism. Activist refers to the practice of prefiguration, movement building, protest, campaigning and action building. These are not only a feature of autonomist politics but used and engaged with by a wide range of political left tendencies.

The adoption of radical activist media as a type is firstly practical; the overarching typology is a typology of radical media, and the types within it should have their own distinctive definitions. In addition, activist media captures many of the features of autonomous and radical from previous models, which describe a set of media forms and practices that place emphasis on direct action, protest and movement politics (Graeber 2009; Kauffman 2017). It is no coincidence that activist media became categorised as *the* radical media form in the *Indymedia* years, where a rapid advance in

technology and a globalised movement was able to integrate activism and live reporting from the front line of protest movements. This equation is new. Historically, Leninists, Trotskyists, community activists and socialists have also used a form of activist media to forward and promote their political activity. The reporting of strikes, protests and direct action has a long history, from the Chartists through to anarchist and communist publications and the diverse range of publications of the new left and liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Radical activist media therefore positions a key orientation of and embedding of radical media within social movements, protests, strikes and other struggles. The documentation of will as opposed to and dialectic to the critical intellect.

4.5.3 Tensions of a Radical Institutional Media Type

Institutional radical media as the final type is defined by tensions: in its historic conceptual use, in its relationship to the state and emancipation, and in its relationship to other radical media types, such as activist, community and critical radical media.

Institutional as a concept is used in a novel way in this typology. In general, the research topic of media institutions falls within a study of systems of media organisation, particularly the structure, organisation and relationship to audiences of large corporate and public service broadcasters and their historical development, particular in the 20th century (Fourie 2001; Napoli 2003; Lacey 2017). This analysis of media institutions relations both to an analysis of the relationship between media and the state and as a consideration of an ideal fourth estate media with liberal democracy. Additionally, media institutions have been considered comparatively, distinguishing different media system developments in different parts of the world which are, additionally, increasingly defined and shaped by globalisation and convergence (Fourie 2001; Hallin & Mancini 2004). Finally, there are points of critical considerations of the tensions of media, cultural and political institutions. Within arts and cultural theory in particular the concept of counter-institutional has been used to describe interventions into and counter-positions of and against mainstream, corporate and dominant state media and

cultural institutions. Media reform can additionally be considered part of a critical institutional framework, resting on considerations of the possibility of transparent, participatory and accountable public sphere and media institutions as counterweights to state and corporate power (Price, Rozumilowicz & Verhulst 2003; Obar, Martens & McChesney 2016).

Radical institutional is used in a novel way here, framed in terms of normative, emancipatory and social justice ideas embedded at a structural level in media institutions such as publications, papers and broadcasters. The concept of radical institutional goes beyond critique, the cornerstone of counter-institutional art practice. Radical institutional additionally goes beyond media reform which proposes to create checks on the bourgeois press and states, in particular through legislation change, instead positioning institutions of emancipation themselves as new and independent of the bourgeois press and state.

Radical institutional, conceptualised in this way, has at least three historical developments: the alternative public service broadcaster, social justice journalism and reformist socialist media. Alternative public service broadcasting has focused on reconstituting public radio, television and print with a clear social justice message (Bardoel & d'Haenens 2008; Schiller 2007). *Democracy Now* is a prime example, using the existing tools of public service radio and refashioning them into a social justice orientated set of media sites, independent of the state. There have been a large number of such projects across the 20th and 21st centuries, each grappling with the contradictions of public service forms, objectivity and critical normative engagement with news and narratives.

A range of publications which are also mentioned by Fuchs and Sandoval (2009), such as *Liberation*, *Le Monde* or the *Morning Star*, engage a merging of investigative journalism and beat reporting with an open normative and radical political perspective, covering the full range of social, economic, political subjects independent of the bourgeois state and press. Social justice journalism has also been constituted as freelance and in smaller investigative

media projects, driven by a commitment to uncovering the workings of power and providing stories and information useful for social movements (Ostertag 2007).

Beyond alternative public broadcasting and social justice journalism, democratic socialism, euro-communism and social democracy have also engaged in the formation of institutions of working-class power, including the formation of radical institutions of the press. These are positioned as points of counter-power in the Gramscian (1971) war of position, where the self-organisation and self-expression of the working class and working class–middle class alliances against the capitalist class and its influence on the state and media industry are developed. *Libération* in France and the *Rizospastis* in Greece (Siapera, Papadopoulou & Archontakis 2015; Saridou & Veglis 2019) both operate as communist daily papers. There are also strong traditions of media institutions tied to social democratic parties and formations (Esping-Andersen 2017; Pickard 2017).

Institutional media raises a conflicting consideration of the state, with institutional type publications, as well as social democracy more generally, being sometimes integrated into the state and constrained in terms of the transformative power it wields. However, its principles and the principles of publications such as *Le Monde* or *Libération* identified by Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) remain at least in principle committed to progressive politics and systemic change and should therefore be considered as part of the radical media typology.

Additionally, radical institutions raise debates on social and political emancipation. Marx argued that political emancipation, positioned within institutions, is alienating in contrast to social emancipation. Institutional radical media explicitly separates out a professionalised labour force from the roots, establishing an elite craft within social-justice-oriented media. Fenton (2016b) indirectly gives some support for an institutional radical media type as part of radical digital democracy, where change can be positioned both at the roots of society in social movements and through electoral representation of the new left. The history of radical media practice has often seen a clash between the

institution and those outside it, between civil rights and liberation in the 1960s, social democrats and communists in the interwar years, and as Luxemburg asserted (2007), more generally between the position of revolution and reform.

For this typology, a radical media type that captures this progressive institutional tradition, and specifically the development of socialist, social democratic and left institutions independent from the bourgeois state, is important both in its own right and in the sense of its contrast and comparison with the other radical types, such as critical, community and activist. It is included on this basis.

4.5.3 Categories and Scales

How a radical media typology is represented is important in terms of the overall analysis of radical media, as it sets out how and in what manner different types relate to each other. A categorical representation of radical media types separates each type from the other with specific definitions in terms of content, production and politics. As such, categories of radical media are valid in terms of how they distinguish types from each other. The difference between each type is the basis for distinct analysis of radical media within an overarching framework. By contrast, a scales-based approach defines each radical media type in terms of how they relate to each other and how they operate as interactive tendencies.

	Radical Critical Media	Radical Community Media	Radical Activist Media	Radical Institutional Media
Key Concept	Critical Analysis	Empowerment	Action	Truth to Power, & Justice
Content	Form: analysis, critique, theory & argument	Recording collective experiences & understanding power	Reporting on protest, actions and movements	Professionalised content, reporting, investigation, analysis for social justice
Production	Subscription and reader funded, editorial ownership, producers are decision making.	Community funded, worker & community ownership membership decision making	Volunteer funding, ownership, decision making, emphasis on consensus	Institutional, business, non-profit and cooperative, craft labour, professionalised
Politics	Marxist associated, intellectual vanguard, organic intellectual	Base, emphasis on the collective power of communities, working class and oppressed	Anarchist tradition, as well as newer social movement and protest traditions	Reform and civil rights social democracy, euro-communism, democratic socialism

Figure 4.5.3.1 A Categorical Typology of Radical Media

Radical critical media is distinguished by ideological and intellectual proposition, community radical media by grass-roots empowerment and experiences, institutional by professional journalism, and activist radical media by action and protest. These four definitions are distinct. Content is also distinct. An analytic framework in critical radical media relies on intellectuals, writers, editors and secondary sources; community media relies on direct

experience and primary sources; radical institutional media relies on professional journalists engaging both primary and secondary sources; and activist radical media relies on primary sources from those in action, in protest, in motion. Production is distinct. Radical critical media is editorially-centred and focused on intellectual labour and power; community media is community-centred, owned and run; institutional media is staff-driven and professionally run, often through non-profit structures; and activist media is led by volunteers from and within movements, and is protest and action-centred. Politics is less clearly distinct, as different political tendencies can use a variety of models to further their goals and positions. Generally, *institutional radical media* is more closely aligned with the traditions of social democracy and socialist reformism and the activist with revolutionary politics. The critical and community is more a question of orientation, between intellectual and ideological clarity to shape the world (critical) and organising, roots, shared relations and experiences (community). The range of progressive politics has done both.

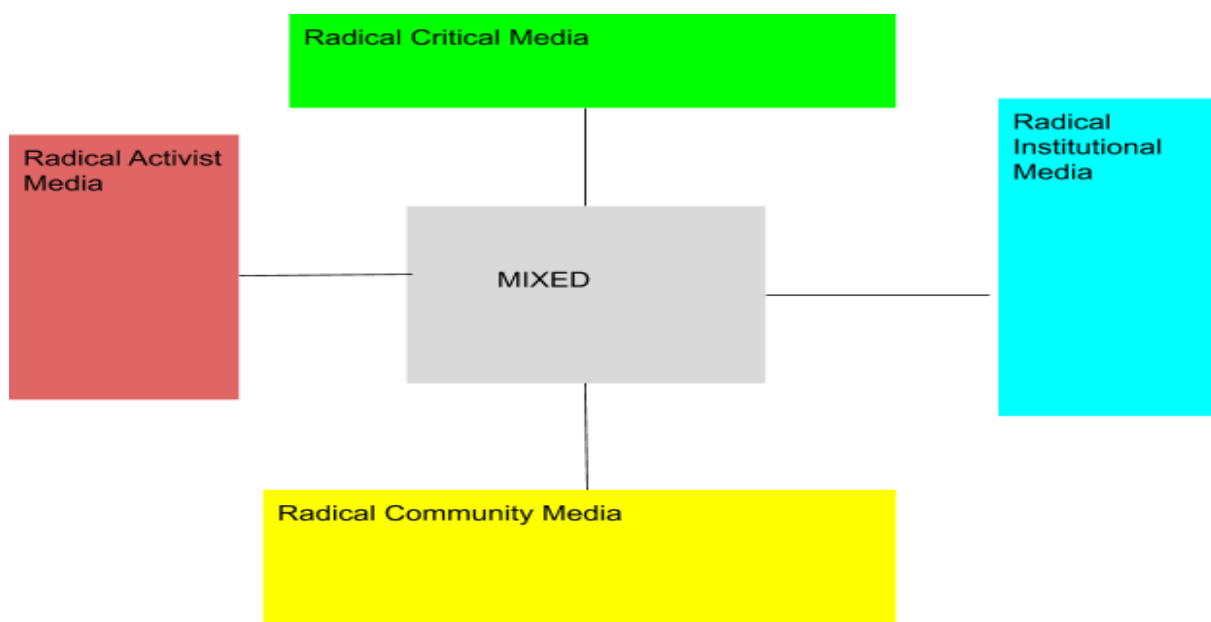


Figure 4.5.3.2 Scales-Based Typology of Radical Media

A categorical typology defines itself by distinguishing different radical media types from each other; by contrast, a scales-based typology can be used to represent the interaction of radical media types. The history of radical media practice and theory indicates a variety of interactions of radical media; this

scales typology organises these interactions so that they can be further explored and tested. Radical critical and radical community media are represented on a scale from top to bottom (X axis). At the top end, critical media is intellectual, detached from everyday experiences and popular organisations; it is abstract and theoretical. At the bottom, community media is purely experiential and everyday relational, with no grand theory or abstract. As we move to the centre of the scale, these distinctions blur, with the centre point a combination of intellectual analysis and everyday experience and relations.

Radical activist and radical institutional media are represented on the Y axis. Furthest to the left is a media purely outside of the system, focused on action, and furthest to the right is an institutional, professionally concentrated media insulated from social movements and protest. These meet in the middle as part of a social movement journalism or activist journalism (Wall 2003; Ashuri 2012).

In this scales typology of radical media, interactions can also be considered between the scales and more generally in the centre of the field. In the top left, critical-activist media is represented, which combines analysis and intellectualism with a focus on protest, social movements and action. In the bottom left, activist and community media interact, with a focus on protest and social movements and rooted experiences in communities. Community and institutions interact in the bottom right, with a semi-professionalised journalist framework that focuses on everyday experiences, relationship and marginalisation. In the top right corner the professionalised journalist analysis publications are represented. The middle is the mixed territory where types interact not only along the scales but between scales too.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter set out to analyse and clarify the conceptualisation of radical media in the digital age. Models of non-mainstream media were analysed first. Downing's (2000) model of radical media, Atton's (2002) alternative radical media model, Curran's (2002) countervailing media model, Fuchs and Sandoval's (2015) alternative media model and Jeppesen's (2016) alternative

media power model were all examined. Commonalities and contradictions of these models were analysed with a consideration of content, production and politics, and in terms of how they related to their specific historic context within the digital era. It was argued here that while theorists were influenced by their context, political tendencies, particularly the distinction between Marxist theorists and anarchist and intersectional theorists, helped to explain different ways that non-mainstream media has been considered in the digital age.

Radical and alternative were then contrasted as concepts. It was argued that radical has greater explanatory value with its normative underpinning and historic use contrasting to the problems of the co-option of alternative by capitalism and the far right, and the compromising way in which alternative has been used by recent communication and media theorists. A radical media typology is proposed, taking on Fenton's (2016b) concept of radical digital politics, Fuchs and Sandoval's (2015) understanding of mass anti-capitalist media and the categorical structure of Jeppesen's (2016) model of alternative media power. This radical media typology has four types: radical critical, radical community, radical activist and radical institutional media. These can be considered as discrete categories, with their own theoretical traditions, content, production and political relations and in terms of an overarching radical media field, with two scales, an activist-to-institutional scale and a critical-to-community scale.

The typology analysis of radical media rigorously answers the first research question – how can radical media be conceptualised and defined in the digital 21st century? – and additionally gives a conceptual basis from which to consider the remaining two questions. Radical media can be conceptualised and defined in terms of a radical media typology, with four types: radical critical representing the intellectual-focused strand of radical media, radical community representing the experience-focused and bottom-up tradition of radical media, radical institutional representing the social democratic and social justice journalist strand, and radical activist media representing the action-focused, campaigning and struggle-centred strand of radical media.

From a Marxist human political economic perspective, this typology is a framework from which material and social realities can be better understood in their particular time and place, rather than as a model which is a timeless and absolute abstraction. The typology of radical media places a bold marker on the field of critical communication and media studies, rejecting the understanding of radical as fringe and marginal and rejecting the concept alternative in favour of a multi-faceted radical media. In addition, the typology of radical media signposts a pathway for further inquiry. A typology of radical media developed from existing models of non-mainstream media and existing modes of theoretical inquiry should match, to an extent, the self-description and self-expression of radical media themselves. The self-description of radical media publications and platforms and the ideas and experiences of radical media actors within radical media publications and platforms are thus a useful next step in the analysis of radical media as a whole.

Chapter Five: Content Analysis of Radical Media Publications and Platforms

5.1 Introduction

The term 'Twitter revolution', used to describe the rapid growth in 2011 of street protest movements across the globe, but particularly in North Africa and the Middle East, represents a curious techno-determinism. A range of media outlets and academic papers argued that Twitter and the networked social relations it facilitated had caused rebellion and revolution (Harlow & Johnson 2011). This analysis has been carried beyond the anti-austerity wave with social movements, protests and rebellions of the late 2010s considered under the rubric of social media revolutions: #blacklivesmatter was positioned as a movement of social media; the Irish water charges movement, the Orange Revolution in the Ukraine and in 2019 the Hong Kong protest and the latest wave of protests in Latin America have all been considered as acts of discontent mediated and driven by digital media.

Political, economic and critical theorists have to a large extent rejected this analysis. Fuchs and Sandoval's (2015) analysis of digital capitalism, digital labour and alternative media includes a careful analysis of the material conditions of new social movements. They consider the Arab Spring and the 'movement of the squares' as latent responses to the financial crisis of 2008, neo-liberalism and the political repression of particular states. Digital media is part of a contest between capital, the state and the people in rebellion, a means not a cause. Fenton (2016b) argues that digital media gives us power to speak but not power to act on and change the world around us. This remains constricted by neo-liberalism, austerity and the power of capital. Both Fenton (2016b) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) write about the use of radical media in movements, and by political parties, as well as considering ideal forms of alternative media and radical digital politics. They do not write in any detail about specific publications. This gap is not only among critical and political economic theorists, but in the theorising and analysis of radical media and politics more generally. Jeppesen (2016) is a minor exception to this,

exploring both theories of alternative media and prefigurative and anarchist projects, sites, publications and platforms.

This content analysis of radical media publications and platforms seeks to fill this research gap, building from the typology of radical media in chapter four. From a political economic perspective, and as noted in the introduction, radical publications and platforms are a site of collective production with value in themselves as an organised form. This is in contrast to individualised forms of radical content production – the individual blogger, freelance journalist or social media personality. Publications and platforms are additionally sites of collective ownership of the means of media production, as opposed to the radical content which flows through digital corporate social media. Finally, there is a historical lineage of radical publishing and platforms: radical publications and platforms today have built on the history of radical media practice. As noted in chapter two, the digital era has been particularly influenced by the New Left and the alter-globalisation movement, with publications and platforms forming as a continuation of these traditions and as a critical response to the limits of these traditions.

As outlined in the methodology chapter, a selection of radical media publications and platforms from the UK, USA and Ireland collected between January 2016 and December 2019 was analysed using qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is firstly used for a summative analysis of all radical media 'About' sections, mission statements and statements of principles. This is compared to the radical media typology to see if concepts match and to see what new conceptualisations of radical media have emerged in the sample of publications. It was found that the typology and summative content analysis align conceptually, with the addition of new concepts such as forum, human rights and diversity. After this the content analysis is used to analyse each individual publication and platform based on a radical media scoring system. It was found that a majority of publications are institutional, critical and mixed, and a minority are activist and community-focused. Using a Marxist composition analysis, it is argued that the fact that a majority of publications are critical and institutional shows a dominance of radical media from above

platforms, websites and social media pages of radical media publications. Media refers to these sites and media content flows through them. The idea of media as digital sites fits the understanding of media as operating within a digital age.

Media is also conceptualised as a more traditional form: the print magazine, journal or publication. When words such as publication are used they do not refer purely to physical print editions; relational analysis shows publications and magazines existing within sentences such as 'the magazine can be found online'. The use of 'journal' and 'publication' is significant as it shows a hybrid model of online and offline content, a merging of forms in the digital age and a merging of traditions; the press, journals and publications are a mainstay of the 20th century and will remain so, but are integrated with the digital today.

The concept 'forum' emerges with a slightly different use to digital and print. Forum refers to a place where ideas are explored and exchanged or a site in which radical media is of democratic participation. Forum is relationally looser than the terms publication or digital platform; the suggestion that 'this is a forum for ideas', a place for ideas, indicates a less strict editorial or ideological line. Forum positions radical media as a site of radical digital politics in which ideas are freely shared and political participation developed.

The hybrid representation of radical media as digital (platform, website and social media site), print (magazines, journals and publication) and forum within a sample of publications collected between January 2016 and December 2019 indicates two important things. Media is articulated as a convergent form; in the digital era, radical media is both physical and digital and a radical democratic site. The three dynamics additionally each have their own value, so that a physical copy of a radical publications is worth having along with the digital site, and this is wrapped within a process of exchange of ideas and the building of democratic values.

The way in which 'media' and 'technology' were interrelated conceptually additionally stands out. Across the publications, there was evidence of media and technology being understood as interrelated, and a third concept – 'platform' – intersecting with media and technology. Media is both a digital and

physical product and a communication technology. What is striking from this analysis is that digital and non-digital conceptualisations of media are inter-joined, and that 'media' refers both to an entity and the organisation of that entity – 'our media is collectively organised' – as well as the site in which radical content is placed and the ideas circulated in the digital age.

Comparing what was conceptualised as media to what did not appear in the frequency and relational analysis gives us some indication of shifts from the early 2000s, through the anti-austerity years and into the period of political polarisation and new social movements. Concepts such as network, networked (Castells 2007), temporary, ephemeral and tactical, were not evident in the analysis and it can therefore be determined that radical media publications, in their 'About' sections, mission statements and principles, do not consider themselves in these terms. If network and networked radical communication were significant in the sample, one would expect a discussion of networked information flow, networked ownership, network exchange and networked distribution. In the early 2000s such a concept was significant in the theoretical literature (Castells 2007) and in publications themselves self-conceptualising the digital age (Giraud 2014) but they seem to have disappeared, from the publication and platform self-conceptualisation at least. There are at least three reasons for this. Firstly, the concepts of network and networked have simply been rejected by publications and platforms. Secondly, other concepts capture some of the elements of networks now; for example, platform captures some of the dynamics of network: a site or place for ideas and information to flow through, something looser than a publication and forums' sites of democratic participation in the digital era. Thirdly, for political reasons platforms and publications may be used more than networks because of the declining influence of anarchist politics on radical media in the UK, USA and Ireland. Networks developed as something between an ideal organisational form (autonomy of individuals and groups and then their free association) and a practical measure to establish communication and organisation among diverse social justice and social movement groups. The use of the term network is less evident throughout the history of radical media, with publications more consistently used. Zines and other DIY media forms were

not found within the frequency analysis; this was influenced by the fact that subculture and DIY media producers were not explicitly sampled, although it might have been possible that cheap publishing approaches such as zines would still be evident in activist and community media and radical media types.

The absence of concepts such as network in particular, as well as self-publishing terms such as zines, point towards a shift in production as well as politics. Production in the early 2000s was dominated by volunteer, horizontal and prefigurative-focused radical media production. The self-description by radical media today as publication, platform and forum points towards a loss of this prefigurative and horizontal focus, as well as autonomy within production, a tightening of production methods around their function in producing radical media content and sustaining themselves as independent of corporate media. At least two production processes may explain this. The power of digital media corporations and the co-option of decentralised production methods may have simply forced radical media to centralise its production to an extent. Alternatively, the decentralised production forms might have moved away from the collectively run sites such as *Indymedia* and into individual blogs, projects and social-media users, profiles and pages.

Politics was the second highest frequency word. Politics and political were connected with the concept of active; for example, being political, being involved in politics, being politically active. It can be tentatively deduced from this that radical media can be seen as a form of political activity. This is to a degree a demarcation of radical media from a solely utopian conceptualisation of media and communication in which the sites of radical media are sites of prefigurative experimentation outside of or below politics. Additionally, it is a demarcation of radical media from Fourth Estate media and journalism, in which the media is separate from politics, objectively reporting and analysing, without partisan bias. Finally, politics as active indicates a rejection of the idea of politics as progressive legislation or policy alone, politics of the 'high' parliament. Politics instead is doing, of and by the people.

Political or politics was also, simultaneously, a new topic, or subject of analysis: the analysis of politics, covering politics. As in the frequency analysis, active and political were relationally linked and significant, indicating a relationship between the speaking voice being empowered or active and the publication being actively part of movements. In the literature, active is encountered in Fenton's (2016b) conceptualisation of political organisation and the everyday political. It is also used to indicate a transformation from consumer to producer, or audience participation, and hypothetically can also be considered in terms of Fuchs and Sandoval's (2015) understanding of prosumer, the merging of consumption and production within digital platforms.

5.2.2 The Four Radical Types in the Summative Findings

The frequency analysis demonstrated evidence for the four radical media types. Institutional concepts had the highest frequency within the sample overall. In particular, the words 'independent' and 'independently', 'journalism', 'public' and 'publics' and 'reporting' were all highly ranked. 'Independence' and 'independently' were concepts which demarcated radical media from mainstream or corporate media generally. This independence focused on editorial and financial independence. Independence has been identified in the typology as a general consideration of alternative and radical media by theorists throughout the digital era. It refers to an overarching categorisation of independent media and a consideration of internal production dynamics within publications and platforms: that radical media should be financially independent of business and corporate interests. The reason 'independent' is considered institutional is that it is relationally paired with concepts such as being independent of big business, independent of corporations, independent of the mainstream. This is less ideological than critical media, which would express itself as anti-capitalist or socialist; less active than activist media, which is interested in movements and protest against corporate interests and does not state who owns the media, as in community radical media's expression of community and collective ownership (Kumar 2006).

Independent also has a long tradition within the social democratic and progressive wing of US politics. Independent from big business and

corporations has been a slogan and campaigning practice since the 1970s, and is popularised, with consideration of the lack of campaign financing rules in the USA (Hart 2001; Sanders 2016; Sheridan 2015). Independent of big business is more politically palatable when concepts such as socialism and anarchism are at the margins and fringe of political discourse.

'Journalism' and 'publics' also repeatedly appeared, with independent journalism contrasted to corporate journalism. The presence of journalism and publics indicates an engagement with traditional Fourth Estate concepts of media, and Habermasian's (2006) concepts of the public sphere. Journalism as a profession and public as a subject are connected to a framing which separates to a degree the people from the media (Beers 2006; Potter 2006). Journalism has value as a profession or specialised labour and as a tradition which promotes social justice, rigour and accurate knowledge (Beers 2006; Potter 2006). That said, journalism also interacted with codes from other radical media types; relations included 'movement-focused journalist' and 'community journalism'. It can be deduced from this that institutional radical media is simultaneously positioned within a logic of counter-institutions – anti-corporate, anti-mainstream – while also containing a 'return to origins' framing, that 'real' journalism and media with an emphasis on objectivity, journalist ethics, social justice and human rights should be the norm for journalism as a whole.

New concepts connected to the institutional radical media type also emerged – in particular, 'human rights' and 'diversity', with radical institutional media positioned as a defender of human rights and a promoter of diversity. These are more positive assertions of principles and normative practice. Institutional radical media is focused on investigating the abuse of human rights, and defending human rights, including the right of the public to know what the powerful do. 'Diversity' is used in a way that refers to a radical multiculturalism where cultural and group practices are respected and defended, particularly minorities against majority repression, at the same time that common values such as social justice and equality apply to everyone. Diversity is considered

both in terms of having more diverse voices platformed on media sites and challenging racism and other forms of discrimination.

Concepts related to radical community media also have high frequency within the sample. Community media concepts group in two significant ways in the sample. Firstly, the concept of community, collective and cooperative, related and referred to the ownership of radical media. This was articulated as an ethos or principle – we believe in – and as a production form – we organise ourselves, we are owned by our members. This is the strongest assertion of a tradition of co-operativism and worker ownership which defines the radical community ethos and which infuses the politics and dynamics of Latin American socialism from below. This also extends to include articulations of collective ownership which have less clear formal structures, such as collectives, projects and groups.

The concept of empowerment was present within the sample as a radical community media concept too. Empowering members or following the ethos of empowerment were important phrases in the frequency analysis. Empowerment moved community media from a consideration of structures of ownership and decision making towards a consideration of a process of ownership and production, with the consideration of how people are empowered to produce. This empowerment includes building up marginalised and oppressed voices to enable them to speak, to act and to organise media, and includes both a consideration of whose voices are platformed and how.

A third conceptualisation of community media emerged that was based around the concept of story or narrative. Specifically, the stories of those excluded, marginalised, oppressed, the working class and women were all articulated. This sees the articulation of an ethos, a general belief in the importance of these voices and an approach to source material in that these are important sources of knowledge and radical community media content. This fits with the radical community media type, and in particular with concepts and methods of empowerment within Latin American community media and critical pedagogy (Kidd, Rodriguez and Stein 2009; Jeppesen 2016).

The radical media type activist referred overall to action within the sample. Radical activist media concepts captured a diverse range of understandings of action, including 'protest', 'struggles', 'dissent', 'rebellion', 'revolution', with significant focus on concepts such as 'tactics' and 'campaigns'. Radical activist media is both part of these actions and activism and reports and amplifies them.

Action, struggle, protest and campaigns have been an important component of radical media publishing since the 1800s. Along with the news and human-interest value of analysing conflict, radical media has been particularly concerned with showing that people – the working class and the oppressed – can and should organise and create better conditions for themselves. This agitation element of radical media is a partner to the intellectual reflection of critical media. Within the sample, elements of radical media grouped in different ways. Production tempos and labour processes are important points of demarcation within radical activist media conceptually. Short-term and reactive content – concepts such as protest, resistance and dissent – contrast with those activisms which are multi-sequenced or long-term, such as movements and campaigns. *Indymedia* and the digital era have allowed instant reporting and analysis of action, which has created room for an extension of the agitation-propaganda model, in which immediate events, actions and protests create a sense of anger, and longer-form reflections allow for consideration of tactics and strategy via radical activist media. This continues to be represented in current radical media's self-conceptualisations.

A third concept which could be defined as activist centres on specific process words such as 'activity' and 'struggle', which capture the motion of radical media activism. This is distinct from the immediate reaction to an event or the reflection and longer-form campaign or social movement analysis and platforming. The people in motion are demonstrating the transformation of the world. Radical media in the digital age, through instant reporting and participation in struggle, is able to show the motion of activism itself as it happens.

Analysing the relations of radical activist media concepts indicates a crossover between radical activist and critical radical media types, in which both analyse strategy, tactics, movements and protests. These are distinct, in that critical places emphasis on being above and outside the movements, whereas activist places emphasis on being inside and below. Relational analysis of the 'activist' and 'community' types indicates crossover and interaction too. For example, community concepts such as experience and empowerment were evident in activist media types. The distinction is that experience and empowerment comes through the day-to-day social relations and experiences of people in community radical media, akin to Fenton's (2016b) politics of the everyday; this is a politics of being, and in activist radical media this empowerment happens through action.

The radical media type 'critical', identified in the typology, was the final coherent cluster which emerged in the sample. The first finding is that critical involves an understanding of analysis as political persuasion. Within the critical type, at least two groupings of concepts emerge in the frequency and relational analysis. Theoretical journals which are focused on abstracted analysis, theoretical and philosophical consideration, group together, and they contrast with a popular critical media, publications focused on popular knowledge, strategy, tactics, histories and context, which are centred on events and topical debates. There is a degree of crossover between the two: popular critical media articulates theoretical concepts and theoretical critical media conceptualisation tends to engage with events and subjects which are happening. *Catalyst* (journal of theory and analysis) and *Jacobin* (socialist perspectives), which are both owned by the same publisher, provide an example of this distinction between the theoretical and popular nodes. There are distinctions in writing style and audience, and an emphasis on specialist and abstracted knowledge in the theoretical journal as against a wider, more discursive and entertaining form in the popular publications.

The purpose of critical radical media is to persuade an audience of a point of view and inform them of what this means. Critical radical media has a historical precedent in pamphlets and polemics, through to letters, position

papers and policies within socialist organisations, through to theoretical journals and socialist newspapers. In contrast to Jeppesen's (2016) understanding of critical as solely related to critical theory and Marxist and socialist analysis, persuasion as an intellectual and analytic method can be associated with any radical ideology – Marxism, anarchism, feminism or racial justice. That said, the relational analysis of critical media types draws out contradictions between the need to analyse events, movements, the state, politics and capitalism, a craft or skill of critical analytics, and the need for this analysis to happen through a particular ideology – a Marxist analysis or an intersectional analysis. Critical publications are ideological and use a particular method, persuasion, but simultaneously need to respond to concepts, ideas and events which contradict stated arguments, positions and theories. This means that critical radical media is both a type of radical media and a body of knowledge, continuously developing and reorganising itself.

5.3 Findings from the Publication Analysis

5.3.1 General Findings

Radical media publications and platforms were scored and categorised and then mapped country by country, as outlined in the methodology. A more detailed breakdown of the scoring is in Appendix A. Radical media in the UK, Ireland and the USA between January 2016 and December 2019 consisted of a diverse range of publications and platforms, with a variety of production processes, content styles, levels of output and political relations. Some publications produced online content every day, with *Jacobin* producing up to seven articles per day on its website. Other publications, such as *Salvage* or *Irish Marxist Review*, produced a quarterly print edition, with occasional online articles. Publications contained a mix of analysis, interviews, reporting, investigative pieces, short polemics, book reviews, editorial, radio, podcast and television-style interview shows, panel shows, guest posts and, in a minority of cases, they included storytelling, poetry and other creative media forms. The publication's output, audience size and other factors which give an indication of the relative strength of the publication are noted, but this is not the main focus

of the publication's analysis. Instead, the analysis here focuses on the way in which a publication can be considered in a matrix of types – in essence, an analysis of the characteristics and tendencies of radical media which occur through contrasting and comparing the publications' and platforms' language, self-expression and features.

Radical Media Type	Number of Publications	Examples
Critical	11	Jacobin, Dissent, Salvage
Community	7	Near FM, Bristol Cable, Unicorn Riot
Institutional	13	The Intercept, In These Times, Democracy Now
Activist	7	It's going down, Strike Media, Solidarity Times
Mixed (no clear type)	15	Novara Media, Look Left, Red Pepper
Combined 2 Types	7	Viewpoint (critical-activist), The Ferret (community-institutional)

Figure 5.3.1.1 Overall Scoring Results

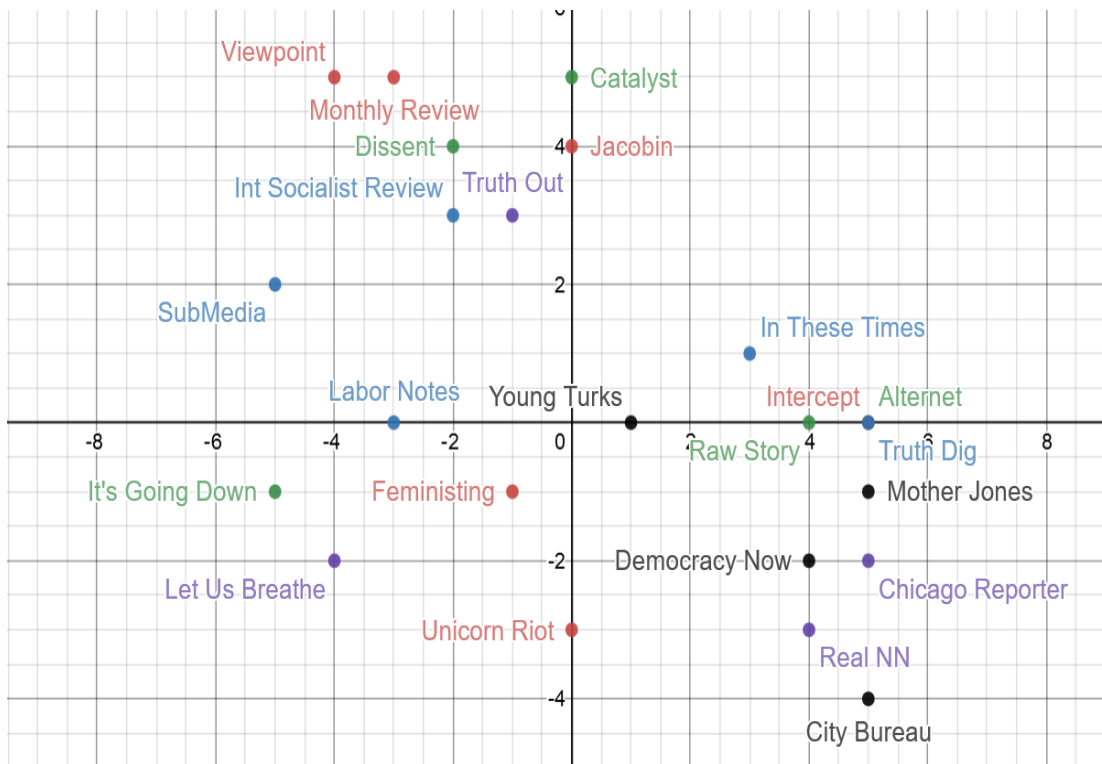


Figure 5.3.1.2 Radical Media Publications and Platforms in the US

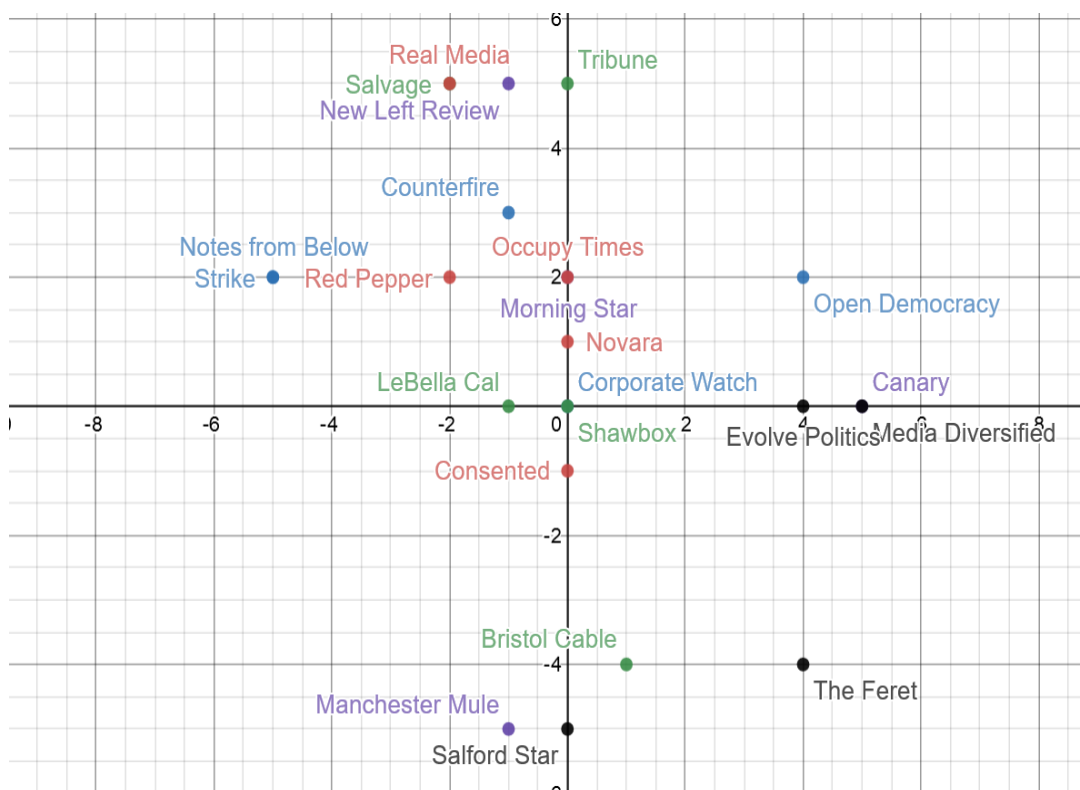


Figure 5.3.1.3 Radical Media Publications and Platforms in the UK

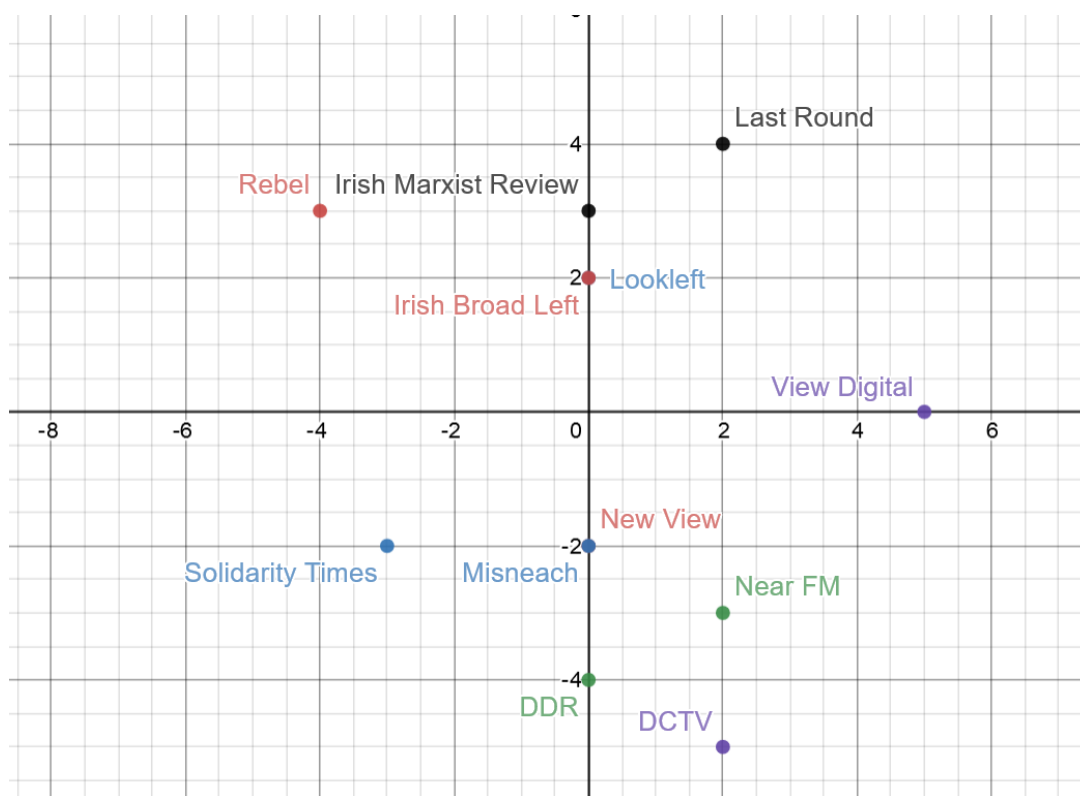


Figure 5.3.1.4 Radical Media Publications and Platforms in Ireland

Eleven publications were critical and 13 publications were institutional across the three countries. Independent was the most consistent concept used by radical institutional publications to define themselves was centred on the publications defining themselves in terms of their independence from corporate media. What is interesting here is that the typology of alternative media, and the conceptualisation of alternatives in the early 2000s, have a tendency to define themselves as a counterpoint to corporate media, interrelating alternative and independent as concepts. In institutional radical media this independence from the corporate sector combines with a professionalised journalism. There seems to be a legacy line from the publications, platforms and networks of the early 2000s, such as *Indymedia*, to a range of publication such as *Truth Out* and *AlterNet* today. These publications also emerged in the late 1990s and early 2000s. They have maintained aspects of the independent and counter-cultural dynamics of the period while combining this with a professionalised journalism and electoral support for progressive democrats and political reform.

Institutional radical media contains publications with large reach and varying formats. Some are journals from the New Left era such as *Mother Jones*, a publication which focuses on investigative journalism. *Mother Jones* places emphasis on the analysis of politics in the US capital, and *In These Times* places emphasis on investigative journalism, social justice and labour beat reporting. Other examples include a wave of 1990s and 2000s television and radio radical media such as *Democracy Now*, *The Real News Network* and *Young Turk*. These have converted aspects of the 24-hour news cycle approach, talk show panels and radio shows into a social justice and partisan counter-institution with a wide reach. *Democracy Now* is a particularly important example of radical institutional media. They have adopted and pushed the boundaries of a tradition of public service broadcasting in the USA (Elin 2008) – the idea of free access and informative content in the public interest, a tradition developed from Dewey's (1963) model of pragmatism, and a progressive liberalism that aims for all citizens to be educated regardless of race, creed or social and economic status. Public service broadcasting has been expanded by *Democracy Now* to include the reporting on and analysis of class,

race and structural inequality, the impact of US foreign policy and the lives and experiences of social movements and people in struggle (González & Goodman 2013; Goodman 2016). The *Young Turks* and *Real News Network* engage in much of the same formatting as *Democracy Now*, but have a more brash and confrontational style and use more conspiratorial language, such as ‘corporations are rigging our elections’.

A number of publications within the institutional-type group, such as *TruthDig*, *AlterNet* and *Open Democracy*, began in the 1990s and early 2000s as independent and alternative publications blending anti-corporate, investigative journalism and counter-cultural politics. Other institutional publications have emerged post-2008. Of particular note is the investigative journalism publication *Intercept*, emerging directly out of the conflict between *WikiLeaks*, Internet freedom activists and the US government. It and its lead reporter Glenn Greenwald have placed emphasis on challenging government surveillance on the Internet and Internet freedom (Greenwald 2014). In addition, publications such as *Evolve* and *The Canary* emerged in the UK after 2014. They combine the language of independent journalism, a focus on human rights, and language emphasising freedom from corporate control. They use the concept of truth and speaking truth to power while containing these traditional journalistic forms with an agitation-propaganda model that blends a tabloid-style shock-and-horror content style with strongly partisan pro-left political content (Scott 2015).

The institutional radical media type is diverse in terms of form, encompassing investigative print and online content, television, tabloid digital content, radio and magazines. Within this type, the mapping shows at least two groupings of institutional publications. There is a tight grouping around (0,5) which indicates a strongly institutional publication. These include the *Intercept* with its investigative focus, as well as *TruthDig* and *AlterNet*, which emerged in the early 2000s as aligned to the anti-globalisation social movement and which take the form of a digital and traditional media hybrid. This cluster also includes *Media Diversified*, which focuses on platforming under-represented voices in the media, in particular ethnic minorities. In addition, the UK’s left

digital tabloids, *The Canary* and *Evolve*, who have come sharply into focus as anti-Tory and pro-Corbyn, and have been publishing since 2014, are positioned here. Outside of this close institutional radical media cluster are publications which engage in degrees of critical media analysis, such as *Open Democracy* and those which lean towards aspects of community radical media, *Democracy Now* and the *Chicago Reporter*, with a focus on voices from below and empowerment.

There were 11 critical media type publications and platforms. Critical media contained publications with more of an academic focus and those with more of a popular analysis. More publications would have fallen under the critical type but for the fact that solely academic publications, for example the *Historical Materialism Journal*, were not included. Academic style publications which were included needed to be in public circulation outside of academic institutions or not primarily focused on academic production, distribution and conference presentation.

Jacobin is a key critical publication. Founded in 2011 (Sunkara 2011), *Jacobin* has expanded with multiple titles. *Jacobin* and *Catalyst* are included here, *Tribune* and *All Italia* have recently emerged too. *Jacobin* also has publishing deals for pamphlets, journals and books and has collaborated on conferences such as the annual Socialism and Historical Materialism (Sunkara 2015; Williams 2017). Other critical publications vary in self-description; some are small publications connected to socialist parties such as the *Irish Marxist Review* in Ireland, linked to People Before Profit. Others engage in broad socialist or intersectional analysis, such as *Red Pepper* in the UK and the *New Left Review*, while others occupy political or stylistic niches such as *Salvage* in the UK, which engages a 'radical pessimism' in their words. A crisis of the far left in the USA in 2018 saw publications linked to *Solidarity* and the *International Socialist Tendency (ISO)* end and therefore they were not included.

Critical radical media also contains two key historical trends: New Left (1960s and 1970s) publications, such as the *New Left Review* and *Dissent*, and a post-

2008 set of publications, such as *Jacobin* and *Salvage*. There are clear aesthetic, content and political differences between these two 'waves'. The New Left publications emphasise a pluralism of thought, grounded broadly within Marxism and critical theory. The post-2008 publications have clearer and sharper political goals and aesthetics. For example, *Jacobin* bashfully calls itself the 'largest voice on the US left' and *Salvage* positions itself in terms of sharp political pessimism in the context of historic crisis. Other publications such as *Truthout* and *Red Pepper* bring together New Left and 1990s social movement politics. The critical publications were also divided politically between party-backed publications and broad left publications. *Against the Current* and *Irish Marxist Review* are supported by Trotskyist parties while *Red Pepper* and the *New Left Review* belong to the broader left. *Jacobin* sits somewhere in the middle here, and is subject to the specific conditions of the US left. *Jacobin* has a broad editorial team but close political connections to the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), which has grown to become the dominant force on the US left (Price 2019; Freeman 2019).

The lower presence of activist (8) and community (7) radical media indicates that media focused on community empowerment, collective ownership stories and narratives and media focused on engagement with the moment, sequence and motion of political agency and organisation make up a smaller proportion of radical media in the UK, USA and Ireland than critical and institutional radical media forms. *Sub Media*, *It's Going Down* and *Solidarity Times* were three of the new generation of activist media. Their about sections describe their focus as one of reporting on, participating in and live action analysis of protests and other political actions. *Labor Notes*, a long-standing US-based socialist trade unionist publication, specifically focused on the rank and file strategy within the trade union movement, set out its role as an organising facilitator and point of exchange. Its website focuses on telling the stories of ordinary workers in struggle and connecting them online and at troublemaker schools, in which hundreds of union organisers and rank-and-file members are brought together to share skills and train. Radical community media type publications such as the *Manchester Mule* and *Bristol Cable*, as well as *Dublin*

Digital Radio and *Near FM*, share a common belief in empowerment and a focus on experiences and collective identity. They also vary in terms of degrees of formalisation of structure, ranging from collective grass-roots structures to formal co-operatives.

Activist and community radical media were also more fragmented, with more differences of approach within these types and more crossover with institutional and critical conceptualisations. Activist radical media split into two groupings. The larger grouping consisted of an activist radical media which engage in critical analysis. These activist radical media produce a political theoretical analysis while also covering protests, struggles, social movements and campaigns. Publications such as *Viewpoint* and *Monthly Review*, the Trotskyist *Counterfire* and *Rebel*, and the anarchist *Solidarity Times* and *Strike Magazine*, as well as *Notes from Below*, were all activist-analysis publications.

The political range of this cluster is significant. It can be argued here that at least two questions on political orientation emerge in this content. *Viewpoint*, which sits within a radical or revolutionary left, blends the critical and activist media type, placing more emphasis on exploring the dynamics and tensions of revolutionary politics, struggle and social movements; while *Dissent*, which is New Left, and *Jacobin*, which is democratic socialist, orientate towards a critical and institutional blend which places more emphasis on analysing the state and considering socialist policy.

There is also a degree of division between an emphasis on the base, taking the experience of those at the bottom, and a high politics, which places emphasis on parliament, elections and national political representation. Publications such as *Notes from Below* are highly theoretical – at least as theoretical as *Catalyst* or *Irish Marxist Review* – but they place their emphasis on a lens of analysis which starts at the level of the worker and the working class, exploring the day-to-day experiences of class and building from this an analysis of political change. Electoral politics and policy, by contrast, are emphasised as publications move to the right in the critical sphere.

There are a number of potential reasons for the smaller number of activist and community media publications and platforms. Firstly, it can be argued that this has been the result of a structural change in the production of radical media. In the early 2000s publications were activist-centred, with the important influence of Latin American communication studies and community media, and the dynamics of prefiguration and grassroots empowerment. However, since 2010 in particular, considering the range of new critical publications, there has been an emphasis on building critical analysis and counter-institutions. Secondly, the actions of capital in two ways may have reduced the size of activist and community media. Community media has suffered dependence on state funding following major cuts in the austerity years, particularly in Ireland (Sheppard 2019; Gaynor 2019), and activist media has suffered from the dominance of digital media corporations in the circulation of protest and social movement content (Girud 2014; Fuchs & Sandoval 2015). It is also important to consider the influence that inclusion and exclusion criteria would have had on these findings. Community media content and the focus on the use of media for empowerment is often interrelated to, or positioned as a sub-function of, community development; youth groups, after school programmes and the many other community-sector projects that exist in all three countries, defusing community media content and reducing the number of explicitly community radical media projects found. A large component of activist radical media has been focused on defusing content through movements' media sites, social media pages, closed groups, message boards, campaign websites, and action print, radio and videography, as well as personal social media and message board commentary and discussion, which means the example of radical activist media content may be greater, even as the publication and platform size is small.

5.3.2 The Mixed Category

Fifteen publications were of the mixed type, the largest of any single category. Fifteen publications were within the range of 2 and -2 on both scales. Mixed types either had too little content to clearly categorise the publication or platform, or there was a mix of content from the types in the publication or platform. Two publications in the UK, *Novara Media* and the *Morning Star*,

scored closely as mixed, despite vastly different histories and content styles. Distinct political histories were outlined in the publications' mission statements, with *Novara* a post-2008, post-student protest, New Left publication using video platforms, interviews and in-depth analysis, as well as panel and discussion pieces in its publishing. The *Morning Star* by contrast is a long-standing daily newspaper of the Communist Party of Great Britain, with a focus on mirroring traditional broadsheet and tabloid media content with a socialist perspective. It is produced as a daily newspaper.

The mixed section contained two potentially important groupings within it. A number of publications were leaning towards critical and institutional dynamics and a number of others towards activist and community. Publications such as *Red Pepper* and *Novara Media* are situated within the critical and institutional lean. Both are mixed because they combine various elements within the radical media typology. These include journalistic features, overt critical and ideological analysis, community building and social movement, and protest reporting. The far smaller Irish Workers' Party magazine *Look Left* is also a mixed type, expressing both ideological analysis and institutional, professional journalist frameworks and reportage. Outside of this, a range of niche and specific publications such as, *Feministing* and *Consenting*, are generally culturally focused, and employ a range of styles and contents with an orientation towards activist and community features and considerations.

The fact that mixed emerges as the largest category supports the idea that in the post-2014 context there is a degree of convergence in radical media production, content and politics. The four types of radical media – critical, community, institutional and activist – are radical tendencies not exclusionary positions. These publications learn from each other, copy methods and ideas, and develop frameworks in common, as well as having marked differences. The high number of mixed publications can be considered as a positive blending of forms, styles, content, production and politics and an indication of the capacity for multiple perspectives to exist within individual publications: the need for movement analysis and action, theoretical and popular intellectual work, community empowerment and the building of radical institutions. The typology

of radical media outlined in chapter four allows for this type of interaction, and reflects similar tendencies, for example in Greece (Siapera, Papadopoulou & Archontakis 2015), where austerity cuts to mainstream media and communication pushed young journalists out of work and to the left. This combined with a of socialists and anarchists coming out from the fringes of society as a part of mass movements. These two forces converged and a range of new publications emerged, as well as older left and social justice publications readjusting to this altered context.

Another way of interpreting these results is that all three countries contain critical, activist and community radical media. Two factors boost the mixed and institutional types. In the USA broad-based publications, radio stations and digital television stations are concentrated in the institutional radical media type, with a core emphasis on journalism and independence, and in the UK they are more likely to be mixed with an emphasis on the integration of movement, community and critical perspectives with a social justice journalism. In the UK publications such as *Red Pepper* engage more with social movements and their methods and approaches and socialist politics, compared to *In These Times* in the USA, which gives more time to journalist reporting and investigation. In comparing *Novara* in the UK and *Young Turks* in the USA, it emerges that both use videography, panel discussion and television studio style content to frame their analysis of current events. *Novara* is mixed with more theoretical and social movement content and *Young Turks* in more focused on US electoral politics.

5.4 Exploring Political, Geographic & Historical Composition

Summative analysis of the radical media publications and platforms' 'About' sections, mission statements and statements of principles allows us to assess the typology of radical media, while the mapping of publications gives us an important understanding of the political and social context of radical media in the digital century. A useful way to explore the interaction between radical media publications and platforms as a subject, and the context of their development, is to ground such development within a Marxist composition

analysis, which is cognisant of how class conditions and conditions of social composition feed political organisations mediated by geographic and historical dynamics (Aune 2019; Clare 2019; Lassere & Monferrand 2019; Roggero 2015; Trott 2017; Haider & Mohandesi 2013).

Institutional and critical publications are the largest types in the content analysis. These place an emphasis on professionalism (institutional) and intellectualism (critical). Both can be considered to a degree specialist radical media types. They are also largely tied to socialist and social democratic political projects. *Jacobin* represents the centre of this orientation, focused on bringing socialist analysis to the people. These publications can be characterised as a *radical media from above*. Below these institutional and critical radical media publications and platforms is the mixed type. Mixed publications indicate a convergence of production and content forms, an adoption of multiple types. Activist and community radical media publications can be considered as politically *from below*, as their emphasis is on either the action and protests of the marginalised or the day-to-day lives of ordinary people, the marginalised, oppressed and working-class. The emphasis is on grassroots and social movements as points of political organisation. These are in a minority.

Three dynamics are happening within the sample as such: a majority radical media from above represented by the critical and institutional radical media types, a convergence of production and content represented in the mixed radical media type, and a minority radical media from below represented by the community and activist types. Activist and community media were large forces in the early 2000s, so at least three possible reasons may explain the recomposition and smaller representation in the sample. *Indymedia* as part of the anti-globalisation movement, and Occupy publications as part of the Occupy movement in 2009, dominated the construction of activist-type media in the 2000s. When these movements declined, the radical media projects connected to them also declined. The social movements that have replaced them, #blacklivesmatter, feminist and women's strikes, anti-water privatisation, anti-austerity and racial justice movements, have by contrast

failed to build their own publications and media platforms, with content and exchange concentrated on (or taken over by) corporate digital media platforms such as Facebook.

What has endured from previous decades within the radical media orientation from below, such as *Labor Notes*, *It's Going Down*, *Solidarity Times*, has had some degree of movement-embeddedness, but also a radical political tendency with a degree of independence from the movements and grassroots organising. *Labor Notes* was influenced by revolutionary socialism and rank-and-file trade unionism as a strategy developed with the political organisation Solidarity. Anarchism anchors *It's Going Down* and *Solidarity Times*. This has helped these publications sustain themselves while others decline or disappear.

The radical media from above and the mixed category tell different stories. Legacy New Left, Marxist and socialist organisations and publications sustained themselves throughout the 1980s and 1990s, often with small audiences and limited influence on wider politics. After 2008 an intellectual reorientation towards systemic and structural analysis was hypothetically compounded by the downward mobility of young intellectuals, and the return of mass politics shaped by austerity. The new publications of this context appear to have politically orientated towards institutions and intellectual critical formations. The mixed type indicates a degree of pragmatism and flexibility of both political orientation and content and a convergence of production.

This political reorganisation of radical media is potentially mediated by geographic composition. Both the USA and UK have proportional (and large) numbers of critical and institutional radical media publications. What is significant about this is the particular geography of such publications, with a majority of these publications concentrated in New York and London (Chicago and California a noted minority). What is important here is that New York and London are the largest English-speaking centres in the world, and the centres of culture, education and social institutions. It can also be argued that these are centres with stronger social democratic institutions, donor networks and larger populations of well-educated and highly-skilled media workers.

Geographically, new social movements have emerged both in the core and on the periphery; #blacklivesmatter, for example, saw St Louis, Missouri as the centre point of its struggle. Despite this, new radical media publications have not emerged as part of the racial justice movements as they did in the 1960s. Community radical media has also been declining to a degree from the high point of Latin-American-influenced publishing and methods in the 2000s. It has declined greatly in Ireland in particular, but has had a recovery in the UK in urban centres outside the London area: the north and west of England and in Scotland; supporting the conceptualisation of a radical media from above in the core and a weaker radical media from below at the periphery.

There are historical dimensions to this consideration of radical media composition. In the 1800s, early radical media focused on building working-class and emancipatory membership-based organisations and publications, to unify and allow people to express their identity and to develop the organising capacity of the downtrodden. In this era, the organisation of radical media was largely from below, as there was less ideological direction and fewer political parties or separate layers of organisation which had any great influence. This shifted from the 1860s on, when Marxism and anarchism represented a new means of organising the working class, through a starting analytic framework. Organising began among the socialists, who then reached out to build among the working classes. Such a pattern was reflected in anti-racism and feminism, and in Ireland, republicanism, where smaller groups of activists and media producers began with an ideology and reached out to try to build the mass organisation of women, the racially oppressed and the colonised.

The interwar period shifted the division. A communist revolution in Russia created a space to the left of social democracy. The division began between communists and social democrats in the sphere of radical politics and media, between the call for immediate world revolution and reform of capitalism as a stepping stone to socialism. Anti-communism in the 1950s and Soviet repression, such as during the Hungarian uprising in 1956, created conditions in the 1960s for the re-polarisation between a liberation position and civil rights movements, in which the characteristics of radicalism were

reconstructed via the radical media in terms of new radical identities. In this era both a radical media from above and from below existed, although that which was from below was more diverse, creative and experimental, producing much of the original formation of radical press of the era.

The defeat of both civil rights and liberation struggles in the 1970s and 1980s, and the ideological hegemony of third-wave liberalism and economic neo-liberalism in the 1990s, saw both radical media from above and from below retreat. The anti-globalisation movement and digital era broke this open; lateral communication and organisation across the globe was made more possible because of shifts in production, in particular the new digital technology. This meant that more room existed for a prefigurative media tied to movements and operating from below. This has flipped in the post-2008 era. Small, new left and socialist currents grew gradually through the 2000s, while anti-globalisation publications professionalised and institutionalised, and digital corporate social media platforms such as Facebook undercut, independent bottom-up media efforts. Unexpected carriers of Marxism and social democracy in the USA and UK, Bernie Sanders (Sanders 2016) and Jeremy Corbyn (Seymour 2017), brought hundreds of thousands of downwardly mobile young people into radical politics between 2015 and 2019. These young people have fed a radical media from above that speaks to their orientation and politics today. In Ireland, where no large socialist or social democratic force emerged, despite the large-scale anti-water-charges movement, right2water and right2change, radical media from above remains smaller and more fragmented.

5.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the content analysis of 'About' sections, mission statements and statements of principles from radical media publications and platforms expands our understanding of how radical media is conceptualised and has allowed us to explore what radical media does – including its content, production and political relations – and how it has shifted in the digital age. In the summative

findings, general concepts emerged to describe radical media, in particular the idea of radical media as digital – describing itself in terms of websites, social sites, platforms; non-digital –describing itself in terms of publications, magazines and print; and as a forum – describing a site of democratic exchange. The concept of network is not used by publications and platforms. Radical media is also characterised as politically active, an active involvement of media in politics, and a media which covers politics critically.

Beyond these general findings, the four radical media types are evident in the self-descriptions of radical media publications and platforms. Institutional, community, activist and critical media are joined by mixed radical media, a type which combines elements of the other four types. Institutional, critical and mixed are the larger grouping of radical media publications and platforms, with 39 publications of this type compared to 14 of the activist and community type, and seven which combine two types.

Radical media composition is explored; it is argued that the fact that a majority of publications are critical, institutional reflects a dominance of radical media from above over radical media from below, represented by the activist and community radical media types, while the mixed type represents a degree of convergence of production and a multi-faceted dimension to radical publications and platforms. Shifts in capital, class composition and radical movements, mediated by considerations of political, geographic and historical composition, explain, to a degree, these changes. A shift in class composition under austerity has seen, to a degree, a proletarianisation of journalist, digital, communication and media workers, along with a wider pool of young unemployed and underemployed workers. This class has become politically active and shifted away from a horizontal and prefigurative politics after Occupy. Marxism and socialist thought have become increasingly important and impacted on the reorientation of radical media. This process has been accelerated by a concentration of such politics and media in a geographic core of New York and London and a historic moment in which mass social democracy has re-emerged in the US, with Bernie Sanders and the Democratic

Socialists of America, and Corbyn's Labour Party and Momentum in Britain; this was not replicated in Ireland.

Chapter Six: Thematic Analysis of Semi-Structured Interview Findings

6.1 Introduction

Within radical media publications and platforms key radical actors (producers, workers and journalists) organise and develop radical media practice: they produce, design and write content, and cohere political relationships. Radical media producers, workers and journalists shape and drive a wider vision and strategy for radical media as a whole and reflect on the practices, content and politics of the field as a means to transform and develop it. They are an important influence, within the limits of capital and class, on whether radical media publications fail or grow, if they meaningfully connect to mass movements or if they remain marginal. Along with being key agents of transformation, radical media actors provide a lens which differs in important ways to the conceptual perspective of theorists and the 'official' statements, 'About' sections and principles of publications. The insight of radical media actors provides a view from 'under the lid' of radical media production, expressing perspectives on the internal workings of publications and platforms, the frustrations, the 'grind', the tensions and contradictions, the hopes and fears of success and failure.

Thematic analysis of five interviews with radical media actors was carried out. Five radical media publications were selected based on the need to analyse a spread of radical media types and spread of locations. Micah Uetracht in the US- and New York-based *Jacobin Magazine* (critical type), Rebecca Burns in the US- and Chicago-based *In These Times* (institutional type), Jenny Nelson in the UK- and London-based *Red Pepper Magazine* (mixed type), Andrew Flood in the Dublin, Ireland-based *Solidarity Times* (activist type) and Sean Finnan in the Dublin, Ireland-based *Dublin Digital Radio* (community type) were interviewed.

Within a multi-methods research design, a sample of non-mainstream media models have been examined using a typology analysis to clarify the conceptualisation of radical media and a sample of radical media publications and platforms have been examined using a content analysis to confirm the

typology and explore, map and understand the context of radical media publications and platforms. In the typology, five radical media types emerged: critical, activist, community, institutional and mixed. In the content analysis, these types were confirmed and it was argued that three strands of modern radical media have emerged: firstly, a majority critical and institutional radical media characterised politically as radical media from above, geographically concentrated in London and New York, and influenced by a particular post-financial-crisis moment where Marxism emerged out of the fringes and social democracy re-emerged as a major anti-systemic force in the UK and USA. Secondly, the mixed type was characterised as a point of radical media convergence where publications and platforms have drawn from multiple sources to create multi-faceted publications. Finally, the activist and community media type, in a minority, was argued to represent a smaller tradition of radical media from below, which was weakened by the decline of *Indymedia* and the circulation of grassroots radical media content on social media instead of the development of independent sites after 2008.

The interviewee's background gives important insight into the relationship between class, capital, social movements and radical media publications and platforms. From here, this chapter is primarily structured in terms of the themes that emerged across the interviews. The themes of 'principle and pleasure' emerge in the interviews in the discussion of content. Radicalism against moralism frames the discussion of the concept of radicalism.

From here, discussion of production and political relations emerged as dominant and extended points of discussion. In the discussion of production there is a convergence of ideas among interviewees. These are thematised as 'sustainable radical media production', 'pragmatic decision making' and 'adaptive radical digital journalism'. Political relations are defined by tensions: the tension between a cooperative and accumulative approach to political relations among radical media publications, and the division between a leadership role or supporting role for radical media in movements. Finally, questions of wider political strategy are thematised, expanding on the idea of radical media from above and below, to include a debate on radical media as

part of strategies to build power outside the system (movements) and inside (electoral, state and policy reform).

6.2 Publications' and Participants' Backgrounds

Uetricht from *Jacobin* magazine and Burns from *In These Times* were the first two participants interviewed. The interviews took place in Chicago in the summer of 2016. Uetricht of *Jacobin* and Burns of *In These Times* had worked together at *In These Times* over the last year and Uetricht had just started his role as deputy editor in *Jacobin* magazine. *Jacobin's* operation is based in New York city but Uetricht worked as deputy editor from an office in the *In These Times* building in Chicago. Both Burns and Uetricht were politicised in a number of stages. They had gained experience in social movements, trade unionism and journalism before taking up their respective roles in *In These Times* and *Jacobin*.

Burns became politically active after college, when she moved to Chicago. Reporting of poverty and home foreclosure in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis pushed Burns to join the Centro Autonomo in Albany Park, a social centre run by the Mexican-American Solidarity Network who attempted to defend mostly low-income minority homeowners against bank repossession (Centro Autonomo 2018a/b). They used two main tools: legal support for residents facing repossession and community demonstration to pressure the banks to negotiate. From here, Burns's political organising moved towards racial justice and anti-deportation work, with the increase in deportations under the Obama administration (García Hernández & Crennen-Dunlap 2019) and the murder of young African Americans by the police igniting #blacklivesmatter (Taylor 2016). At this point Burns was working primarily as a freelance journalist and with community investigative journalist publications such as the *Chicago Reporter*. Burns saw her journalism and activism as intertwined, with the skills of investigation and research being applied and developed in journalism being used in a supporting way within social movements. In 2015 Burns took a more permanent role with *In These Times*.

Uetricht traced his first political consciousness to the West Michigan punk scene

in the early 2000s. In college in Chicago he became involved in Students Against Sweatshops. At this point, the financial crisis pushed Uetricht to get involved in Occupy and protests at the Republican National Convention, where he was arrested. Occupy moved Uetricht from a 'punk-anarchist to a Marxist and socialist'. At the end of college, he became critical of horizontal practices and the tactic of occupying public spaces. After college Uetricht worked for a community workers' centre called Arise Chicago.. He then worked at O'Hare Airport. In O'Hare he was a union salt (Lipscombe 2006; Bronfenbrenner et al. 1998; Labor Notes 2014), being supported by SEIU to organise workers in the airport. After his community and union-organising experience, Uetricht turned towards publishing, with a book as part of a Jacobin series on the Chicago Teachers' Union, and freelance journalism and writing including with *In These Times* and *Jacobin*.

In These Times was part of a series of New Left publications founded in the USA in the 1970s. Started in 1976, *In These Times* positioned itself as neither Soviet nor revolutionary and insurrectionist, plotting a middle course of democratic socialism. Its analysis concentrated on a broad 'non-sectarian socialist position' and combined it with classic liberal journalism: reporting and investigation adopted to social movement politics. *Jacobin*, by contrast, was part of a wave of post-2008 publications, or 21st-century socialist analysis publications, which set out its stall as a strong socialist voice. Both publications today are strongly linked to Democratic Socialists of America, an organisation formed in the 1970s, existing in the 'wilderness in the 1980s and 1990s and re-emerging as a large organisation in two ways, after the Occupy and then again during Bernie Sanders' 2016 run for presidency' (Schwartz 2017). In 2019 it has 60,000 members and has scored a range of electoral victories at the local and national level, including the election of congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in New York. Considering the beginning of *In These Times*, Burns states that:

In These Times started loosely affiliated with Democratic Socialists of America. The position from what I understand that it was occupying at the time was sort of like, reacting a little bit to the New Left. And just

sort of, perceived, like, ultra-sectarianism or tendencies towards ultra-sectarianism on the left. So sort of trying to create some sort of a broader progressive line.

Uetricht identities and credits Bhaskar Sunkara as the driving force of *Jacobin*, both in terms of the broad left politics, rigour of analysis and its effective business model, arguing that:

Jacobin started five years ago by a guy named Bhaskar Sunkara... he wanted to create a leftist magazine, a socialist magazine, a non-sectarian one... (not tied to a kind of sectarian organization)... Within that time it has become I would say the major voice, one of the leading voices in the American and maybe even English-speaking left.

Sunkara in a *New Left Review* article in 2014 argues that radical media should have a firm business model, with financial sustainability, a clear political orientation – which he argues in the USA should be based on rigorous class analysis and democratic socialism which allows for multiple tendencies and points of debate, aesthetic quality – and internationalism, connecting and analysing struggles across the world and the role of the US left in these struggles. Sunkara was a member of the small youth section of Democratic Socialists of America. He saw *Jacobin* as a broader project, even though a core of its members were young DSA members. Sunkara credits dissatisfaction with Occupy as moving a key subset of young radicals towards Marxist and socialist politics, and the 2016 presidential campaign of Bernie Sanders with creating a wider mass audience for socialist politics. *Jacobin* has been able to become the leading site for these new Marxists and socialists.

Red Pepper magazine is based in London in the United Kingdom (UK) and *Solidarity Times* and *Dublin Digital Radio (DDR)* are based in Dublin, Ireland. *Red Pepper* is comparable to *In These Times* and *Jacobin* as a quarterly print magazine with a digital daily. Its political history, though, is different. It began in 1995 out of a merger of trade union, socialist, feminist, and other coalitions

which had been in existence since the miners' strike in 1984 and 1985 and the publication *Socialist*. *Red Pepper* offer an account of their origins, and although lengthy it gives an important insight into the historical context of *Red Pepper* and radical British politics more generally.

The origins of *Red Pepper* magazine can be traced to the rainbow coalition that came together in towns across Britain to support the miners during the strike of 1984-85.

Soon after the strike's defeat, nearly 2,000 activists in this disparate coalition came from inside and outside the Labour Party, from feminist, black, lesbian, gay, green, trade union and left academic organisations to Chesterfield to the first of the annual Socialist Conferences – sponsored by the Campaign Group of MPs, the Socialist Society and the Conference of Socialist Economists.

At the third of these conferences in 1987, delegates decided to form the Socialist Movement (SM). Very soon, as is the way of most socialist organisations, the SM decided to set up a newspaper. It was to be a non-sectarian, campaigning newspaper called *Socialist*.

The SM raised funds, including £1,000 in standing orders from supporters giving £5 a month – many of these same people still give to *Red Pepper* – and *Socialist* was launched as a fortnightly newspaper in autumn 1991. In its 18-month existence *Socialist* established a reputation as a reliable and hard-hitting source of news and debate, winning the support of, for example, Harold Pinter, John Pilger and Billy Bragg.

Socialist was in many ways a trial run for *Red Pepper*. As a fortnightly newspaper owned and run by a new organisation, it turned out not to be viable. However, the response to the newspaper showed that there was a demand for a regular green-left publication combining news with debate, action with theory, culture with politics. Moreover, the project had built up a network of writers, photographers and other contacts keen to make such a publication work. After much constructive conflict, a dummy

magazine and some preliminary fundraising, the Socialist Movement decided to keep the company (Socialist Newspapers (Publications) Ltd) going but to give up ownership of the project and invite others to join it in launching a monthly magazine called *Red Pepper*.

The political backstory that *Red Pepper* outlines gives an important insight into how it conceptualised itself and the context of its development. The defeats of the 1980s, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disorientation of movements would seem like a less-than-ideal context for the launch of a new socialist magazine. What seems important for *Red Pepper* at the time was that they launched out of an existing collection of networks, connections, political radicals from a range of movements and perspectives who could agree on the common need for a wide-ranging and diverse left publication. The late 1990s were perhaps even more challenging for a socialist publication such as *Red Pepper*, as the Labour Party moved towards third-wave social liberalism under Tony Blair, or Blairism (Schmidt 2019). *Red Pepper* seems to have survived through the 1990s and 2000s by having a sustained core of supporters, writers and contributors and an openness to engage new movements and all shades of progressive politics. This included in the 2000s anti-globalisation and anti-war movements, environmentalism, anti-racism and feminism. The post-2014 era had seen a shift in UK radical media, particularly in London. New publications such as *The Canary* and *Novara* had emerged, and for a period, Corbyn's Labour Party and the group Momentum meant that hundreds of thousands of mostly young people were politically active and radical.

Nelson had been hired five years previously, in 2012, as a community and political organiser. Her role was to build the support base and community involvement of supporters with *Red Pepper* through outreach and events, as well as look at redeveloping the internal production dynamics of the publication in a post-2008 financial crisis context. Nelson had worked both in journalism and social justice foundations, as well as being a committed socialist-feminist.

It was a crowdfunding appeal to create my role five years ago. It was a

role that I applied for and got. And the reason they created this role which is a strange kind of marketing type political organizer role [is that]... they weren't doing very well promoting [the magazine]... It just became the kind of strange hybrid role of political organizing and marketing. So trying to like – trying to grow in a politically useful way for the left. I was trying to find ways that that could work.

Solidarity Times and *DDR* share an office and studio space in Jigsaw, an independently run social space, formerly Dublin office of the Shell to Sea environmental campaign and the main social centre of the anti-globalisation movement. *Solidarity Times* and *DDR* are contrasting in form and origin to the three other publications. *Solidarity Times* is an anarchist publication, directly run by the Workers Solidarity Movement (WSM). *DDR* is a radio collective that also runs events and produces zines. It emerged out of a convergence of the youth counter-culture music scene and *Rabble* magazine, an anti-establishment media collective formed during the Irish financial crisis and recession.

Solidarity Times is part of an important Irish anarchist tradition dating back to the 1980s. Flood, who was interviewed, has been involved since the 1980s. He produced his first piece of anarchist publishing while in secondary school, with a newspaper called the *Radical*. Pro-choice and feminist organising in the 1980s, along with industrial and community struggles, efforts to fight privatisation in the 1990s, and the emergence of the anti-globalisation movement and anti-war politics were all major social movement waves of which anarchists were important components. Shell to Sea, the campaign to fight an oil refinery on the north-west Mayo coast in the mid-2000s, and the campaign against bin privatisation were perhaps the highpoint of anarchist influence. Anarchist media was focused on *Indymedia* in the 2000s, as well as a print theoretical paper the *Anarchist Review* being produced. Flood has worked in IT since the 1990s, making technological changes, in particular quick and cheap production methods which can be used in support of movement, and self-organisation a key interest of Flood's.

In 2010 we were sort of looking at what was happening with Facebook and realized that you could get a lot of readers if you just treated it as if it was the newspapers. You actually wrote articles and published directly and the way it was set up you got ridiculously enormous reaches. I remember getting one and a half million out of something during Operation Cast Lead. So we built up the kind of specific anarchist page we had which is that just called *Workers' Solidarity Movement*. The group initially reached 65,000 people but at that point we noticed that stories about things happening in Ireland weren't doing all that well comparatively to other stuff. I mean, when you look at where people were following the page, two-thirds of people [who] followed it with that site were not from Ireland. So people have followed us because they liked articles about anarchism or maybe they liked what we were saying about Palestine or whatever else, but they really [had] no interest whatsoever in what some TD in the Dáil was saying.

Dublin Digital Radio (DDR) is the newest radical media publication to be considered. It emerged in 2016 as a collective community-focused radio project. While the emphasis is on creating music, a broader analysis of Irish and international counter-cultural, anti-establishment and radical publications and stations took place. In particular, early organisers of *DDR* saw a convergence of music, counter-cultural youth politics, and anti-establishment, austerity-era publication, *Rabble*. In 2016, austerity and anti-austerity politics were being replaced by new social movements such as abortion rights, housing, and anti-racism while a 'recovery' emerged for capital in Ireland. Profitability returned to financial services and industrial sectors, and prices, in particular rent and the cost of living, began to rise. Finnan had studied English in college and was politicised by austerity. Youth unemployment hit 40% in the recession and mass emigration from Ireland occurred. In this context, Finnan survived by teaching part-time, and often on zero-hour contracts, at English-language schools. *Rabble* and a cheap and flourishing counter-cultural scene were the life-blood for Finnan in Dublin, allowing him to have a chance to write

and keep a sense of community in the context of poverty and barriers to social mobility.

So this radio was founded in 2016. We are thinking about space in the city having an online radio station. Thought it came about initially for music though we were thinking about people like alternative music they run different labels in the city and we're getting airplay on national radio. So we spent the summer 2016 getting equipment together getting interesting if people wanted to see that kind of thing.

6.3 Radicalism against Moralism

Interview participants were asked how they conceptualise radical media and radicalism more generally in their practice and politics. Two themes emerged: the idea of radicalism as a strategic intervention to transform the world, and radicalism as a form of collective identity and building of collective power. In both there is a rejection of the idea of radicalism as a moralistic concept. This division additionally mirrors and expands on concepts emerging in the content analysis: the idea of radical media as political active and radical media as persuasive.

Uetricht in *Jacobin* magazine considers radicalism on a number of levels – firstly as an entry concept to social justice, and secondly as a concept related to socialist strategy, which he contrasts with radicalism as a moralising ‘performativity’:

I think a certain segment of young people ... associate being a radical with being a good thing. And you can see that increasingly in like Bernie Sanders campaign and stuff like that. There's also this tendency [to consider] radicalism is like holding those beliefs, like, really really strongly and being a radical means that I will not let the slightest, you know, political infractions pass or, like, if I hear the wrong language that I confront those things right away. Just, like, uncompromising. And radicalism become the kind of posture. Yeah. And to me that is not what I associate with radicalism. My radicalism is about, at the most

fundamental level, ending oppression of all kinds and to me confronting capitalism. Yeah. So. But I also, like, being radical to me means, like, thinking about the most strategic ways to effect change rather than taking some kind of pure moralism.

This assessment of radicalism puts three considerations together. The first is a broadly positive, normative orientation which fits the starting definition of radical media and Fenton's (2016b) analysis of radicalism as politically progressive and broad. This is contrasted with a conceptualisation of radicalism as part of a moderate–radical division that has been important within social movement theory and egalitarian theory. Out of these two opposing ideas there is a third position, the idea that radicalism is the intertwining of strong, principled positions, such as the end of oppression and capitalism, with a strategy-orientation to intervene as well as can be done in a political context.

Burns is unsure if *In These Times* is radical. Burns considers the magazine's capacity to facilitate and support the 'cross-fertilisation', 'cross-over' and 'convergence' of ideas and people, in particular between different spheres such as social movements, community groups, political organisations, and trade union members, journalists and media producers, as the most substantive radicalism within *In These Times*. For her, radicalism is also a strategic intervention focused on the best use of resources and skills to develop radical and progressive struggle. Burns considers how journalistic resources can be used in progressive politics in a strategic manner in a way that empowers people through education, creates engagement among groups through the sharing of knowledge and more generally creates an insight into how power works.

Flood in *Solidarity Times* considered radicalism in terms of the theories, writers, ideas, strategies and perspectives developed over time by those in the anarchist tradition and in the self-organisation of the oppressed and working class. Finnan in *DDR* connects radicalism to labour, culture and the everyday experiences of alienation. Finnan places emphasis on collective identity and collective power as radical, including the feelings, ideas and processes that

emerges in and among collective projects.

[DDR] is radical because, like, the workers should control the organisation and the profit should reinvest in the organisation and the community should own it. People shouldn't be creaming off that or profiting off it. Community media in Ireland is very weak, projects start, but fail... I think it is important for people because it connects identity and creates a connection between political movements, culture and individual identity... What actually is radical media? Reporting on something like an eviction... weekly or daily happening and doing something to normalise that as a lens of looking at society.

6.4 Principled and Pleasing Radical Content

Two content themes emerge in the interviews: the idea of principled content which has normative value, and the idea of pleasing content which is interesting, funny, engaging and dynamic.

Uetricht considered *Jacobin's* content firstly as 'consumer of it'. He argued that *Jacobin* had sharp analysis and high-quality design. Uetricht considered *Jacobin* aesthetically pleasing and engaging to read. Uetricht considered *Jacobin's* style an important aspect of its mass appeal.

Incredibly sharp analysis. Incredibly good writing which is so rare. Like he (Sunkara) cared about aesthetics and it wasn't just about putting on a political line but crafting arguments that were compelling on multiple levels, both on the intellectual level but also through gorgeous prose that reflected a real willingness to wrestle in an intellectually honest way with political questions, which I feel is lacking almost uniformly across the left... Much of the left wing [is about] reciting chapter and verse of socialist Marxist thinking of the past as if they're like fundamentalists quoting the Bible. *Jacobin* is not that. It takes those classic words seriously, very seriously. But it's not just sort of broadly repeating what the forefathers or mothers said. So it became my favourite publication. I

found it a joy to read.

Uetricht also considered content in terms of the relationship between popular and theoretical analysis. He highlights the positives but also the challenges of a 'grad school Marxist' audience. Here there is acknowledgement that there is a tension between an intellectual audience, which includes academics, intellectuals and students reading *Jacobin*, and a wider popular audience.

We have this new academic journal coming out – *Catalyst* edited by Vivek Chipper, a sociologist from New York University, and Robert Brenner, who is a historian from UCLA... Chibber has written for the *New Left Review*, Mike Davis a famous US Marxist, His home was *New Left Review* for a while... They don't take aesthetics too seriously. I think they are a little more academic. We aim when we're starting this academic journal to move some of the heavy-duty theoretical academic content there. *Jacobin* will be, hopefully, lighter because even though we're trying to be popular and accessible we don't always succeed at that. We still sort of have what I would call a grad school Marxist [appeal].

The 'grad school Marxist' is an interesting class fraction identified by Uetricht. Precarious conditions have been created for many young workers in the financial crisis and years of austerity within media, communication and journalism. Many have returned to university education, radicalised by the precarious conditions outside, and increasingly inside, the university, while also studying and writing from a critical lens. The re-emergence of Marxist theory in the crisis identified by Fuchs and Mosco (2012) is playing out in an overlap between 'grad school Marxists' in the academic field and in the audience and worker base of publications such as *Jacobin*.

Burns considers *In These Times* content in terms of a mixture of short and long-form pieces, reporting and analysis. Burns considers *In These Times* as more focused on what is happening 'on the ground' in comparison to *Jacobin*. *In These Times* takes a more traditional journalistic approach to content, conceptualising its content in terms of reporting and editorials. Additionally,

there is to a degree a contradiction between an objective outsider approach to analysis and an integration with the subject, in particular social movement. Burns considers the investigative journalism institute which is part of *In These Times* as particularly unique:

We have a separate investigative institute that people apply to. We evaluate stories based on how interesting the topic is, how novel and its potential for impact. We've done a lot of stories on prisons and policing, a lot on civil liberties and environmental injustice. The thing that I've been working on all weekend is about Native land rights, and corporations infringing on those. It's about digging in much deeper in a way that we think can sort of like critique and form new useful insight and revelations that just sort of straight reporting doesn't cover.

Nelson considers *Red Pepper* a social movement publication with an intersectional and socialist lens. Rather than focusing on the immediately topical events, *Red Pepper* is a space for longer-form analysis and reflection.

In the magazine we don't do a lot of news because we are more of a slower kind of media, so it's more like analysis and commentary and movement analysis. We have a website and that's a similar concept, but including more frequent shorter blog posts and things.

Solidarity Times focuses on short-form and quick reporting of actions and events, foregrounding the voices of the working class and oppressed as being able to speak and action for themselves. Changes in technology have helped develop this process. The accessibility of cheap video recording in the 2010s meant that videos of reasonable quality can be recorded and produced.

With the spread of video, we very quickly switched to that. So we do an awful lot of video reporting IDB where it's not also actually I mean you don't only end it in a bit of a voiceover like like I mean most people they do video on camera all the time.

In *DDR* content is made up of music shows, political events such as fundraisers (for housing campaigns, migrant groups, international solidarity groups and feminist collectives) and finally a limited run of podcasts and discussion shows, in particular 'The Current'. Finnan considers *DDR* a space for people and groups to intersect, in particular elements of the counter-cultural music scene and social movements.

Most shows are music shows, that would involve maybe people with an interest in music or maybe a person that runs a label or maybe a musician or a DJ doing an hour or two hours, maybe weekly or monthly, in the station. They produce the shows themselves. We have been trying to do an element of cross-fertilisation by trying to make people from my music background and get them aware of housing stuff

Social movement reporting, election analysis and other social, political and cultural content make up the majority of *In These Times* pieces. Despite this, Burns considers the reporting focused on the organised labour movement in the USA as the most valuable aspect of *In These Times'* content.

So labor is maybe the most distinctive part of our coverage in that we try and focus in a very granular way, in particular rank-and-file organizing and big developments in the labor movement.

The labour coverage is particularly focused on engaging with the 'rank and file' members of the unions, with an emphasis on telling the stories of ordinary workers and union members. Burns sees this as a version of 'beat reporting'. 'Labor beat reporting' engages the experiences and actions of ordinary members over and above the union leadership. Uetracht added to this, as someone heavily involved in labour reporting for *In These Times*. He considers the labour reporting of *In These Times* as a strategic orientation, in which it is hoped trade union members get more coverage of their work and in turn they read the analysis and develop their strategic understanding.

So, you know, labor unions send out a press release about some strike

action. We want to cover that but also theoretical thinking about what the union, what labor should be up to. This has a very strong kind of rank-and-file sympathy [and] is somewhat of an opposition to trade union bureaucracy. Probably not talking about it in that kind of way, which is sort of classical Trotskyist.

Uetricht also puts emphasis on the coverage and support *In These Times* gave to Bernie Sanders in 2016. There is a tension here between how Burns and Uetricht see the purpose of the content of *In These Times*. Burns wants to emphasize the investigative reporting and social movement coverage of the magazine and Uetricht wants to emphasize how support for Bernie Sanders expanded the research of *In These Times*, with this popularity a basis for expansion.

Maybe 60 or 70 per cent of our coverage was related to Bernie Sanders for like six months. We were trying to publish articles, for example, that were written by people who were members of unions who were like, Why did my union endorse Clinton when that was a foolish thing to do and the membership wasn't properly consulted about this decision? The aim was to give voice to this segment of the trade union movement which was to the left of where their leadership was. Also the aim is to write stuff that can be used for strategic orientation for the labor movement. So, you know, we publish something like the labor movement has an opportunity to pursue this kind of legislative agenda right now, it should be bold and should do this, or like labor has largely given up the strike, we need to reach out to strike back.

Nelson places emphasis on the radical pluralism of *Red Pepper* and the publication's diversity of coverage. Radical pluralism is distinct from media pluralism more generally. Radical pluralism emphasises a diverse range of progressive, working-class and marginalised voices being engaged as part of radical media content, including, in Britain: feminists, anti-racist activists, labour party members, environmentalists, housing campaigners, workers and trade unionists. These voices are both a topic and lens of analysis. These

voices can disagree with and critique each other, but as part of a nurturing process which enriches analysis and our radical knowledge.

The kinds of things that we will cover could be classed as issues of interest to the broad left. So campaigns politics, particularly from a movement point of view, rather than, like, I guess we would feel that a lot of the media sees politics as happening in Westminster. We're a bit more interested in bottom-up grass-roots change and protest movements. We have been quite good at putting energy towards feminist issues, environmentalism, challenging injustice, social justice issues and economic justice.

Flood uses the example of eviction reporting to illustrate the quick video reporting approach of *Solidarity Times* and its focus on social movements. The ability to quickly record self-organised struggles in communities and on the 'streets' is the main content focus

The big Grangegorman eviction, the first one, I lived just up the road so I got to go and get a video of that scuffling in the courtyard, got the bus to work, edited it and then posted it when I got in. And that meant that pretty much immediately people had access to the fact that something big was going on and that mobilised people later.

While music is the main focus of *DDR* content, Finnan wishes to develop content which focuses on social issues and centres marginalised voices. 'I'm trying to focus on social issues. I have been trying to see what we're gonna do. Unfortunately we lost momentum with shows such as "Current", which was starting to cover a range of things.'

6.5 Sustainable Radical Media Production

The financing and labour model of radical media publication was a major consideration across the interviews. Finance and labour are at the core of production and radical media actors were hugely concerned with how to build

sustainable organisations that could contribute strategically to radical media and politics over an extended period of time. Overall, a convergence of financing and labour models emerged. Production was semi-professionalised, with elements of classical journalism and academic writing combining with social movement and activism in tightly organised radical media projects. Money is raised by publications/groups for a combination of staff costs, administrative costs and equipment, and all publications combined this with voluntary labour. The use of voluntary labour is a necessity – there is not enough money to pay everyone for every hour of work done – rather than an ideological belief in volunteerism. This marks a major shift from the early 2000s, where projects such as *Indymedia* were opposed to paid labour and social movement politics placing emphasis on prefiguration and exchange of knowledge and skills instead of financial transactions. Even the anarchist *Solidarity Times* operates a cross-subsidy model, where the Workers Solidarity Movement funds *Solidarity Times* through their membership income. All organisations indicated that subscription, which created financial and political independence and longer sustainability, was the ideal framework, with the exception of *Solidarity Times*.

Four particular finance and labour strands emerged within this hybrid model. Subscriptions are at the core of radical media funding. Readers and listeners subscribe to the publication or platform and pay a monthly or annual fee to support it, or they join as a member or pay a mixture of fixed monthly payments and once-off donations to sustain the publication. This is the central point of convergence that radical media actors agree on and the core of radical media independence. In addition, subscriptions are supplemented by grants, in which publications source external (non-governmental) forms of fixed-term funding or payment to cover either specific projects or general operational expenses. These are generally socially progressive philanthropic funds. The third and more minor source of funding was a cross-subsidy model, where the income from other organisations funded a radical media project. Finally, the fourth strand was volunteer-based, where self-financing and fundraising, socials, gigs and events helped to raise funds. This combined with unpaid

labour and other sources of non-monetary labour – skills shared, exchanges, training – and the use of spaces and other resources from larger organisations.

The funding source is an important question of power within radical media works. *In These Times* is mostly dependent on grant funding. They explain this as 'often fickle' philanthropic funding, where rich people donate to 'good causes' such as their media project. This creates problems in terms of inconsistency in funding, as well as shifting power towards a pool of progressive donors, who rather than exerting direct editorial decision-making influence, influence radical media through processes of labour: the continued applications process, deadlines, professionalisation and quantification of radical media labour and content production. *Red Pepper* engages grant funding in a more limited way, drawing on funding for specific projects only.

The core funding source for *In These Times* is foundation and grant funding. Burns argues that this presents difficulties for a publication that strives for sustainability and independence:

Foundation grants or individual rich people's grant money, quite inconsistent with or varying. Yeah ... I guess it's consistent in that we have staff, consistently. But, you know, I have been in [here], almost five years, I've been there, I've been in sort of various periods of full-time [or] maybe [being] laid off for two weeks, you know, and that's just sort of the nature of it. We're trying to build away from that. Partially just because you can't step that way. But, generally like independent [means] grant, or funded by rich people. I don't think it's too big a problem in terms of like our editorial side. Occasionally, maybe, you know. Like it's happened maybe once or twice I can think of, where you know our bosses, like there's this weird rich lady who really likes X thing. We're gonna write an article about that.

Trade union support is a secondary income source, more important to Burns because it is part of a process of outreach to organised trade unionism:

A couple of big unions support us, would like to sponsor us. I mean it's

not a lot of our money comes that way but it's good that they do, it tends to be the more progressive unions who sort of recognize the value of labor coverage. But also we've been pretty successful in saying, 'Look, we have an editorial firewall.'

Nelson was particularly interesting in discussing the nuts and bolts of radical media production. She was hired in 2012, four years after the financial crisis, as *Red Pepper* rethought aspects of their organisational form, production processes, finance and labour. *Red Pepper* is primarily funded by subscription and Nelson emphasises the blending of free digital content and a print edition that people 'want to' buy as a key selling point. There is a steady sustainability to *Red Pepper*. While this is seen as a positive thing, there had been hopes for a greater breakthrough, with an expanded membership and reach after the financial crisis, in particular because of the disillusionment many progressive readers were having with mainstream media, in particular the *Guardian*.

The donation and subscription model was modernised under Nelson in *Red Pepper*, and the sale of the magazine is key to its sustainability. As Nelson comments:

I suppose the magazine gets us regular donations and subscriptions. It's like the core money that keeps the organisation afloat because sometimes it's suggested it [would] be cheaper to go online, so it's expensive for us to produce the magazine but it's actually the magazine that we find readers are willing to pay for, so it keeps us having a cash flow. And with that cash flow it means that we manage to survive.

Although everyone involved would like to not be dependent on grants, and likes the idea of just getting more subscribers and more donations, I think the reality is when you look at the accounts we have depended on occasional grants because of that. Without that it just clicks because it would be grants for projects, like maybe once a year we get a small grant for a particular project and then my job was to try and make money... We experimented with all sorts of different stuff, including merchandise and trade union affiliation and advertising revenue. So I guess the best strategy was to diversify income streams and to

streamline like the admin of bureaucracy as much as we could and to make it easier for people to become supportive.

We never felt that free content on the Internet was a threat to our books like print magazine or media organization because we noticed that more and more people that visited our website for free and the more people that heard about the magazine, the more people would be likely to think about timing.

Jacobin is purely subscription-based, and run on a professionalised, unionised media model, although there is some segmentation of work between staff and 'pitch writers' who are paid per article. The subscription model shifts power to the audience. If *Jacobin* produce content and the audience doesn't like it, it withdraws its payments; if it produces content the audience likes *Jacobin's* income grows. A symbiotic relationship occurs here, as *Jacobin* tries to influence the consciousness of a large target audience and the audience influences *Jacobin's* political direction in turn. The challenge that such a model faces is that *Jacobin* is dependent on a growth model, where a new audience feeds new subscriptions. This expansion forces a speeding up of production, and potentially an increased extraction of labour.

All publications to varying degrees engaged in volunteer labour as part of their work. The discussion of voluntary labour and the relationship between types of resources, paid work, unpaid work, care and emotional labour was underdeveloped in the interviews. If we consider volunteer labour as unwaged labour performed as part of the radical media project and as part of the fabric of social relations in production, the extra meetings, events and after-hour socials, volunteer labour is still the dominant labour form.

Jacobin have the largest sum of money established over time, but even they were cognisant of 'the sacrifice' particularly early on. Editors have had second and third jobs, have used savings to cover living costs and have worked freelance, and occasional writers for *Jacobin* have received fixed payments per article and as such were unlikely to derive their income solely from *Jacobin*. As noted by Uetrict, *Jacobin* operates with a 'Harvard Business School model

with socialist politics'. Micah thinks this a positive, arguing that 'we have created a commodity, if you will'.

Uetricht identifies three particular dynamics of *Jacobin* magazine's production approach that have been highly effective: firstly, a clear business plan and focus on capacity to function in an open/free market; secondly, an early 'graft' of low- to no-pay work, sustained through other paid work, subsidising the labour time at *Jacobin* to get the project off the ground; and thirdly, after the initial phase, a financial sustainability established through a subscription and advertising funding model.

I was the first person who worked full time for *Jacobin*. This is 2013/14 I think. Bhaskar gave me the job but there was no money to pay me a full-time wage and he was working as a receptionist at CUNY, the City University of New York, and he was doing *Jacobin* stuff from his day job. And I was being paid about half-time wages, because of that... I was living off of some meagre savings. So I did that for a year because of the project which I very much believed in.

Well [now] the main thing is the financial stability which mostly comes from subscriptions. It's one of the few magazines in America, a socialist Marxist magazine, that can survive out on the free market without like some rich benefactors, but we do have people who donate to us, including people who give large once-off donations. But if tomorrow all those donations dried up the magazine would still survive based upon its own ability to get subscribers and advertising dollars and web advertising. Yeah. And I would chalk that up entirely to the kind of incredible business prowess of Bhaskar – [he] could go work on Wall Street.

DDR also operates, and consciously sets out, a subscription basis for its operation, although its costs are low, with cheap rent and no paid staff. *DDR* is an example of a subscription and independent funding model operating at a smaller scale. The independence that subscriptions bring helps insulate *DDR* from corporate sponsorship and other forms of 'tied' funding as the platform

develops its political identity and structures. Finnan in *DDR* mentioned burnout directly, but it is something that emerges under the surface of all the publications: the need to 'shift' or 'change it up', the movement between and among radical media projects, and other progressive organisations, campaigns and groups, and a more general squeeze on low-paid, precarious workers, including double-jobbing. Burnout, as a concept, touches on the emotional and relational labour of the radical media organisations and their position within wider radical politics. As Finnan explains,

Rabble [were] having their own problems with sustainability at the time. *Rabble* have gone over the hill and were trying to get back on and get subscribers back from... their heyday. So I think we kind of copped quickly you need to try to get a subscription model going when you're on the way up. We want to be funded by our listeners but also everyone who is doing a show pays five euro a month. I think that that's kind of standard. I think [in] pirate radio stations or online radio stations it becomes more of a club or community.

Solidarity Times operates a cross-subsidy from their anarchist organisation, Workers Solidarity Movement. As a result, it is the only radical media project which does not engage with or consider a subscription model of funding. Flood explains:

The way our funding works, members put in between two and four per cent of their income. Okay, and then actually we don't spend much on Facebook publishing... we spend money on advertising full events to get people to the door and in fact I think that's one of the reasons why although what we were doing was massively successful initially it is not getting the same sort of reach nowadays, because I've noticed that all political parties pay to advertise this kind of video reports.

The shift from the early 2000s to radical media today is significant. Firstly, the concept of prefiguration, raised by Atton (2002) and Downing (2000) as a transformative process, is replaced by a discussion of the hard and difficult

'grind' of radical media development. This 'grind' is something shared by radical media actors in a diverse range of publications, from the music-focused *DDR* to the social movement and radical pluralism of *Red Pepper*, the social justice journalism of *In These Times* and the interventionist socialist *Jacobin*. This seems to be reflected in the background of these publications and radical media actors. All four have experienced the precarious conditions of the post-2008 financial crisis and era of austerity, as well as political frustrations with past movements, such as Occupy, or radical media projects, for example *Rabble*. The grind is simultaneously an acknowledgement of the limits of radical media development, the hard and boring work involved, and a strategic orientation to build sustainable platforms and publications that will last over short-term and potentially more enjoyable or cathartic projects. This hard realism is both a strength and a limitation of the radical media projects. They are durable and resilient, but can they express the same level of experimentation and new possibility as a result?

The way in which *Solidarity Times* diverges from the other four publications is important to consider in terms of these historic shifts in radical media production over the course of the 2000s. In the early 2000s, legacy anarchist publications and *Indymedia* had millions of readers and hundred of contributors. *Solidarity Times's* practical adoption of Facebook, 'treating it like a newspaper', can be interpreted as both pragmatic and a retreat from the concept of independent ownership at the core of radical publishing, particularly anarchist radical publishing. This retreat owes much to the reduction in resources, as anarchism has fragmented and declined in Ireland as part of an ideological shift.

6.6 Adaptive Radical Digital Journalism?

Mainstream media labour and journalism has been facing a decade-long crisis. Production and technology shifts from legacy corporate to digital corporate media, and a period of austerity and lean production, have put pressure on media workers and eroded the status of professional journalism. How does this impact on radical media? How do journalism as a profession and digital technology interact with this crisis in mind?

In the interviews carried out here, radical media workers and journalists are conscious of changes in journalism and media technology, but they are not as concerned about these changes as other young journalists. While acknowledging the general challenges of poor conditions, precarious employment and low pay in the economy at large, three factors emerge. The idea that journalism should be a protected profession, involving a degree of elite or middle-class social status, is contested by radical media journalists and producers. That does not mean that radical journalists think that they should have low pay, rather that journalism should be considered work and journalists should be paid a living wage and unionised along with other workers.

Radical journalists are less motivated by career progression in the narrow sense of achieving status, power and leading positions within media and communications. Instead, they see themselves as journalists because they are radicals. Journalism as such, in ideal terms, could be both a field where they can make a decent wage and a field where they can challenge the powers that be and facilitate marginalised voices and left-wing politics. Finally, radical media journalists and workers are less supportive of legacy media projects and they do not see the rise of digital media corporations as a reason to return to 'traditional' press production.

Flood, in *Solidarity Times*, considers the opportunities of digital production as part of a historical sequence of innovation in production which has reduced entry costs for radical producers and allowed radical messages to be spread. *Solidarity Times* sees a process of novel, inventive use of the digital by anarchists in Ireland from the 1990s website, *Indymedia*, blogs and then social media pages. Flood argues that these, combined with other technological advances in audio and video equipment, present an opportunity that radicals can use to push their message out; in particular, the ability to do instant reporting has massive value for social movements, campaigns and direct action groups.

Other publications, such as *Red Pepper*, *Jacobin*, and *In These Times*, all combine digital content and a print edition. Nelson argued that print added

value, or was seen as what people wanted to pay for. Here arguments of tangibility and aesthetic quality are wrestled with by radical media producers. The combination of digital and print appears to be a second convergence of production for these publications, along with the finance and labour model convergence.

DDR uses and engages the early 20th century production method of the radio. Mainstream radio in Ireland retains a high listenership and there is a strong tradition from the 1980s and 1990s of pirate and community radio, which *Dublin Digital Radio* builds on. Radio also allows for an easier entry point for new participation as people can run their own one-hour slots. *DDR* capitalises on this by asking radio producers to become members and pay into *DDR*. The wider crisis of media, the loss of media revenue, the undermining of the traditional bastion of media production by social media and citizens' journalism and the dynamics of fake news are less concerning for radical media producers, who are used to working with limited resources and appealing to those dissatisfied with mainstream media.

Burns, of *In These Times*, has a particular interest in the idea of radical journalism. Her knowledge of journalism as an editor of *In These Times* and head of their investigative journalism institute is supported by her experience as a freelance journalist. To Burns, journalism is seen primarily as a skill-set, which can be developed and practised. These practices are useful for social movements, progressive and radical politics. Freedom of Information requests, investigation, beat reporting and interview processes are all important skill-sets that need training and practice. Radical journalism can be constructed as a site in which these skills are redistributed. The radical journalist as such becomes an *active* part of movements, building justice and equality. Burns uses the example of investigation into police murders in Chicago and how it contributed to #blacklivesmatter and police justice struggles. The Freedom of Information requests and investigative work uncovered malpractice and mistreatment. The choice was made to distribute this strategically to the communities affected so that they could use it as a 'weapon' against the powerful in the city.

Burns also argues that journalism is becoming increasingly proletarianised in the USA, with young journalists ever more conscious of themselves as workers as they unionise. Secondary sources show that *In These Times* unionised in 2014 (Jamelson 2014). This is potentially an important part of what can be constituted as radical journalism in the 21st century: a proletarianised worker integrated into social movements and progressive politics and organised and unionised as a worker.

A lot of journalists in some sense [have] become proletarian, have decided to join unions and often or joining industrial unions rather than sort of like guilds... I wouldn't necessarily say that has had a discernible effect yet. Ideally you can think of ways where having organized journalists would lead to either sort of like more editorial independence... a radical bloc of journalists or something. I don't know that that's necessarily sort of observable yet. I mean in some cases. There's no network of journalists around , like radical journalists, or journalists focused on social justice issues or any space or forums.

Uetrict also considered the labour practices and challenges of funding an inconsistency. Here the idea of a radical journalist and a radical political actor are in contradiction to a degree, as Uetrict accepts lower and less consistent wages because he 'believes' in the projects he is working for.

I was a senior in college in January 2009 right after the financial crash. So, I was there and half the staff got laid off; people hadn't gotten paid in months. The funding just totally dried up. [I hadn't been paid] for a long time and then eventually had to [be] laid off and it was very terrible. And some of those people were extremely sharp people, very good. Journalists and editors had just left journalism. These were amazing people who went to nursing schools because they didn't think there was a future.

The proletarianisation of journalism that Burns outlines may not be enough to

save journalism as a career. Instead, in the more dystopian scenario, journalism increasingly disappears and in general is replaced by user-generated content, celebrity think pieces and clickbait, all extracted and commodified for digital media corporate profit.

There is a lot of Doomsday about the death of journalism. It's interesting that *In These Times* has been more stable recently than like *Al Jazeera America* [which] went under. It had very good coverage that was funded by like an oil dictator. Yes, surprisingly that turned out to not be a great model. It definitely seems like journalism as a career is increasingly less viable. So maybe that's the reason. For all of us to think more seriously about these questions, especially for those of us who are sort of radical or left.

6.6 Pragmatic Decision Making

The decision-making process and its importance was emphasised by *Red Pepper*, *Solidarity Times* and *DDR*. The subject was not really engaged by Uetricht in *Jacobin* or Burns of *In These Times*. A reason for this may be that both are producers in more professionalised media organisations with less crossover with social movements. *Jacobin* and *In These Times* both operate in a more professionalised and hierarchically structured way, with editors, staff and then freelance contributors. *Jacobin* pays people for their work and is pro-union, allowing and encouraging staff and contributors to unionise, as well as being highly centralised. *In These Times* has more of a progressive NGO structure. Unionisation in 2014 was contested, and it was argued by management that it could lead to cuts in their philanthropy funding and therefore make the workers worse off. Democracy in these publications is contested and limited; in *Jacobin's* case production efficiency and content is prioritised over internal democratic practice, and for *In These Times*, the limitations of an institutional radical media, the contradiction between management and staff, limits the radicalism of the production process.

The decision-making process and its importance was emphasised by *Red Pepper*, *Solidarity Times* and *DDR*. In *Red Pepper* the decision-making process

is consensus-based, and builds on a grassroots campaigning model adapted to a formalised, professionalised radical media. As Nelson outlines:

I suppose we have for the magazine... four editors. I think there might be a fifth coming soon and they take it in turns to [do] an issue of the magazine... so for each issue of the magazine we have an editorial meeting and the lead editor will sort of make notes during that meeting and the editor would take different ideas from different people with different pitches and we'll try and weave it together into some sort of... So as a magazine there's some sort of journey that the reader's going [on] and they'll come up with an editorial to see what that is.

So it's a mixed decision-making process... there is always a discussion. The editor of the magazine gets a certain amount of say but if anyone objected then we discuss it further and I guess we eventually reach consensus and if something is pretty contentious then we might frame it as a debate and publish both sides or we might have to just keep on talking.

Solidarity Times is a project of the Workers Solidarity Movement (WSM), and is therefore based on the decision-making and funding model of the anarchist organisation itself. There is an interlinking of decision-making between *Solidarity Times* and WSM, as Flood outlines:

It's a WSM project, work wise. So it is an organised formal group that has twice-yearly big decision-making meetings options. Every couple of weeks we meet and then go elsewhere and that kind of instantaneous decisions we make in a Facebook chatroom. Stuff like can somebody cover this. The if someone is not quite confident yet about writing stuff or they just need some help with stuff they put it onto a Google docs... Anything of substance goes on to the WSM website as well. So we kind of view *Solidarity Times* as WSM actively

[As WSM] I mean I think because the methodology involves a lot of these kinds of very formal discussions that you end up with written position papers, quite large and complicated at the end, and that has the

advantage that you've not only talked about – you've not only agreed whatever you think about various things – but you've actually also gone through a fairly big process of discussion and debate around us. And so... very seldom do we have political disagreement in *Solidarity Times*... outside of a piece not being very well written.

In *DDR* the decision making itself has also been developed from existing volunteer media projects and grassroots groups and campaigns. The awareness of the constant strain of volunteer labour and the challenges of experimentation have facilitated important discussions and considerations of how to avoid burnout and develop collective practice.

We realised that it's been three or four of us. We're just doing everything and we were doing everything: replying to emails, putting up stuff on social media events and all the other shitty work, the admin work you don't see, and then you realise you spent nearly an hour or two every day. One time I was working part-time, I was actually spending so much of my time looking for new shows, doing things like that [so I learned] don't be protective of your work, things like share it out. That became a really important way of getting other people involved.

An informal focus on diversity, collective practice and community, in particular the active recruitment of women, became a more formalised process in early 2019 as *DDR* developed a constitution and made steps towards becoming a co-operative.

We don't have a constitution... it's something that we've been working on this year. It's kind of like how we make decisions. This is the constitution that we [use to] figure out what our values are. We want to do it early because I feel like this project [which] was in gestation is setting up exactly something we need to play with and how we do things... We figured out some kind of form that we're comfortable with. But also, I'd like to involve the local community and listeners in some way. There's gonna be a co-op where I can make a decision in terms of open position.

Red Pepper, *Solidarity Times* and *DDR*, who focus more on decision-making and democracy, and take a position in favour of bottom-up and democratic decision-making, are nevertheless far from the prefigurative and horizontal models of the early 2000s outlined in platforms such as *Indymedia*, in movements such as anti-globalisation through to Occupy and among theorists such as Downing (2000). Instead, all three publications operate a democratic hybrid, focused on a mix of consensus and majority decision-making within clearly defined and accountable structures. Decisions with *Red Pepper* are made by staff, within *Solidarity Times*, by WSM members and in *DDR*, by a steering committee. These decisions are made with a pragmatic organising ethos in mind.

6.8 To Accumulate or Cooperate?

The way in which radical media publications and platforms relate to each other is a first important political-relational consideration. Two approaches to inter-publication politics emerge: an approach based on cooperation, in which publications work together fulfilling different roles within a radical media ecosystem, or a more accumulative dynamic of individual publications growing and acquiring other publications, expanding the reach of their brand.

Jacobin have an, often brash, focus on accumulation and expansion. Uetricht identifies *Jacobin*'s production model as a 'Harvard Business School model' adopted for socialist media production, with a clear year-on-year strategy for growth. The first person paid within the publication was a designer; after this, a core team of staff was built. Collaborations are focused on expanding *Jacobin* into new spheres of influence, building co-projects with the radical publishing house Verso Books, Haymarket Books and the Historical Materialism conference. Since 2017, titles in England, such as *Tribune*, as well as magazines in Germany, Italy and Brazil, have all been acquired or developed by *Jacobin*, and a network of editors, writers and political sympathisers has been fostered.

Additionally, Uetricht connects *Jacobin* to a longer tradition of radical publishing and radical thought, from the *New Left Review* through to *Historical Materialism*. The goal is something Curran (2002) recognised in the early radical press of the Chartist era: develop not only an alternative to the mainstream or liberal press but build a socialist press that can overtake it.

Nelson considers the relationship among radical media publications in the context of austerity, the breakthrough election which made Corbyn leader of the Labour Party, and Brexit. Within this, The World Transformed, a one-day debate, discussion and education festival, started as a fringe event of the Labour Party conference, has been the most fruitful cooperative intersection of radical media publications in Britain. The World Transformed was started by Momentum, formerly the political organisation which developed around the campaign for Corbyn to become leader of the Labour Party. It has been a space where radical intellectuals, young activists, social movement participants and publications meet and share ideas, organising and articulating a counter-hegemony (Rhodes 2019; Watts & Bale 2019; Manguashca & Dean 2019). Nelson considers The World Transformed as having been a key plank in the renewal of radical British intellectualism.

[We were] looking for sort of creative experimental ways ... to do radical politics in an inclusive way that sort of got like embedded values of equality. I think ... the best collaboration we've had recently might be with The World Transformed and it's an offshoot. It's related to the Corbyn campaign but it's a couple of steps removed because, like, Momentum is a bit detached, The World Transformed is a bit detached again.

So we collaborate with them to produce a special issue for magazine to go along with an event in Liverpool. The first World Transformed event was held in Liverpool alongside the party conference and it was like an alternative conference because it was open to anyone and you didn't have to be a party member and that was a really exciting collaboration. So that branding was like in the festival and our issue of the magazine with guest edits by people involved in putting on the event. And so it was

like we felt like we could be useful because we could provide some background reading for people that might come along for the event and wanted to explore things a bit further. And it just felt like an obvious link.

Nelson considers the radical media field in the UK as vibrant, with processes of interconnection at a national level but also internationally, particularly with and as part of European networks. Nelson argues that although there are some tensions, the British radical media sphere can be seen more as an ecosystem of publications with their own strengths and weaknesses and all contributing to a larger 21st-century socialist movement:

When I was in the role I was really interested to collaborate as much as possible and network with other media organisations. So I arranged like a meet up in London with different people from different left kinds of media projects. And that was quite good. It could have become much more; it was almost like it was like *Novara, New Internationalist*.

On a European level [we were part of a] social solidarity economy network. That's why I went to Greece and that's a very new attempt to make a European-wide network of media organisations. Somebody has fundraised some money to make that happen and they've got enough money to pay for I don't know how many meetings to take place.

Nelson considers the political context primarily through the lens of what use and role *Red Pepper* and radical media more generally can, do and should play in a deeply contested political environment. In relation to Brexit, the majority of the editorial team were in favour of Remain, while one editor was pro-Brexit. This meant a majority editorial line supporting Remain and a minority of articles at the time exploring left and EU-critical perspectives.

In terms of the benefits and limits in particular of Corbynism, Nelson argues that there wasn't necessarily a major growth for their publication off the back of Corbyn's rise, even though, for example, the *Guardian* lost subscribers over their strong opposition to Corbyn. Nelson argues that *Novara Media*, which had a quicker, reactive media format, producing sharp video content in particular,

may potentially have benefited more from the rise of Corbyn.

We haven't seen a huge, huge spike in readership ... like we thought we might off the back of like ... for a while a lot of people were really angry at the *Guardian* for just slaying Corbyn from day one. And we were, I think we were proud to be properly the only magazine in the UK to be like fully behind them [Labour]. It's like it's helped us but it's not a huge game changer in terms of sustainable financial stability. And then the other organisation that we feel close to, would be *Novara Media* because they really did seem to do a lot of coverage in the run-up to the election, and I imagine for them it was like they felt that they were more actively on it and doing more reactive media, quick stuff, everyday things, that us being a bit slower and clunkier maybe didn't quite get there in time.

It's not likely that we are going to be able to produce like viral videos, like *Novara Media* might do that. I think one strength that we have is that we've got this long-term support base. So we've built a long-term relationship with our readers that you don't get if you maybe just have some viral videos. So there's strengths and weaknesses too. And I think it's nice if we can work with them because they've got different strengths and we would like to have different roles.

6.9 Make Radical Media Great Again or Make it Nurturing?

A tension emerged in how radical media actors saw the relationship between radical media and radical politics more generally. Does radical media position itself as a driver of social change, a leader in the struggle, or does it play a supportive and experimenting role? *Jacobin* has the clearest articulation of radical media as a leader of a radical movement, while Burns of *In These Times* gives the strongest articulation of radical media as existing in a support role. The other three publications vary in how they consider the leadership and support. *Solidarity Times* exists to report on events, direct action and the politics of the social movements, not to lead it – but they also play a role in helping to facilitate and give direction to movements and actions, depending

on how and what they decide to cover. This borrows from the agitation-propaganda model of radical media. Meanwhile, *DDR* constructs itself in terms of a cultural counter-power. This is a synthesis between the leadership and support role. *Red Pepper* engages an analysis and support role primarily, but there is a slightly more active intervention, for example in the World Transformed conferences in the UK in 2016 and 2017, which attempted to frame the discussion around Corbynism and provide radical imagination to drive forward the Corbyn movement.

Uetricht argues that *Jacobin* engages in a type of political interventionism through an analysis and agitation explicitly aiming to influence political debate and organisation. This type of interventionism is both necessary and a means of clarifying a class-based socialist analysis. There is also a recognition of *Jacobin* being a site of experimentation and 'figuring out' a 21st-century socialism. *Jacobin* in particular drew on the early 20th-century US progressive era (1900–1914) and the socialism of the 1930s united front, while reinventing these historic socialist legacies:

Part of what we're trying to do [is] recreate a... *we're trying to like make Marxism great again.*

The left in the 21st century has to look very different from the left of the 20th century. Both because objective society has changed and also the left fucked up a lot in the 20th century. So my hope, whatever we're doing, can be either a seed... [of] whatever the new 21st-century left is going to be... In New York we are having like 75 people show up to a Brooklyn meeting of the *Jacobin* reading group. So I think there's this hunger for people who are disillusioned with the sectarian socialistic model because they want something else. They don't know what else they want and I think that the reading group helps bring them in.

The advent of 21st-century socialism is both embedded in a history of socialist and radical development and a particular process being shaped in the here and now. Burns in *In These Times* and Nelson in *Red Pepper* consider radical media as part of a radical pluralism, that demonstrates and models respect for the

diversity of radical voices, forms and motions. Both *Red Pepper* and *In These Times* also indicated that radical politics involves an intertwining of radical spaces: the digital and non-digital with online and offline spaces, such as events held in physical spaces, launch events and talks. Fenton's (2016b) radical digital democracy indicates some theoretical crossover with these formations of radical media which emphasises its role in supporting and nurturing radical politics. Historically, radical pluralism, evident in *In These Times* and *Red Pepper*, mirrors most closely the New Left traditions of the 1960s and social movements of the 1970s and 1980s. Burns sees a tension between this nurturing approach and the leadership approach of a publication such as *Jacobin*:

I don't think calling out to people to follow, or sort of like agitating or bringing radical ideas in that sense. Most of the media structures that we have [were] like very effective or very well received. I feel like there's maybe a little bit of a tendency in left media that's just sort of trying to be like purely analytical to be like OK here's my imagined rubric of what I think a good movement you know... I really like the Communist Party in the 1930s or something... I do think that there's value in being able to bring sort of historical perspective or whatever... but a lot of times I think that that's just very limited and sometimes disingenuous or a deflating way to engage. And also, I don't think there's any reason why... putting yourself in a position where you think... your analysis is useful because you just read this stuff in this book about the 1930s just seems a little bit silly.

I think there are like skills and analysis that it's useful for journalists to bring. Things that we do as journalists, that maybe are thought of as professional skills... things that would actually be very useful to various organizations in Chicago. So like FOI requests is a good example of that... I wouldn't hold that up as the reason that there is a lot of mobilization right now but I think especially around Lake County, police and things like movements against police brutality – the ability to get that kind of information [out] – has been pretty important. And there's

been a lot of interest in sort of broadening out those skills so taking part of the domain of the press doesn't always do anything useful with the information. So that's something that we've sort of tried to do. And are still thinking about; how do you do [this] most effectively, forming partnerships.

Interestingly, *Solidarity Times* and *DDR* offer different considerations of political struggle. *Solidarity Times* is explicitly run by an anarchist political organisation. Within that anarchist tradition there has been a handing-down of an analysis of and participation in at least three dynamics of struggle in Ireland: anti-globalisation and counter-cultural struggles such as the G8 protests, environmental struggles such as Shell to Sea, and community struggles, which are more localised, such as the anti-bin tax and anti-water charges campaigns. The methodology of the publication fits this, with quick reporting, and an analysis of confrontations and self-organisation efforts, in a bid to aid mobilising. The other dynamic of *Solidarity Times* is anti-electoralism and anti-state politics.

DDR draws from community politics, and is at least indirectly influenced by the community media projects of the 1990s and a counter-cultural model of power, which is influenced by the cultural studies school (Hall 1982b) and a cultural interpretation of Gramsci (1971). There is both a looseness and a pointed quality to *DDR's* interpretation of radical politics; a relationship to political struggle, with support for movements on one hand, and a mass counter-cultural, anti-commodification dynamic on the other.

Experimentation is a radical political consideration for Finnan. He sees *DDR* as a necessary prototype and condition of experimentation regarding form, as well as collective knowledge-building and power. A major limitation of this is the expensive and challenging conditions of Dublin as a city.

I keep saying that *DDR* is a prototype. [what] we can do depends on how many subscriptions we get, how people actually feed into us and understand that we are that type of space. [I] think if we were in a city

that was cheaper to live in there would be more room to do that. At the moment obviously everyone has to at least do a part-time job. You get burnout a lot quicker... [we are here to] figure out the different things that a radio station or media thing can be... figuring out its own form, it sounds really wanky and artsy... like messing around in the form [of] the media can have radical consequences.

6.10 Beyond Movements and Elections

Radical media actors not only consider the political relationships among radical media publications and the relationship between radical media publications and radical politics, but they also see themselves as an active part of the 'struggle'. The struggle was a term synonymous with being politically active on the left. The idea of being active, captured in the content analysis, is expanded and deepened here with the concept of 'struggle'. Uetrict identified the struggle as socialist, as a struggle to free oneself from oppression and take on capitalism. Burns and Nelson see it as a struggle of movements; of a range of issues and oppressions being fought and as a building-up of an alternative. Finnan sees the struggle as a condition of class, the struggle to survive, and this situation being channelled into action. Flood sees it as a long process of working-class self-organisation.

The struggle is both an everyday part of life and a form of collective political organisation. This tallies well with Fenton's (2016b) conceptualisation of the politics of being, the deeply political nature of everyday experiences of austerity, class, racism, sexism and oppression and marginalisation. The struggle is also about 'being political' – as in the efforts to collectivise a resistance to these experiences and organise oneself as a political subject. Radical media is uniquely positioned as the vehicle for analysis and the expression of everyday politics; it is a politically organised form, a form of being political. Media, as such, is embedded in rather than separate from the struggle.

Within Fenton's (2016b) consideration of radical politics and the digital, there is a tension. On one hand, radical politics is centred on contributing to an

electoral strategy to win a majority to progress radical politics, gain state power and then transform power from the inside. On the other hand, there is a social movement strategy focused on building power and putting pressure on the state and capital from the outside.

The radical media actors in *Jacobin*, *In These Times*, *Red Pepper* and *DDR* differ in the weight they give to these two strategies. Uetricht places more emphasis on elections, giving considerable weight to campaigns such as Sanders' 2016 campaign for inspiring and building a socialist consciousness, and to the importance of building the Democratic Socialists of America and winning progressive seats at local and national level in the USA. Burns places more emphasis on movements. Nelson in *Red Pepper* tries to engage and sustain a position between the two. In practice, this means trying to retain a balance between the socialist Labour Party led by Corbyn and the social movements that continue to exist and struggle against racial, environmental and gender injustice outside of the Labour Party.

Finnan in *DDR* displays less interest in electoral politics, being embedded in youth, counter-cultural and community media. *DDR's* context also differs from that of the USA and UK. In both the UK and USA, large social democratic organisations have emerged, pushing a large pool of publications, projects, groups and organisations into the orbit of electoral politics. In the USA, there is open debate on how to approach electoral politics from the left. Within the Democratic Socialists of America, caucuses outline various positions on this strategy. In the UK an initial emphasis by radicals on building the Labour Party under Corbyn and movements in the streets (a dual strategy) was turned into a defensive fight focused on defending Corbyn against attacks from the right and to stop the working-class coalition formed in support of Corbyn from being pulled apart by the politics of Brexit and national chauvinism (Rhodes 2019; Watts & Bale 2019; Maignashca & Dean 2019). Ireland has not seen this large growth of social democracy and democratic socialism to the same extent up to 2019.

Movements were widely supported by the radical media actors but rarely clearly defined. 'Movement' covered a range of topics and tactics, from specific

issues campaigns such as environmental, police justice or feminist movements, or specific approaches and lenses through which to analyse politics.

'Movements' also meant something general: the people in motion, the active and organised part of the struggle. Burns and Uetracht also focused on the labour movement as a key site of their struggle as a movement, with reported support for workplace organising, rank-and-file groups of workers and trade unions, as well as trade unionism more generally.

Flood, in *Solidarity Times*, was the only participant to take a purely movementist position, discounting elections and struggles from inside the system.

We are anarchists or anti-authoritarians. That also means we're not electoralist or anti-electoralist. Not really that interested in political parties [or] election campaign stuff. We [are] very interested in anything *popular*... not spontaneous... but where people are self-organising around things. I mean, that's always kind of complicated because of course as always [there's] people with different levels of experience. Nothing comes out of nowhere. Yes, you know things like the water charges was really interesting from that perspective because suddenly you had this massive wave of organising happening all over the country. I think increasingly kind of where we look [is] at stuff for the planet, [the] intersectional feminist, anti-racist angle as well as direct action that causes the other route or the people [who] are actually taking action that will change the situation.

The analysis of electoral insider and movement outsider radical political strategies crosses over with the composition analysis in the content analysis in important ways. A convenient analysis would be that radical media politics focused on inside strategies would line up with radical media politics from above, and core geographic sites of production and radical media politics focused on outside strategies would line up with radical media from below and the geographic periphery. Instead, a more complex picture emerges. Burns of *In These Times* (institutional) publication, proscribes a radical media from

below, and supports a movement approach from the outside more than Uetricht in *Jacobin*. Outside media and radical media from below line up in *Solidarity Times*, but even this is not clear-cut, with *Solidarity Times* funded and organised by a vanguard anarchist organisation, WSM. There is no pure election-only publication; instead the division is between outside-only or a dual strategy which positions radical media and politics as operating both inside and outside the state.

6.11 Conclusion

Thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews with five radical media publications has greatly expanded our understanding of radical media. Micah Uetricht in the US- and New York-based *Jacobin* magazine (critical type), Rebecca Burns in the US- and Chicago-based *In These Times* (institutional type), Jenny Nelson in the UK- and London-based *Red Pepper Magazine* (mixed type), Andrew Flood in the Dublin, Ireland-based *Solidarity Times* (activist type) and Sean Finnan in the Dublin, Ireland-based *Dublin Digital Radio* (community type) were interviewed, with important historical background provided to help us to contextualise the experiences of radical media actors, and significant understandings of the concept of radicalism explored, in terms of content, with a particular focus on production and political relations.

There was a convergence in radical media actors' considerations of content and production. It was found that the logic behind content production was focused on providing principled radical content, which is engaging and interesting to a wide audience. Production, in particular finance and labour, converged around the building of financially sustainable publications that were based on subscriptions and combined paid professional labour and voluntary labour. With this solid production base, challenges of changes in digital technology and the loss of journalism were considered less significant to radical media actors.

Radical media's political relations were defined by tension. There were tensions in how radical media publications related to each other between accumulation and cooperation; tension between an idea that radical media should lead the wider radical political movement or play a supporting role; and tension

between an inside-the-state and an outside-the-state strategy. Considered alongside the analysis of geographies of radical media, historical moment and ideas of radical media politics as from of above and from below, a rich and vibrant tapestry of radical media politics emerges.

Conclusion

x.1 Twenty Years of Radical Digital Media

In the December 2019 UK General Election radical media was a key component within a social democratic electoral campaign. Radical publications and platforms, using their own websites and distributing their content across social media, reaching millions, argued for and supported the progressive policies of the Labour Party, encouraged mobilisations, canvassing and other electoral campaign work. In addition, they challenged the PR of the Conservative Party and attempted to counteract the consistent negative coverage of the British Labour party by the mainstream media (Deacon et al 2019). Radical media, as a mass force, was more deeply than ever entwined in the mainstream of political life.

The British Labour Party lost. The radical media was not enough. As one Momentum (the left-wing pressure group within the British Labour Party) activist wrote, 'the circulatory networks of power and privilege that exist between media, politics and big business mutually reinforce one another. In the face of a socialist politician with a chance at office, instincts and interests set into motion a process of absolute strangulation and disorganisation that is difficult for any Left to face down' (Proletariato_Papi 2019). Despite this, the presence of the radical media was felt and in the immediate aftermath of defeat these publications and platforms shifted from agit-prop to reflection: platforming perspectives within the progressive radical movement to understand what went wrong and where to go next (Novara Media Team, December 18th 2019; Cant, December 18th 2019; Meadway, December 17th 2019; Seymour, December 18th 2019).

Twenty years previously, on the 30th of November, 1999, thousands of anarchists, direct actions groups, environmentalists and trade unionists filled Seattle, fought the police and shut down the World Trade talks. They opposed the further liberalisation of trade, the reduction in regulations and the benefit this would accrue to multinational corporations. Independence Media Centres (IMCs), or *Indymedia*, was the main site of radical communication and media

reporting on the events on November 30th. The Battle of Seattle, as it was dubbed, was considered a victory by the radicals who attended and 20 years on is reflected on as the foundation for 21st-century socialism (Denvir, November 30th 2019). *Indymedia* spread rapidly across the global. Downing's *Radical Media: Rebellious Communications and Social Movements* was written the following year (2000). In the new digital age both radical media practice and theory placed emphasis on the centrality of the prefigurative, horizontalism and struggle outside the system.

In twenty years, how has radical media moved from a prefigurative and decentralised set of platforms experimenting with digital communication technology to a set of publications and platforms centred on a social democratic electoral campaign? This thesis offers a step towards answering this through an analysis of the long history of radical media theorising and practice and through a specific set of analyses of radical media in the digital age: a typology analysis of theoretical models of radical media (2000–2016), a content analysis of radical media publications in the UK, USA and Ireland (2016–2019) and a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with radical media actors (2016–2019).

Indymedia, the Battle of Seattle and Downing's (2000) theorising of radical media emerged from a long history of radical political movements, radical media production and radical media theorising. Early political economic theorists placed emphasis on the question of radical media as part of seizing political power, Cold War theorists on culture and cultural resistance, and digital theorists focused on digital capitalism, labour and the potential for radical alternatives in the digital age. Radical publications and platforms themselves have been a form of mass media since the early 1800s. Their early formation helped form working-class and emancipatory consciousness (1800–1860); they developed and forwarded socialist and anarchist thought (1860–1914); they were a tool of revolution, anti-fascism and class conflict (1914–1945); they re-emerged as a formatter of radical identity and radical political re-composition (1960–1980); and they globalised and digitised in opposition to neo-liberalism (1995–2005).

In the digital era, the theorising, general processes and specific production and politics of radical media have shifted in important ways. The analysis of the theory and practice of radical media in the early digital age was triggered by the need to understand the return of mass movements such as the alter-globalisation struggles, the new Latin American left, and the new digital media technology which radicals were using to communicate globally. This analysis was filled with the hope of the transformative potential of digital technology, often slipping into techno-determinism and techno-utopianism (technology decides and technology will save us) and ultra-leftism (only the total transformation of society now is radical). Radical media production was volunteer-based, horizontal and experimental; its politics was dominated by anarchism and orientated radical media to be a voice from below and outside the state. By 2005, as the alter-globalisation movement began to retract, the theorising and practice of radical media itself began to decline and shift.

Between 2005 and 2015 radical media changed. Social media corporations commodified features pioneered by radical media, alter-globalisation retracted as a movement and *Indymedia* declined. The financial crisis, while creating opportunities for radical political media and creating new critical audiences, demonstrated the weakness of radical politics: an inability to challenge a major structural crisis of capitalism, an inability to turn back the day-to-day hurt and destruction of austerity, and the inability to bring hope in the face of mass unemployment and impoverishment. New digital media theorists, new radical media actors, new radical political subjects and eventually new radical publications emerged from this context. Fuchs and Mosco (2012) and Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) offered a sharp critique of capitalism as whole, argued for a return to Marxism in communication studies and proposed mass progressive alternative media. Radical politics shifted from the global and macro focus of alter-globalisation to the national and local impact of austerity. A new generation of young radical journalists, intellectual and precarious workers, downwardly mobile and highly educated, joined social movements, left political parties and began to re-develop and start new radical media publications and platforms.

This thesis is part of a third period of the digital age, a new radical media and politics emerging post-austerity, in the context of political polarisation (2015–2019). Since 2015 shifts in theory have occurred. Jeppesen (2016) offered a categorical framework for the analysis of alternative media, positioning alternative media types within their theoretical context and with consideration of how these types consider alternative content, practice and social movements. Fenton (2016b) offers a concept of radicalism in the digital age, positioning 'radical' as progressive and related to change at the roots of society, at a time when 'radical' is being conceptualised in the mainstream as violent and extremist, and a horseshoe in which the radical left and right converge.

Radical media is conceptually redrawn with these theorists in mind and taking into account Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) and the long history of radical media theorising. Radical media is theorised as a form of communication focused on change at the roots of society, progressive politics and emancipation. It has a long historical development, it is understood as a mass media and the analysis of it is centred on publications and platforms themselves. Four radical media types emerge in the analysis: radical critical, community, institutional and activist media.

This thesis has tentatively explored a new wave of radical digital media that has emerged after 2015, reinforcing a re-conceptualisation of radical media. Radical media publications and platforms have been shown in this thesis, within the limits of the sample, to have a dominant tendency: a semi-professionalised production model focused on sustainability – prominently subscriptions and membership funding – with some degree of volunteer labour and a radical politics from above intertwining with institutions and intellectuals, focused on mass movements and mass consciousness, and engaging in a dual strategy for power within and outside the state. A minority tendency of activist, community- and grassroots-focused publications and platforms from below and outside the state remain, but are smaller compared to the days of *Indymedia*.

The shifts in radical media production and politics after 2015 had a number of particularly important potential factors. Mass anti-austerity movements (2008–2014), and then a more diverse range of feminist, racial justice and other social movements post-2015, failed to develop lasting radical media publications and platforms. Much radical content is produced by these movements but it circulates on digital corporate media platforms, concentrated in campaign pages, groups and statements and exchanges among individuals within the movement. Into this radical media vacuum stepped publications such as *Jacobin* magazine. It offered a coherent world view, a sustainable financial model and a level of openness to debate that drew in a core of writers and readers. It looked outwards in terms of covering a range of topics of interest to a new, young radical audience and it expanded rapidly. In the UK, *Novara Media* did something similar, building with sharp videography, analysis and debates and a wide-reaching socialism targeted towards young radicals in particular. These publications were built by a new generation of radical intellectuals; their success set an example for other publications to follow, shaping the radical media field as a whole.

The unexpected re-emergence of social democracy boosted both publications themselves and this tendency within radical media. Marxist and socialist thought now had a mass organised audience. This mass audience was also a financial and production support, with new subscribers, the expanded infrastructure of political events, pools of organisers, and a body of analysis and critical thought to draw from. This was, as Richard Seymour argued in *Corbynism: The strange rebirth of radical politics*, an unexpected development. Two figures, Bernie Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn, respected as older, principled fringe figures throughout the 1980s and 1990s, were inspiring a generation of mostly young, urban and downwardly mobile radicals and reorientating social democracy. In Ireland no such reorientation occurred. The ruling class hegemony of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael was broken; mass social movements, Marxism and social democracy all re-emerged; but they did not re-compose and there was not as such a new mass radical media from above. Instead, a smaller fragment of publications and platforms began to grow.

That there is a mass radical media at all, with multiple publications and platforms, millions of readers creating space for radical thought and practice, is itself remarkable, considering the power of neo-liberal states and capital, digital media corporations and the far right. Many of these publications have been built from nothing. In addition, existing radical publications have been re-invigorated by a new generation of radicals. These platforms and publications have both been shaped by and shape the wider social movements and mass electoral socialism and social democracy that has taken root after the financial crisis.

As Cant argued in an article in *Red Pepper* (September 5th, 2018) entitled 'Precarious workers and popular forces. The essential question for a socialist government is: are you willing to defend yourself?', a radical politics from below focused the experiences of ordinary people and the organisation of their self-defence against the worst impacts of austerity and neo-liberalism was needed to ground and deepen the Corbyn Labour breakthrough. This 'Corbynism from below', which was contrasted with the centralised head office and professionalised 'Corbynism from above' discussed in the 'Understanding Our Defeat' article, is reflected in some of the findings of this thesis and what such findings mean for radical media in practice.

The radical media that has developed from above – the professionalisation, intellectualism and the dependence on being the left flank of social democracy – brings with it risks. Being the left flank of social democracy means that if the Corbyn or Sanders project fails or even wins and is then co-opted into the state, radical media faces the risk of a great demoralisation or de-radicalisation. Professionalisation and intellectualism risk an elitism, where the learned class habits of downwardly mobile young journalists and intellectuals risks creating closed spaces, detached from everyday working-class life rather than facilitating, developing and amplifying the experiences, relations and anger of people from below. Gramsci (1971) in his analysis of organic intellectualism is relatable here. The challenge of intellectual and media production is not a moral question based on the right or wrong decision of individual intellectuals but a question of the strength of radical organisations as

a whole: a radical politics without grounding in the day-to-day lives of the proletariat is unlikely to reflect its experiences in its writing nor develop an intellectualism from below out of these experiences.

x.2 The Significance of this Analysis

This thesis has made a number of original contributions to academic knowledge, in particular in the field of critical communications and media studies, as well as to political economy more generally. The use of a Marxist humanist political economic framework, which centres an analysis of human agency and considers radical media actors as operating through and building radical publications and platforms, contained but not determined by the conditions of capital, the state and class, has been novel. In particular, the thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with radical media actors illustrated this agency and subjective material dynamic. This has built on a long history of political economic theorising, but also more recent developments such as the works of Fuchs and Mosco (2012), Fuchs and Sandoval (2015) and Fenton (2016b). The materialism of political economic analysis, and the capacity it provides to ground and historically contextualise an analysis of rapidly shifting communication dynamics in the digital age, is vital for a vibrant analysis not only of radical media publications and platforms but radical media as a whole.

Radical media as a subject has been re-conceptualised. The conceptualisation of 'radical' as fringe and marginal in the early 2000s and the use of 'alternative' as a means of describing non-mainstream media have been rejected. 'Radical' has been positioned as a mass media with normative principles, a specific legacy of historical development and particular dynamics of content, production and political relations as part of a typology of radical media. Radical media, rather than being considered a subfield of alternative and community media, has been positioned as the overarching term. This forces a wider re-conceptualisation of all non-mainstream media. A typology of radical media outlined four tendencies within radical media: radical critical media (intellectual and grand narrative focused), radical community media

(experience and collective empowerment focused), radical activist media (action and movement focused) and radical institutional media (focused on a social justice counterweight to the mainstream). This is the primary original and the significant contribution of the thesis findings.

This thesis has outlined a rich field of radical media practice with numerous, diverse and complex platforms and publications, many with large audiences and operating on multiple scales, with multiple approaches. Radical media is additionally adoptive and experimental. Fifty-nine publications and platforms were sampled in the UK, USA and Ireland and analysed using content analysis. Thematic analysis provided focused on five radical media actors within five publications delved into considerations of content, the motivations of media actors and the convergence of production and political tensions.

Publications and platforms have been under-researched and undervalued as subjects of inquiry. Radical media production was explored with shifted in the digital age tentatively considered, in particular the emergence of semi-professionalised, intellectual publications and platforms, interlinked politically to the revival of Marxism and social democracy. Additionally a degree of political tension, between a 'core' of London- and New York-based publications with an emphasis on intellectual analysis, grand narratives characterised politically as radical media from above, and a 'periphery' with emphasis on reporting from everyday experiences and struggles, from below and outside the state, was engaged.

The importance of understanding collective sites of organised production has been re-established in this work, in two decades where social media users, audiences, networks, movements and political party campaigns have taken precedent, and it has been demonstrated that an analysis of these sites provides a wider basis for the analysis of radical politics and communications. The analysis of radical media publications and platforms and the insights from radical media actors within them establishes the basis for a concrete analysis of the relationships among components of radical politics: the relationship

between media platforms, radical political parties, histories of theory and practice, social movements, trade unionism and radical culture.

This analysis has wider significance in terms of a goal of academic inquiry raised by the study of critical theory, that of inquiry for emancipation and social justice. An important role of academic research is to provide analysis and solutions to pressing problems we face and to provide, to a degree, a contribution to our understanding of how to fundamentally change society. Critical media and communication studies is seeing a growth of analysis focused on the critique of capitalism and neo-liberalism, the environmental crisis and rise of hate speech and the far right. These are importance advances in knowledge but they do not tell us what we can do as an alternative. Examining the development of radical media thus has specific value as part of a contribution to the development of alternatives.

x.3 The Limits of the Analysis

There are a number of limits to this analysis. Theoretically the political economic framework used, in particular Marxist humanism, provided an important overarching basis for the analysis of radical media. That said, other strands of political economic analysis could have been useful to review radical theory and practice and to contextualise the findings, in particular Marxist theories of law and the state (Pashukanis 2017), Political Marxism on the relationship between capital and class (Brenner 1977; Wood & Kennedy 1999) and social reproduction Marxists on understanding the social reproduction of radical media (Bhattacharya 2017).

There were limits to the methodology and the evidence base derived from it. The typology with its conceptual focus was the primary analysis and the selection on 'About section' and five interviews analysed through content and thematic analysis were exploratory and reinforcing of the typology and therefore the findings that emerged from them should be generalised. In addition, a greater spread of perspectives, such as more radical media actors, radical media audiences and the perspective of radical political actors outside

of the publications and platforms, would strengthen the analysis, expanding the process of theory confirmation and theory development.

A greater historical and geographic spread would additionally strengthen the analysis: interviews with *Indymedia* participants and publications from the New Left era, in particular, would allow for a comparative historical analysis. The aspect of radical media covered is Anglo-centric. An analysis of the range of other radical media contexts would widen the analysis greatly and additionally deepen the analysis of colonialism and neo-colonialism, as it relates to radical media. This was touched on in the historical analysis of Ireland, but needs a great understanding as a process of capitalist media, as a means of co-option and repression, and in terms of its manifestation within radical media and communication.

There are limits to what can be inferred about the relationship between radical media and its radical political context, including how capital, class composition and radical movements have shaped radical media development. Greater study is needed of these dynamics in their own right to infer causation in the relationships. In particular, a class composition analysis of radical media actors would be strengthened by further sociological analysis of class and changes dynamics of class composition more broadly. This would be strengthened by an analysis of social reproduction and the gendered nature of radical media production and a Marxist consideration of radical media and race.

x.4 Where to Now?

There are a number of future directions for this research. A Marxist humanist political economic framework has been a useful theoretical framework, simultaneously facilitating a macro analysis of radical media as part of and in opposition to capitalism and a more micro-level analysis of the relations and roles of radical media actors within publications and platforms, accounting for their subjective agency within the conditions imposed by material reality. A social reproductive analysis of radical media and Marxist race theory of radical media would provide important potential steps forward, enriching the analysis

of radical media and contributing to a deepening of political economic theoretical analysis within communications and media studies.

The radical media subject can be expanded too. A specific focus on the under-researched topic of publications and platforms was needed to reground the field and to identify key collective organisational forms. At least three additional aspects of radical media could be explored as part of an expanded understanding of radical media. Firstly, radical media content produced by grassroots groups, campaigns, parties and institutions could be explored. Secondly, considering differences between ownership and distribution and platformisation in the digital age, where publications are collectively owned and run and independently funded but depend on digital media corporations such as Facebook for distribution of content, would be an important dynamic to explore further. Thirdly, there are more individualised and dispersed radical media users who produce radical media content on social media platforms, and there are other spheres of radical media content – academic, artistic, educational sites – which could be expanded in their own rights but also understood as seeds of collective organisation in the radical media sphere.

Interviews with radical media audiences and the perspective of radical political actors outside of the publications and platforms would be an important strengthening of the evidence base. This would be helped by expanding the historical and geographic parameters of the analysis. A historiographic approach, documenting the publications and memories of publications from the start of the digital era and from the liberation and New Left era, would deepen our understanding of the shifts in radical media. Geographically, the analysis of the non-Anglo spheres – northern, southern and eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, Central and Southern America radical media – would greatly expand the scope of the analysis. Across the world there are rich radical media traditions and current practices strengthening the analysis of radical media. This would provide evidence for a global radical media and help us establish an understanding of the tensions of colonialism and the geographic divisions of radical media and politics.

Finally, the thematic analysis opens up important themes for the politics of radical media: Accumulation or cooperation? Radical media leading the movement (a vanguard) or supporting (a nurturer)? Radical media as part of a war of position inside and outside the state, forming intellectual production from above and relational organising from below? The specific relationship between class composition, movements and radical media can deepen our understanding of these radical political dynamics within radical media. Specific events, in particular the financial crisis and austerity, and the way in which these events have shaped practices of labour and experiences of politics are important to account for. Inter-generational wealth disparity and a deeper process of re-prolarianisation of young people as a material and social formation of class and political consciousness has profound implications for our understanding of media, communication and politics. These processes can additionally be considered in terms of gender and race, migration, state structures and capital, as a totalised view of radical media as part of radical political theory and practice is formed.

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Appendix A: Content Analysis

Publication Data: About Section, Score and Type

Name	Place	About	Score	Type
Jacobin	US	Jacobin is a leading voice of the American left, offering socialist perspectives on politics, economics, and culture. The print magazine is released quarterly and reaches over 15,000 subscribers, in addition to a web audience of 700,000 a month.	(0,4)	C
In These Times	US	In These Times, an independent, nonprofit magazine, is dedicated to advancing democracy and economic justice, informing movements for a more humane world, and providing an accessible forum for debate about the policies that shape our future.	(2, 4)	I
Dissent	US	Founded in 1954 by a group of New York Intellectuals, the magazine set out to "dissent from the bleak atmosphere of conformism that pervades the political and intellectual life of the United States ...The accent of Dissent will be radical. Its tradition will be the tradition of democratic socialism."	(-2 4)	C
Viewpoint	US	Viewpoint Magazine is an online review of contemporary politics. Its starting premise is that the history of capitalism is the history of the struggle between capital and the working class. Our task is to articulate the proletarian viewpoint at the level of theory.	(-4,5)	A&C
Against the Current	US			
We are Many	US			
International Socialist Review	US	The ISR is dedicated to advancing socialist theory and practice in the U.S. and internationally. We stand in the International Socialist tradition, affirming our commitment to	(-2,-3)	C

		<p>"socialism from below," the self-emancipation of workers and the oppressed, the struggle against imperialism and for national liberation, and the building of a socialist current rooted in all of those struggles. We hope that the ISR will provide a forum for the development of an open and critical Marxist analysis of the challenges and opportunities that confront the left and social movements in the 21st century. We welcome contributions from all who are committed to that project and vision. The ISR is published quarterly by the Center for Economic Research and Social Change.</p>		
Alternet	US	<p>AlterNet is an award-winning news magazine and online community that creates original journalism and amplifies the best of hundreds of other independent media sources. AlterNet's aim is to inspire action and advocacy on the environment, human rights and civil liberties, social justice, media, health care issues, and more. Since its inception in 1998, AlterNet.org has grown dramatically to keep pace with the public demand for independent news. We provide free online content to millions of readers, serving as a reliable filter, keeping our vast audience well-informed and engaged, helping them to navigate a culture of information overload and providing an alternative to the commercial media onslaught. Our aim is to stimulate, inform, and instigate.</p>	(5,0)	I
Truth Out	US	<p>Truthout works to spark action by revealing systemic injustice and providing a platform for transformative ideas, through in-depth investigative reporting and critical analysis. With a powerful, independent voice, we will spur the revolution in consciousness and</p>	(-1,-3)	C

		inspire the direct action that is necessary to save the planet and humanity.		
Democracy Now	US	Democracy Now! is a national, daily, independent, award-winning news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez. Pioneering the largest public media collaboration in the U.S., Democracy Now! is broadcast on Pacifica, NPR, community, and college radio stations; on public access, PBS, satellite television (DISH network: Free Speech TV ch. 9415 and Link TV ch. 9410; DIRECTV: Free Speech TV ch. 348 and Link TV ch. 375); and on the internet. DN!'s podcast is one of the most popular on the web. Democracy Now!'s War and Peace Report provides our audience with access to people and perspectives rarely heard in the U.S.corporate-sponsored media, including independent and international journalists, ordinary people from around the world who are directly affected by U.S. foreign policy, grassroots leaders and peace activists, artists, academics and independent analysts.	(4,-2)	I
Unicorn Riot	US	Unicorn Riot is a volunteer-operated decentralized media collective comprised of multimedia artists and journalists. Born from the Internet in 2015, we operate non-hierarchically, independent of corporate and government funding. Our non-profit media organization currently spans across multiple US cities including Boston, Denver, Minneapolis, and New York City.	(0, -3)	Com
Sub Media	US	subMedia.tv is a video production ensemble, which aims to promote anarchist and anti-capitalist ideas, and aid social struggles through the dissemination of radical films and	(-5, 2)	A

		videos. Founded in 1994, subMedia.tv has produced hundreds of videos on everything from anti-globalization protests to films about shoplifting. Our films have been screened around the world in social centers and movie theaters and have been watched by millions on the internet.		
It's going down	US	It's Going Down is a digital community center from anarchist, anti-fascist, autonomous anti-capitalist and anti-colonial movements. Our mission is to provide an autonomous and resilient platform to publicize and promote revolutionary theory and action.	(-5,-1)	A
Chicago Reporter	US	The Chicago Reporter is a nonprofit investigative news organization that focuses on race, poverty and income inequality in Chicago and the nation. In addition to a website, the Reporter publishes an annual magazine.	(5,-2)	I
City Bureau (Chicago)	US	Founded in 2015, City Bureau is a civic journalism lab based on the South Side of Chicago. We bring journalists and community members together in collaborative environments to promote responsible media coverage, increase civic engagement and hold powerful forces to account. Our three programs are the Public Newsroom, Documenters and Reporting Fellowship.	(5,-4)	Com & I
Monthly Review	US	<i>Monthly Review</i> began publication in New York City in May 1949. The first issue featured the lead article " <u>Why Socialism?</u> " by Albert Einstein. From the beginning, <i>Monthly Review</i> spoke for a critical but spirited socialism, independent of any political organization. In an era of Cold War repression, the magazine published pioneering analyses of political economy, imperialism, and Third World struggles, drawing on the rich	(-3,5)	A&C

		legacy of Marxist thought without being bound to any narrow view or party line. The McCarthy-led inquisition targeted <i>MR</i> 's original editors, Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman, who fought back successfully. Against these odds, the magazine's readership and influence grew steadily, and in 1952, Monthly Review Press published its first title, I. F. Stone's <i>Hidden History of the Korean War</i> .		
Labor Notes	US	Labor Notes is a media and organizing project that has been the voice of union activists who want to put the movement back in the labor movement since 1979.	(-3,0)	A
Young Turks	US	Young Turk (n) - Young progressive or insurgent member of an institution, movement, or political party.	(1,0)	M
CounterPunch	US			
Catalyst	US	Discussion of capitalism is not off the table any longer. Catalyst: A Journal of Theory and Strategy launches with the aim of doing everything it can to promote and deepen this conversation. Our focus is, as our title suggests, to develop a theory and strategy with capitalism as its target — both in the North and in the Global South. It is an ambitious agenda, but this is a time for thinking big.	(0,5)	C
#letusbreathe	US	#LetUsBreathe Collective aims to harness creative capital and cultural production to deconstruct systemic injustice in America and worldwide. A grassroots alliance of artists, journalists, and activists, we use our talents to amplify marginalized voices, disrupt the status quo, offer opportunities for healing and education, and provoke critical	(-4,-2)	A

		thought and dialogue about the intersections of oppression through film, music, theater, poetry, and civil disobedience.		
The Intercept	US	The Intercept is an award-winning news organization that covers national security, politics, civil liberties, the environment, international affairs, technology, criminal justice, the media, and more. The Intercept gives its journalists the editorial freedom and legal support they need to pursue investigations that expose corruption and injustice wherever they find it and hold the powerful accountable.	(5,0)	I
Truth Dig	US	Truthdig, founded in 2005 by Publisher Zuade Kaufman and Editor in Chief Robert Scheer, is dedicated to reporting on current issues that are insufficiently covered by mainstream media. The website's mission is to dig beneath the headlines, provide expert reporting and commentary from a progressive point of view, and offer an outlet for original work by exceptional journalists.	(5,0)	I
Raw Story	US	Raw Story is an independent news site that focuses on stories often ignored in the mainstream media. In addition to giving coverage to the top stories of the day, we also bring our readers' attention to policy, politics, legal and human rights stories that get ignored in an infotainment culture driven solely by pageviews.	(4,0)	I
The Real News Network	US	"The question we settle in an election is not whether elites shall rule, but which elite shall rule," said conservative pundit George Will on ABC's This Week. That's why we need daily television news that reports with ordinary people's interests in mind. The Real News is such a network; it's the missing link in the global media landscape. The Real News Network	(4, - 3)	I & Com

		(TRNN) is a non-profit, viewer-supported daily video-news and documentary service. We don't accept advertising, and we don't accept government or corporate funding. TRNN is sustained by viewer donations and earned revenue.		
Mother Jones	US	Mother Jones is a reader-supported nonprofit news organization and the winner of the American Society of Magazine Editors' 2017 Magazine of the Year Award. Our staff does independent and investigative reporting on everything from politics and climate change to education and food (plus cat blogging). Some 11 million people come to this site each month, and we also publish a bimonthly, 200,000-circulation magazine.	(5 -1)	I
Feministing	US	Feministing is an online community run by and for young feminists. For over a decade, we've been offering sharp, uncompromising feminist analysis of everything from pop culture to politics and inspiring young people to make real-world feminist change, online and off. Our diverse collective of writers cover a broad range of intersectional feminist issues—from campus sexual violence to transgender rights to reproductive justice. We serve as a gateway to the feminist movement for young people, giving our readers ways to take concrete action, as well as connecting them with feminist organizations and grassroots activists. We elevate the work of emerging feminist thinkers by providing an open-platform Community where anyone—from teens to national non-profits—can make their voices heard.	(-1,-1)	M

Red Pepper	UK	Red Pepper is a bi-monthly magazine and website of left politics and culture. We're a socialist publication drawing on feminist, green and libertarian politics. We seek to be a space for debate on the left, a resource for movements for social justice, and a home for open-minded anti-capitalists.	(-2,2)	M
Counter Fire	UK	We are members of trade unions, student movements, and protest campaigns to link together different struggles, push them forwards, and build resistance to the system. We are committed to learning from and building mass organisations of struggle like the trade unions, the anti-war movement and the Coalition of Resistance.	(-5, 3)	A&C
Salvage	UK	Salvage is a quarterly of revolutionary arts and letters. Salvage is edited and written by and for the desolated Left, by and for those committed to radical change, sick of capitalism and its sadisms, and sick too of the Left's bad faith and bullshit. Salvage has earned its pessimism. Salvage yearns for that pessimism to be proved wrong. Salvage commits to publishing essays, poems, art and fiction without sectarian, stylistic or formal constraint. Salvage requires only that they cleave to liberation. Salvage does not believe the first, last and only word with regard to prose style was passed down on a stone tablet by Orwell in one overrated essay. Salvage survives only on the generosity and solidarity of its readers. Please subscribe, donate, and persuade your friends, comrades and institution(s) to take out subscriptions, too.	(-2, 5)	C

The CanaryMedia	UK	<p>Kerry-anne Mendoza, our Editor-in-Chief, teamed up with a group of extraordinary people to form The Canary in October 2015. With absolutely no financial backing or outside investment, we have rapidly built a brand new media outlet from scratch through determination in our progressive values, a vibrant team and engaging content. We remain completely independent of any advertisers, funders, companies, political organisations, or political parties. Today, a handful of powerful moguls control our mainstream media. As such, its coverage is largely conservative. But we have created a truly independent and viable alternative . One that isn't afraid to challenge the status quo, to ask the hard questions, and to have an opinion. This has only been possible because of the amazing support from you – our readers. The team at The Canary believes that a free, fair and fearless media is the bedrock of a functioning democracy, because for democracy to work, it requires informed consent from its citizens. We intend to help generate that informed consent by providing our readers with high-quality, well-researched and incisive journalism that holds power to account. Our content focuses on news, ideas and key developments that impact democracy, equality, freedom and fairness</p>	(5, 0)	I
Media Diversified	UK	<p>Media Diversified is a young and growing non-profit organisation which seeks to cultivate and promote skilled writers of colour by providing advice and contacts and by promoting content online through its own platform. Live since July 2013, the initiative is already diversifying the UK's media landscape, providing</p>	(5,0)	I

		important, challenging and original content which contributes to ongoing global discussions on issues of social justice, equality, gender, politics, economics and pop culture. In March 2015 Media Diversified launched its Experts Directory, a searchable resource for media organisations of all sizes. In February 2016 Media Diversified launched the inaugural Bare Lit Festival– a literature festival giving writers of colour the platform and visibility they deserve.		
Novara Media	UK	Novara Media is an independent media organisation addressing the issues – from a crisis of capitalism to racism and climate change – that are set to define the 21st century. Within that context our goal is a simple one: to tell stories and provide analysis shaped by the political uncertainties of the age, elevating critical perspectives you’re unlikely to find elsewhere. Driven to build a new media for a different politics, our journalism is always politically committed; rather than seeking to moderate between two sides of a debate, our output actively intends to feed back into political action.	(0, 1)	M
Corporate Watch	UK	Corporate Watch is a not-for-profit co-operative providing critical information on the social and environmental impacts of corporations and capitalism. Since 1996 our research, journalism, analysis and training have supported people affected by corporations and those taking action for radical social change.	(0,0)	M
Common Space	UK			
LensBella Caledonia	UK	An online magazine, based in Scotland, exploring ideas of	(-1,0)	M

		independence, self determination and autonomy. Editor, Mike Small		
The Morning Star	UK	The Morning Star is the only socialist daily newspaper published in Great Britain. It has a long and proud history. Originally called The Daily Worker, the Morning Star was founded by the Communist Party of Great Britain and first published on 1 January 1930. The aim was, in Lenin's words, to provide "an economic and political tool of the masses in their struggle". Since 1945 the paper has been owned by a broad-based readers' co-operative, the People's Press Printing Society (PPPS). The paper's editorial line remains anchored in the political programme of the Communist Party of Britain but it offers a broad left perspective on political, industrial and international issues	(0, 2)	M
Evolve Politics	UK	Evolve Politics is a truly independent, shared equity media outlet, providing incisive news reporting and investigative journalism that highlights and exposes injustice, inequality and unfairness within UK politics, and throughout society in general.	(5 ,0)	I
Real Media	UK	Real Media is a cooperative of journalists dedicated to public interest journalism and challenging mass media distortion. We believe the large media organisations, as they currently exist, largely serve the interest of a small establishment – their owners, their advertisers and the governments that they get most of their information from. This pattern of ownership and structure results in a narrowing window of debate and the decline of public interest journalism. We exist to challenge this state of affairs.	(-2, 5)	C

STRIKE! magazine	UK	STRIKE! Magazine never speaks from one perspective, but is a platform for those involved in grassroots resistance, anti-oppression politics, and the philosophies surrounding these movements. We prioritise the voices of people directly affected by oppressive structures, those on the front lines of political change. STRIKE! presents radical politics and philosophy using accessible language, supported by engaging design and powerful imagery.	(-5, 2)	A
The Bristol Cable	UK	The Bristol Cable is a media co-operative – created and owned by over 1,600 (and counting) paying members in the city. We're working to redefine media, making it challenging, relevant and accountable to local people. You can join the co-op here. (detailed about section including financing, ethos etc	(1, -4)	Com
Manchester Mule	UK	MULE is a Manchester based non-profit independent media project, looking to promote social justice by getting out the news and views you won't find elsewhere, from the rainy city and beyond! The Thinking behind MULEThree core principles underlie our work:1) Providing an alternative has never been more important Traditional local media is facing hard times. Budget cuts and the turn away from serious reporting means there's an information vacuum waiting to be filled in our communities. On a wider level, the commercial media system is dominated by a small number of huge corporations and wealthy individuals. This system promotes commercial values, and filters out information not conducive to the immediate bottom line or long-run corporate interests. MULE aims to cover the burning issues that the mainstream media neglect, without screaming down peoples	(-1, 5)	Com

		<p>necks, being boring or preachy, or speaking to a select, in-the-know audience.2) Media as a tool for social change At its best independent media supports progressive social movements by raising public awareness and providing information that is a tool in the hands of campaigners. This starts at home. The place we can be most effective is in our backyard, holding power to account in Manchester.3) Openness and inclusivity From the start, MULE has been an organisation run primarily by volunteers. We want to provide an opportunity for writers, designers, web geeks and volunteers of all varieties, to get involved and share or improve their skills.</p>		
Salford Star	UK	<p>For Salford, a magazine that's different. It's written and produced by people in Salford for people in Salford. And it's totally independent. The Salford Star just aims to give the community a voice, to make public bodies a bit more accountable and to inform, campaign and entertain. We showcase what's ace in the city, dig up Real Salford Heritage, give new writers and artists a chance to express themselves, and get Salford celebs to contribute...But to make the Salford Star work, most of all we need your stories... Let us know what's going off in your neighbourhood...If you've got an event coming up let us know... if you're launching a campaign let us know... We also need help with writing, research, photography, graphics, selling ads, distribution and other general stuff. Please contact us and have a chat or e-mail us if you want to get involved – no experience necessary.Meanwhile, if you've got a small business and like the mag or website please support it by</p>	(0, - 5)	Com

		advertising with us at our incredibly affordable rates. We are a not-for-profit company and any revenue is ploughed back into the mag to make it bigger and better and to print more copies. It's also a great way to reach the community direct. The Salford Star magazine is free and 20,000 copies are delivered door-to-door in areas of Salford and to as many public places as possible throughout the city. The Salford Star is a total first for the city – it's never had its own independent magazine before. If you want to see it survive please support us and help us get it together		
Verso	UK			
Occupy Times	UK	The Occupied Times of London was founded during the first week of the protest occupation of land adjacent to St Paul's cathedral in October 2011. The first issue was published on the 24th of October, just nine days after the occupation began, with a print run of 2,000 copies of 12 A4 pages. For the first six weeks the paper was produced weekly out of a tent by a small but dedicated team. The OT quickly settled as an A3, broadsheet-sized newspaper and gradually increased in pages, becoming a monthly publication of around 20 pages after six months. Today, we aim to release an issue roughly every quarter.	(0, 2)	M
Open Democracy	UK	openDemocracy is an independent global media platform publishing up to 60 articles a week and attracting over 8 million visits per year. Through reporting and analysis of social and political issues, openDemocracy seeks to educate citizens to challenge power and encourage democratic debate across the world. With human rights as our central guiding focus, and	(4, 2)	I

		open-mindedness as our method, we ask tough questions about freedom, justice and democracy. We help those fighting for their rights gain the agency to make their case and to inspire action.		
Skawkbox	UK	The SKWAWKBOX is written to try to present information and analysis that will rarely make it into the mainstream media because it doesn't fit their agenda and the narrative they want to present.	(0, 0)	M
New Left Review	UK	A 160-page journal published every two months from London, New Left Review analyses world politics, the global economy, state powers and protest movements; contemporary social theory, history and philosophy; cinema, literature, heterodox art and aesthetics. It runs a regular book review section and carries interviews, essays, topical comments and signed editorials on political issues of the day. 'Brief History of New Left Review' gives an account of NLR's political and intellectual trajectory since its launch in 1960.	(-1, 5)	C
The Ferret	UK	The Ferret is an award-winning investigative journalism platform for Scotland and beyond. The Ferret is a registered co-operative, with places reserved for both journalists and subscribers on the board. This hybrid model makes us unique in Scotland – and it means that when you subscribe to The Ferret you become more than just a passive supporter. You become a part owner of the project, and you can influence how the project will develop by voting at our regular member events. You can even stand for election to the board. The Ferret was the first publisher in Scotland to	(4, -4)	I-Com

		<p>be regulated by Impress, and is also pledged to uphold the principles of the voluntary code of practice for social enterprise in Scotland. those who want to run their own national or local investigationscampaign groups with specific areas they'd like to investigatethose who care about the future of Scotland, Britain and the wider world. Diversity is important and we are seeking members and contributors who can bring different gender, race, class and other perspectives to The Ferret. We aim to do this through offering our supporters news, resources, training and events. As a community, we could learn from one another. With everyone's help and experience, and independent financial backing, we can cover important issues the mainstream media often misses. With everyone's help and experience, and independent financial backing, we can cover important issues the mainstream media often misses.</p>		
Consented	UK	Consented is a multi-media platform for those who aren't accurately represented by the mainstream.	(0, -1)	M
Notes from Below	UK	<p>Notes from Below is published online by the Notes from Below Collective in the UK. ISSN 2631-9284 (Online)</p> <p>It is a publication that is committed to socialism, by which we mean the self-emancipation of the working class from capitalism and the state. To this end we use the method of workers' inquiry. We draw our methods and theory from the class composition tradition, which seeks to understand and change the world from the worker's point of view. We want to ground revolutionary politics in the perspective of the working class, help</p>	(2,-5)	A

		<p>circulate and develop struggles, and build workers' confidence to take action by and for themselves.</p> <p>We argue that an understanding of 'class composition', that is to say, how the classes within society are formed and operate, is an essential task for contemporary socialist militants if we are to develop strategies adequate to our moment without relying solely upon the past for guidance.</p>		
Tribune Magazine	UK	<p>"The cause of labour is the hope of the world"</p> <p>– Walter Crane, 1894</p> <p><i>Tribune</i> was established in 1937 as a socialist magazine that would give voice to the popular front campaigns against the rising tide of fascism in Europe. For eighty years it has been at the heart of left-wing politics in Britain, counting giants of the labour movement like Aneurin Bevan and Michael Foot among its former editors.</p> <p>Over the decades <i>Tribune</i> has campaigned for socialist ideals inside and outside parliament. It championed the cause of the Spanish Republic abroad and the National Health Service at home. Tribunitie Jennie Lee wrote in its pages about the need to democratise culture, before going on to found the Open University as a pioneering Minister for the Arts. Barbara Castle was a columnist for many years, arguing for legal recognition of women's equality before introducing the Equal Pay Act in 1970. <i>Tribune</i> also contributed to the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, offering its pages to Albert Luthuli of the ANC as early as</p>	(5,0)	C

		<p>1961, and to the fight against colonialism, with Jawaharlal Nehru making the case for Indian independence as far back as 1938.</p> <p>In culture, too, <i>Tribune</i> blazed a trail, with George Orwell spending many years as literary editor, and writers from Upton Sinclair to HG Wells, Doris Lessing, George Bernard Shaw, and Seán O’Casey finding a home in its pages. <i>Tribune</i> was relaunched as a print magazine and website with the support of <i>Jacobin</i> in 2018, and its new team is committed to reviving this great tradition on the British left. Our mission remains, as Michael Foot wrote on the magazine’s 21st birthday, “to sustain the old cause with the old weapons.”</p>		
Rebel	EIRE	<p>Rebel is a new socialist website dedicated to challenging establishment politics here in Ireland and beyond, and to creating a platform for alternative left-wing viewpoints to be aired. The website is organised by members of the Socialist Workers Network; a revolutionary socialist organisation and component part of the 32 county socialist party People Before Profit. We are socialist, anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-capitalist. We aim to include the opinion of a wide range of views of those in social movements and on the left, as part of a wider discussion about how we move beyond the failures of capitalism. Articles reflect the views of the authors unless otherwise stated.</p>	(-4, 3)	A-C
Rabble	EIRE			
LookLeft	EIRE	<p>Throughout Ireland, workers and the young are under mounting pressure. Economic mismanagement sees the spectre of mass long-term</p>	(0, 2)	M

		<p>unemployment return, while politicians force the poor to pay for the criminal activities of the rich. In the south, the answer of a speculator elite is to begin openly calling for another generation to emigrate. In the north, a 'peace process' solidifies sectarian division and the positions of new tribal ward bosses. But the Left has been unprepared. Where unity is needed, there is division. Where new thinking is needed, too often there is an acceptance of failed approaches. Instead of challenging the right-wing consensus, some too easily accepts its confines. LookLeft intends to play its part countering these problems by providing a non-sectarian platform for progressive news, views and debate from working class communities and left-wing activists.</p>		
Dublin Digital Radio	EIRE	<p>Dublin Digital Radio is an online digital radio station dedicated to providing a quality platform for the various communities striving to create a socially and culturally progressive city in a landscape netted with political stasis and bureaucratic tepidity. We here at Dublin Digital Radio, believe it is time to break the mould with the medium of radio. Too long has the music scene in Ireland rip roared along without a radio platform to support it, to provide the link between what's happening on the ground to the listener, the music lover that has been left behind by the cultural dearth on Irish national airwaves. Too long have social and political issues been silenced on the airwaves due to the puppet show of balance and too long off air are the days of the pirate radio when a degree of autonomy existed on the airwaves. We are here to change that.</p>	(0, - 4)	Com

Dublin Community TV	EIRE	<p>DCTV is a not-for-profit cooperative. The key aims are To develop and run a community television channel for Dublin and surrounding areas with the following goals:</p> <p>Empowerment: To contribute in the context of equality and social inclusion, to the empowerment of communities of interest and geography, especially those facing disadvantage or exclusion, and to work together with them to achieve their social, economic, educational and cultural objectives;</p> <p>Participation: To provide the means for full participation by communities and people of Dublin in the planning and running of the channel, AND at the same time to enhance their participation in the governance and development of the city;</p> <p>Diversity: To celebrate and enrich through programming the great diversity of cultures and communities of all kinds in Dublin AND to broaden the range, accessibility and diversity of content available to viewers, and especially minority audiences and interests that will educate, entertain, inform, provoke, innovate and challenge. To enable and manage access to broadcasting infrastructure for programmes; to supply equipment and facilities; to support and engage in the production of programmes; to provide training and education in media production, processes and related matter; to establish archives and otherwise document and record community video and television; to cooperate and collaborate with others with similar goals, and to engage in any other activities and enterprise conducive to the attainment of the objectives of the society.</p>	(2, - 5)	Com
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Irish Marxist Review	EIRE	Welcome to Irish Marxist Review, a new journal of socialist ideas published in association with the Socialist Workers Party.	(0, 3)	C
New View TV Belfast	EIRE	NVTV, also known as Northern Visions Television, is a local public service community television station based in the city of Belfast.	0 -2)	M
Solidarity Times	EIRE	Solidarity Times is a radical publishing project by a team of unpaid volunteers. We aim to provide coverage of struggles in Ireland and to create radical analysis of political, economic and social life here.	(-3, 2)	A
Alternative	EIRE			
Near FM	EIRE	Near Media Co-Op is a not-for-profit community media project. The project consists of Near FM and Near TV and works in platforms as diverse as computer training, drama production, assisting unsigned musicians and educational programming.	(2 -3)	Com
View Digital	EIRE	VIEWdigital is an online platform. We aim to independently produce and publish original social affairs journalism in VIEW magazine/ezine and VIEWdigital news site. We cover issues that have a major effect on society and get readers talking about them. VIEW readers are interested in topical social issues and we as journalists are motivated to provide interesting social affairs stories to inform our readers. VIEW magazine is printed and distributed to libraries and we also organise events to promote discussion and debate on issues raised by our journalism.	(5, 0)	I
The Last Round Belfast	EIRE	Set up in late 2015, The Last Round aims to use a combination of online and print media to bring left-wing analysis and opinion to as wide an audience as possible. We aim to use a mixture of podcasts, videos,	(2, 4)	C

		photography, online blogging and print magazine journalism to engage and grow our audience, as well as offline discussion and debate events.		
Irish Broad Left	EIRE	Irish Broad Left was launched on February 1, 2019. It is a broad and open forum for news, discussion and debate among Irish left activists, grassroots campaigns, community groups and NGOs, academics, political representatives and other individuals. In particular, we aim to provide a platform for young people, women, and people from marginalised communities to contribute their views. As an all-island left website, we are also particularly interested in receiving submissions from progressives from a Unionist background.	(0, 2)	M
Misneacht	EIRE	Misneacht is a radical group for the benefit of the local community and native language. We are not like many other organizations in the Irish language world or we put a tooth from a political perspective. We are left behind and we firmly believe that the capitalist system and imperialism must be devoted to life in order to secure the Irish language and indeed the minority and minority cultures of the wider world. Furthermore, we believe that the Irish language can make a significant contribution to the struggle for the rights of workers, that is, our native language is an important part of any revolution in Ireland. We reject the view that it is the state and the political foothold that it is safe to survive the language.	(0,-2)	M

Appendix B: Semi-structure Interview Ethics

Ethics Form

Dublin City University	
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE	
NOTIFICATION FORM FOR LOW-RISK PROJECTS	
Application No. (office use only)	DCUREC/2017/____

PROJECT TITLE:	The Political Economy of Radical Media
APPLICANT NAME:	Seamus Farrell
SCHOOL/UNIT:	School of Communications
APPLICANT EMAIL:	seamuspatrickfarrell@gmail.com
<i>If a student applicant, please provide the following additional information:</i>	
Programme of Study:	PhD
Supervisor Name:	Dr Eugenia Siapera
Supervisor Email:	eugenia.siapera@dcu.ie

1. Notification Review is reserved for low-risk social studies that fall under the following classifications. Please indicate your project type below:	
Please mark as appropriate:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Anonymous Survey (the topic will not elicit significant difficulties for participants)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Observation (without audio or visual recording) of a public setting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Questioning participants regarding their opinions on products or services

	Questioning students about standard educational practices
	Study will monitor the impact of participants' daily activities
X	Questioning public figures/professionals in their professional capacity regarding their professional activities
	Analysis of existing anonymised data which has been provided to the researcher by a third party
	Collection of biological samples which are anonymised and do not require invasive techniques (e.g. hair, nails).
	Other <i>Please explain:</i>

2. Please provide a justification for why your study is considered to be low-risk?

My study involves semi-structured interviews with adults who are media producers and editorial contributors within radical media organisations. Radical Media is defined as media which has or is guided by a principle of emancipation and social justice. The interviews are exploratory, the subjects are radical media members and the questions cover the type of content their media organisation produces, the production process itself, such as funding and decision making and the relationship of their work to politics.

Blind or semi blind sampling will not be taking place, the interviewee will be fully informed of the nature of the research and full consent will be engaged. Interviews with minors (under 18) or specifically vulnerable groups are not been carried out. An informed consent form will be filled out.

A sample of the interview questions are included in Appendices 1.

3. Please describe how your participants will be recruited?

A typology of Radical Media and a mapping exercise has been carried out extracted from content analysis of existing radical media outlets. This has allowed for the creation of a criteria system for interviews, with a ranking of relevant media outlets.

From here there are three routes for participant recruitment. Firstly media outlets will be emailed to ask a representative to be interviewed. Secondly, using network theory, we will map existing outlets and their relationship to each other and ask for recommendation from outlets for other media contact points within the sample parameters. Thirdly third party recommendation from academic, charity and non-profit organisation will be sought.

4. Informing your participants – Plain Language Statement

A Plain Language Statement is attached in Appendices 2. The Plain Language Statement is addressed to individuals over 18, with full literacy skills, reflecting their position as writers, editors and administrators within media organisations.

Please confirm whether the following issues have been addressed in your plain language statement for participants:

Introductory Statement (PI and researcher names, school, title of the research)	YES
What is this research about?	YES
Why is this research being conducted?	YES
What will happen if the person decides to participate in the research study?	YES
How will their privacy be protected?	YES
How will the data be used and subsequently disposed of?	YES
What are the legal limitations to data confidentiality?	YES
What are the benefits of taking part in the research study (if any)?	YES
What are the risks of taking part in the research study?	YES
Confirmation that participants can change their mind at any stage and withdraw from the study	YES
How will participants find out what happens with the project?	YES
Contact details for further information (including REC contact details)	YES

If any of these issues are marked NO, please justify their exclusion:

N/A

5. Capturing consent – Informed Consent Form

An Informed Consent Form is included in Appendices 3. An introduction to the research is included, and the reason why the interviews are being carried out and consent sought.

DECLARATION BY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)

The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have read the University's current research ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with the form guidelines, the REC guidelines (https://www4.dcu.ie/researchsupport/research_ethics/guidelines.shtml), the University's policy on Conflict of Interest, Code of Good Research Practice and any other condition laid down by the Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee. I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.

If there exists any affiliation or financial interest for researcher(s) in this research or its outcomes or any other circumstances which might represent a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest this should be declared in accordance with Dublin City University policy on Conflicts of Interest.

I and my co-investigators or supporting staff have the appropriate qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached application and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies related to the research that may arise.

Electronic Signature(s):

Principal investigator(s):



Print Name(s) here: Eugenia Siapera

Date: 3/11/201

Plain Language Statement

The research is entitled the Political Economy of Radical Media. This research is being completed in the School of Communications, in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Dublin City University. The principal investigator is Seamus Farrell, BA, Msc, PhD candidate at the school.

While there is increasing research on challenges of declining trust in mainstream media and critiques of ownership and content bias, there has been limited research post 2008 of the alternatives to mainstream media, particularly those with a social justice ethos, which have grown in number and impact. This research is focused on these kinds of media.

Specifically, the work is looking to theoretical define a specific form of media, radical media. The concept radical is defined in terms of the concept of emancipation from oppression rather than extremism. This research study wishes to position today's radical media within its historical context, map the existing outlets and explore the type of radical media content, the production methods including funding models, labour models and practices, and the publications' relation and engagement with wider radical politics.

Participants involvement includes a semi-structured interviewed, of between 20 minutes and 1 hour (max). Interview questions can and will be sent in advance. Principle researcher will arrange the option of in person interviews or digital interviews depending on needs of the participant, location etc. There are no specific risks in participation in the study.

In keeping with emancipatory research methods, participants will be offered full access to the research, as well as meaningful knowledge exchange based on the media's of the media outlet or group. The research project is action focused, focusing on best practice as an outcome of the study. This will be a body of work useful in particular to new media organisations.

Interviews will be recorded, transcribed and stored in a password protected file and backed up to a secured external hard drive. Data will be destroyed 12 months after thesis defence. The participants may withdraw from the Research Study at any point.

If participants have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact: The Secretary, Dublin City University Research Ethics Committee, c/o Research and Innovation Support, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel 01-7008000, e-mail rec@dcu.ie

Sample Informed Consent Form

The research is entitled the Political Economy of Radical Media. This research is being completed in the School of Communications, in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Dublin City University. The principal investigator, is Seamus Farrell, BA, MSc, PhD candidate at the school.

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Participant – please complete the following (Circle Yes or No for each question)

<i>I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)</i>	Yes/No
<i>I understand the information provided</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions</i>	Yes/No
<i>I am aware that my interview will be audiotaped</i>	Yes/No

Signature:

Participants Signature: _____

Name in Block Capitals: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Informed Consent Forms

Informed Consent Form

The research is entitled the Political Economy of Radical Media. This research is being completed in the School of Communications, in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Dublin City University. The principal investigator, is Seamus Farrell, BA, MSc,

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<i>I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)</i>	Yes/No
<i>I understand the information provided</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions</i>	Yes/No
<i>I am aware that my interview will be audiotaped</i>	Yes/No

Signature:

Participants Signature: Rebecca Burns

Name in Block Capitals: REBECCA BURNS

Witness: Seamus Farrell

Date: 25/07/2016

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Participant – please complete the following (Circle Yes or No for each question)

<i>I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)</i>	Yes/No
<i>I understand the information provided</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions</i>	Yes/No
<i>I am aware that my interview will be audiotaped</i>	Yes/No

Signature:

Participants Signature: Jennifer Nelson

Name in Block Capitals: JENNIFER NELSON

Witness: Seamus Farrell

Date: 12/12/2017

Informed Consent Form

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Participant – please complete the following (Circle Yes or No for each question)

<i>I have read the Plain Language Statement (or had it read to me)</i>	Yes/No
<i>I understand the information provided</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study</i>	Yes/No
<i>I have received satisfactory answers to all my questions</i>	Yes/No
<i>I am aware that my interview will be audiotaped</i>	Yes/No

Signature:

Participants Signature: Seamus Farrell

Name in Block Capitals: SEAM FINNAN

Witness: Seamus Farrell

Date: 18/04/2018