

**The London School of Economics and Political Science**

**New Technologies and the Idea of Citizenship:  
Patterns of Public Participation in Two Cases**

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**A thesis submitted to the Department of Media and  
Communications of the London School of Economics for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy, London, July 2010.**

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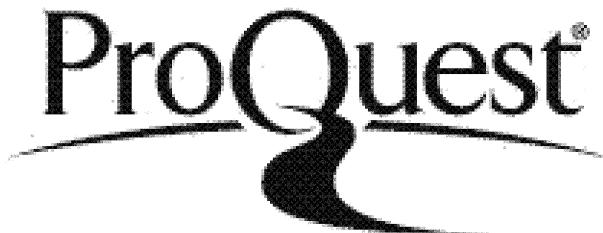
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## **Declaration**

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## Abstract

Many kinds of social, participatory and citizen oriented platforms make up today's media landscape. Many claim that open source and collaborative media change the ways we think about citizenship (Jenkins). Tim O'Reilly claims that Web 2.0 applications "have a natural architecture of participation" (2005). Yet social constructionists, feminists and sceptics caution against attributing new technologies with these kinds of natural characteristics. Drawing from the cultural history of early internet and mobile technologies, this research asks what is meaningful about technologically specific ideas of citizenship? In order to answer this question, I draw from theories of standard and cultural citizenship; analyze a sample of technologically specific ideas of citizenship (e.g. netizenship, e-citizenship, technological citizenship, cyber citizenship); and conduct in depth empirical analysis of two case studies.

Theoretically, this research synthesizes and builds upon citizenship theories beginning with T. H. Marshall and followed by cultural citizenship (e.g. Pakulski 1997; Isin and Wood 1999; Stevenson 2001; 2003). From this conceptual frame, the empirical patterns of connection are analyzed along three primary axes: membership systems; rights and obligations; and participatory strategies. Technologically specific ideas of citizenship fit well with theories of cultural citizenship and cultural rights closely resemble most of those rights that are also technologically specific such as rights to: participate, ideational and symbolic spheres, voice, to representation and to innovate. The cases are of two citizenship initiatives using internet or mobile platforms: the BBC's iCan project and Proboscis' Urban Tapestries project. While these projects emerged on the cusp of social media, both cases are early iterations of participatory media. Both cases provide insights into articulations of changing ideas of citizenship and participatory practices.

Technologically specific ideas of citizenship are conditional. Project users engage different kinds of membership than producers and there is an uneven distribution of cultural rights which favours producers. As a result, users engage different and mostly shallow patterns of public participation. In contrast, producers have broader membership networks, stronger protection of rights and show more variation in deeper more collectively oriented participatory strategies. In the case of limited or partial forms of participation, findings suggest that citizenship language is used as an active manipulative strategy to centralize media organizations as dominant public sites. I argue that the characteristics of technologically specific ideas of citizenship mark a distinct moment in the history of media and citizenship; a moment characterized by the emergence of "public citizenship." The idea of public citizenship attempts to capture the ways in which technologically specific ideas of citizenship, at least in practice, involve making space for ordinary people in cultural institutions.

# Acknowledgements

*This thesis is dedicated to my brilliant father, John Verdon, without whom, undertaking and completing a PhD at the London School of Economics and Political Science would not have been possible.*

Knowledge is never the sole property of one individual, and in the process of writing this doctorate I have often experienced the social nature of knowledge generation, research and analysis. It is not possible to thank everyone who has informed my thinking, provided much needed emotional support and inspired mad rushes of writing or intense critical reflection. However, I am grateful to all those who have directly or indirectly made this project possible. While this work has benefitted from critical comments and insightful reflections from many people, any mistakes or oversights are my own.

First and foremost, I want to thank my family, particularly my extraordinary mother and father, for their unwavering support, constant encouragement and unconditional faith. Second and also foremost, I want to thank my supervisors, Nick Couldry, Roger Silverstone and Sonia Livingstone for everything they have done for me. I was privileged to have Nick and Roger as co-supervisors and worked with both of them most closely at the beginning and middle stages of my PhD. While I owe special thanks to each of them, I want to thank Nick for continuing to critique chapter drafts, even after taking up a Professorship at Goldsmiths, University of London. Sonia Livingstone has been a pleasure to work with in part because she is able to deliver the sharpest insights with optimism and humour and in part, because her work is truly inspirational. Roger Silverstone's death in 2006 was a terrible blow and a significant loss. I miss him greatly and am deeply saddened that he is not here to share in the completion of this project. Roger was a fantastic ally and an esteemed friend. While I hope that this thesis honours the work and intellectual traditions forged by all of my supervisors, I especially hope I have honoured his academic legacy.

Third, I must thank all of my respondents, all of whom are remarkable people doing remarkable things. While I am indebted to each of them, I would like to make special mention of the Urban Tapestries and iCan teams whose commitment and vision are outstanding. Fourth, this research would not have been possible without the support of several funders, for which I am grateful: (SSHRC) Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada; (ORS) Overseas Research Scholarship; several LSE Research Studentships; the (CCSF) Canadian Centennial Scholarship; and the Media and Communications Department.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank my friends, peers and intellectual communities for cheering me on and pointing to the light whenever I was lost in darkness. Nancy Thumim and Giota Alevizou have been good friends as well as setting high intellectual standards. I am grateful for Vanessa Cragoe's presence in the department and for lending her impressive proof reading skills. I have been fortunate to study and work in an incredibly vibrant department. While I have benefitted from this inspirational environment, I am particularly appreciative of many thought provoking discussions with Maggie Scammell, Bart Cammaerts and Robin Mansell. I owe thanks to many colleagues elsewhere, particularly Nico Carpentier and Maja Turnšek Hancic. Many thanks go to my doctoral cohort, especially Elizabeth Van Couvering, David Brake, Suzanne Stein, Patrick McCurdy, Ellen Helsper, Ana Langer and Frederik Lesage. There are also people who have, in part, made me the person who I am today and whose support in whatever endeavours I take on is invaluable. Many thanks go to: Chloé, Ronjon, Tara, Liz, Heidi, Rob and Jeff. Extra special thanks go to Brian Drumm, Simon Jude and Misty Simpson, all of whom have provided exceptional love and exceptional friendship in very different ways and at very different stages. Izaak, my world would not be the same without you; thank-you for being you.

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Thank you to Giles Lane and Proboscis for permissions to reproduce screen shots and images from the Urban Tapestries platform.

I obtained permission from individual respondents to reproduce any material they may have contributed. However, the BBC denied permissions to reproduce iCan or Action Network screen shots. BBC officials justified their denial of permission because the "range of sources" contributing to BBC online content which means negotiating "a variety of licensing and re-use agreements."

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Earlier versions of figures 7.4. and 7.5 (Ryan and Aaron's self identified networks) and of the 'dual systems of membership' model are to be published in a book chapter: (2008) 'New Media Citizens? Dual Systems of Membership in a Citizenship Initiative Case Study.' Alejandro Cervantes-Carson and Kevin W. Grey (eds.). *Inclusion and Citizenship: Readings in Contemporary Pluralism*. Interdisciplinary.net Press: Manchester, e-book (URL forthcoming).

Sections of chapter 2 and chapter 3 have been published as a book chapter: (2007) 'New Citizenships? New Technologies, Rights and Discourses' Nico Carpentier, Pille Pruulmann-Vengerefeldt, Kaarle Nordenstreng, Maren Hartmann, Peeter Vihalemm, Bart Cammaerts and Hannu Niemenin (eds.) *Media Technologies and Journalism in an Enlarged Europe*. Tartu University Press, pp. 201-218.

Figure 7.3. has been published as part of a joint research project published and co-authored with Roger Silverstone: (2005) "Urban Tapestries: Experimental Ethnography, Urban Space and Communication Technologies." Nick Couldry, Rosalind Gill, Andy Pratt (eds). *Media@LSE Electronic Working Paper*. Published by Media@LSE. (URL: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/media@lse/mediaWorkingPapers/ewpNumber7.htm>).

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*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.*

Article 19, Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

# Chapter 1. Introduction: The Idea of Citizenship, New Technologies and the Question of Meaning

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## 1.1. Introduction

me·di·a (mee-dee-uh)

1. A pl. of **medium**
2. (*usually used with a plural verb*) the means of communication, as radio and television, newspapers, and magazines, that reach or influence people widely: *The media are covering the speech tonight.*
3. In communication, media (singular medium) are the storage and transmission channels or tools used to store and deliver information or data. It is often referred to as synonymous with mass media or news media, but may refer to a single medium used to communicate any data for any purpose

tech·nol·o·gy (tĕk-nĕl'ĕ-jē)

is the usage and knowledge of tools, techniques and crafts, or is systems of methods of organization, or is a material product (such as clothing) of these things. The word *technology* comes from the Greek *technologia* – *techne*, craft and *logia*, the study of something, or the branch of knowledge of a discipline. However, a strict definition is elusive.  
(Wikipedia)

Benedict Anderson argues that media (particularly newspapers) help shape the symbolic resources people use to think about their daily experiences and this helps people develop senses of the world out there (2006). Anderson proposes that with the emergence of daily newspapers, the idea of the nation was born. For Anderson, the nation is an “imagined community;” one where individuals will never know everyone else but are likely to share a profound “emotional

attachment" to the nation (2006: 5). Anderson argues that this "national consciousness" came about through three social processes associated with print capitalism. First, the publication of national newspapers "unified fields of exchange and communication;" second, they condensed language into the fixed form of the printed word; and finally, they "created languages-of-power," effectively marginalizing dialects outside of centres of communicative exchange (Anderson 2006: 44-45; c.f. Eisenstein 1979).

Anderson's compelling account of the birth of a national consciousness is widely acclaimed, yet is Anderson writing about the history of media or the history of technology? In some ways, it is unhelpful to make such distinctions because communication technologies are both the "tools" and the "means to communicate" (see definitions above). The histories of media and technology often overlap, in part because of the common associations between the two and as illustrated above. So while some may start the history of media with the electric light and the telephone (e.g. Marvin 1988), the printing press, the steam engine and the railways are also often important starting points (e.g. Briggs and Burke 2005; Downey 2001; de Sola Pool 1983). For Carolyn Marvin, it is important to consider the electric light as part of the history of media because:

...it is less the evolution of technical efficiencies in communication than a series of arenas for negotiating issues crucial to the conduct of social life; among them, who is inside and outside, who may speak, who may not, and who has authority and may be believed (1988: 4).

Marvin prioritizes the role of social and cultural territory over the role of technical instruments, defining media as "constructed complexes of habits, beliefs, and procedures" (Marvin 1988: 8). This understanding of media ties closely into definitions of technology as the "*usage and knowledge* of tools, techniques and crafts" because usage and knowledge also involve complexes of belief and habit. Jacques Ellul refers to technology or "technique" as an "ensemble of means" (1964: 19). For Ellul, this ensemble refers to technology as much more than machines or tools, often invoking practices that are bound up in belief. These understandings of media and technology connect the ways we use tools and how we communicate with how we live.

The point is that it is very difficult to separate the tools of communication from the processes we use to communicate. As such, histories of technology and media are often also about the sometimes surprising ways we come to know the world. While arguments can be made for carefully distinguishing between technology and media, I argue that it is the overlaps and commonalities that are the most interesting. In this vein, I adopt the view taken by Lievrouw and Livingstone who define new media as:

...incorporating both technological and social, political, economic factors... and specifically... as infrastructures with three components: the artefacts or devices used to communicate or convey information; the activities and practices in which people engage to communicate or share information; and the social arrangements or organizational forms that develop around those devices and practices (2006: 2).

Thus, questions about communication technologies necessarily include questions about “social arrangements” and “social life.” The question of how the tools we use (for communication or otherwise) are related to social organization is an important one which has been articulated in thousands of ways, sparking a great deal of theorizing and research. Walter Ong, for example, argues that literacy and the “technologies of writing” significantly shift the cultural and psychological organization of knowledge (1982). Similarly, in a philosophical history, Manuel De Landa argues that the advent of steam technology coincided with new models of understanding individuals and humanity, such as psychoanalysis and ideas of the “unconscious” (De Landa 1991). John Thompson connects new forms of mediated interaction, characteristic of modernity, with electronic media such as television (Thompson 1995).

As electricity and the steam engine marked the advent of the industrial revolution, many argue that we are in the midst of a similar information revolution marked by the proliferation of communication technologies. The recent history of these technologies can be categorized in the three ways, the early internet phase, web 1.0 and web 2.0. As I shall explain shortly, early internet communities began to talk about their electronic experiences in terms

of citizenship claims. While technologically specific ideas of citizenship may have emerged in this moment, this research is empirically rooted in two case studies on the cusp of Web 2.0 and social media.

In the first phase, roughly spanning from 1969 with the development of ARPANET to the early 1990's, "the Internet grew from a single experimental network serving a dozen sites in the United States to a globe-spanning system linking millions of computers" (Abbate 1999: 1). Web pioneers promoted visions of these technologies as empowering individuals, facilitating peer production and enabling collective intelligence (e.g. Jenkins 2006; Castells 2001; Gillmor 2004). Such visions still drive optimistic and pessimistic perspectives of communication technologies. Yet this period also saw competing metaphors for the rapidly shifting landscape. For example, some of these ranged from virtual reality (e.g. Rheingold 1991), cyberspace and to what Castells terms the "network society" (1996) or later, the "internet galaxy" (2001). Despite the changing vernacular, such terms convey fundamental shifts in communicative practices and social organization related to new technologies. As such, the early internet phase is marked by an explosion of technical networks and a shift from the large scale industrial production of material goods to immaterial goods such as knowledge, information and/or networks.

Two important "internetworking" or "virtual" communities emerged in this early internet period: Usenet in 1979 and The WELL in 1985 (Rheingold 1991; Carton 2009). Harold Rheingold describes Usenet as:

...an informal communication medium that has piggybacked and bootstrapped itself through a grass roots movement" into "a coalition of subnetworks consisting of hundreds of thousands of host computers (1991: 197).

The WELL or the "Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link" began as "a computer conferencing system that enables people around the world to carry on public conversations and exchange private electronic mail (e-mail)" (Rheingold 1995: np). Katie Hafner, technology correspondent for Newsweek and Wired, describes the WELL as "the world's most influential online community" (Hafner 1997). These two communities are important in the history of the internet

because they inspired profound attachments, senses of belonging and early iterations of issues related to the development of internet. Additionally, these virtual communities illustrate that:

The remarkable degree of citizen tool building in the Net, particularly tools that enable wider and wider segments of the population to make use of Net resources, is a *de facto* argument for keeping a widely accessible Net open for citizen experimentation (Rheingold 1995: chapter 3).

Thus, the 1990s can be seen as an explosive period marked by the emergence of internet and web based communications such as the world wide web in 1992 and blogging in 1999. However, it is in the 1990s that people begin talking about powerful feelings of belonging, membership and affinity with Usenet and WELL communities. This is especially important because it is at this moment that *citizenship* terms are used to make sense of electronically mediated communities. This research is about these terms and these kinds of claims about the ways technologies meaningfully influence citizenship. My research question asks, what, if anything, is meaningful about technologically specific ideas of citizenship?

There are many different kinds of answers to this question. On the one hand, people such as Henry Jenkins argue that “the structure of fan communities” and other social media are “showing us new ways of thinking about citizenship and collaboration” (Jenkins 2006: 246; e.g. Suoranta and Vadén 2008; Shirky 2008). For Jenkins, the link between “new participatory skills” or “new ideas” and the technical affordances of social media is instrumental for “access to new social structures (collective intelligence) and new models of cultural production (participatory culture)” (Jenkins 2006: 246). Similarly, Tim O'Reilly, well known for coining the term Web 2.0, argues that participatory platforms which build upon user generated content “have a natural architecture of participation” (O'Reilly 2005: np).

On the other hand, this thesis grew from a concern that technologies have historically bound people to unequal social relations; and that technologies will continue to tie people to the *same* cultural meanings and hierarchies (e.g. Marvin 1988; Martin 1991). As Roger Silverstone suggests, technologies carry

with them “bundles of material and symbolic string which tie those who use them into systems of social relations and cultural meanings” (1994: 79). It’s not that the tools we use are innocent or guilty; it’s that they are also “socio-technical systems” connecting and, at times, binding the people around them into particular social relations that (re)materialize inequities and opportunities.

Many feminists have argued that patriarchal social systems establish the norms defining what *is* technological and what *is not*. For example, Lana Rakow argues that domestic appliances such as washing machines, refrigerators, cooking machines and even sewing instruments, etc. are often *not* considered technological because they are associated with the household (1988: 207-208). Similarly, Cheris Kramarae highlights the patriarchal influence on social interpretations of technology which explains understandings of dishwashers as domestic and computers as technological (1988: 5). The point that feminist scholars are trying to make is that technologies are social and political. While it may seem obvious that capacities for political participation are highly gendered, the political character of technology and the technological practices are often less visible (Pateman 1994 [1989]: 372; c.f. Lister 2003: 68 ff.; Nash 2001; on the digital divide, see for example, Gandy 2002; Davies 2004; van Dijk 2005).

Part of this invisibility comes from the tremendous hope attached to the potential for new technologies to change *everything* (or to just change little things) for the better. For instance, Nicholas Negroponte claims:

...that being digital is positive. It can flatten organizations, globalize society, decentralize control and help harmonize people in ways beyond not knowing whether you are a dog... overly hierarchical and status-conscious societies will erode. The nation-state may go away. And the world benefits when people are able to compete with imagination rather than rank. Furthermore, the digital haves and have-nots will be less concerned with race or wealth and more concerned (if anything) with age (Negroponte 1995: np).

For Negroponte, digital technologies shift the organization of power, prioritizing for example, the role of “imagination” over “rank” and changing the criteria for political participation from things such as “race and wealth” to “age”. Yet, technologies are *never* neutral or autonomous. By the early 2000s, the early

internet flourished and the more collaborative and participatory ethos consolidated in Web 1.0 applications (Cormode and Krishnamurthy 2008). Between 2003-2006, “social media” (e.g. Bebo, MySpace, Facebook and other social networking sites) or Web 2.0 type platforms emerge and become wildly popular (e.g. Jenkins 2008; Bruns 2008).

I want to call attention to the links between communication technologies and citizenship. Following Henry Jenkins, I ask: what are these “new ways of thinking about citizenship”? How are technologies actually enrolled in these ideas? Who is involved in creating and enacting these “new ideas of citizenship” and new collaborative citizenship oriented practices? And how, if at all, are these ideas of citizenship meaningful?

This thesis aims to address these questions and in this respect, this thesis is about power. It is not only about the power to include or exclude, but also about the power to enable or disable particular kinds of social action and to legitimate particular behaviours. This thesis examines constellations of power by looking at technologically specific ideas of citizenship in theory and in practice. In order to do this, I have developed a threefold project incorporating: theories of citizenship; analysis of a sample of technologically specific ideas of citizenship; and case studies of two new media projects aiming to initiate citizenship in technologically specific ways.

The first part of this project critically engages ideas of citizenship. As such, chapter 2 aims to *make sense of citizenship* by bringing together Marshallian ideas of citizenship with theories of cultural citizenship. Ideas of cultural citizenship are particularly relevant to this research. Based on the citizenship literatures, I argue that citizenship can best be understood as a framework of action. While the contents of this framework are subject to change according to social and cultural contexts, theories of citizenship identify rights, identities, status, culture, participation and membership, among others, as important components of citizenship.

The theoretical foundation is used as a basis for thinking through a sample of technologically specific citizenship discourses (e.g. cyber, electronic, netizenship, and technological citizenship). Chapter 3 shows that technologically specific rights closely resemble the cultural rights identified in chapter 2. For example, rights of access, participation, information, representation, voice, identity, cultural recognition are all prominent cultural rights. The theoretical analysis suggests that technologically specific ideas of citizenship represent the extension of cultural forms of citizenship. Indeed, cultural rights provide access points to these extended citizenship forms.

Third, I conduct case study analysis of two UK based new media citizenship initiatives, the BBC's "iCan" project (later known as the Action Network) and Proboscis' location based mobile platform, "Urban Tapestries" (later known as Social Tapestries). In the empirical chapters, I analyze the dynamics of membership, the formal conditions of use and the patterns of public participation within both cases. Contingently, these threads theoretically inform the empirical analysis and, respectively, shape the conceptual foundations for chapters 5, 6 and 7 (discussed further below).

While citizenship and media studies are certainly interdisciplinary, I position this research as a sociologically informed research project primarily drawing from cultural and communication studies.

## 1.2. The Question of Meaning

The other caveat is that, I mean of course now it's just, it's training wheels for the real thing. The real thing is communication with other people. It always is (Oliver, Urban Tapestries, information architect, interview 09/08/2004).

When I began this research, I pictured a comprehensive project rigorously mapping the expansive terrain new media cover in relation to citizenship. As such, I proposed the idea of "technological citizenship" as an umbrella term neatly encompassing all kinds of mediated citizenship initiatives, discourses, practices, events, experiences and phenomenon. However, this term was

already in use. "Technological citizenship" may imply the changing geographies of citizenship in light of new media, but the meaning of the terms varies with the context of its use. In relation to the ways citizenship territories are changing, I found myself wondering "what is *the real thing*" (as Oliver states above). I have chosen to use "technologically specific ideas of citizenship" because this term comes with a certain precision and a certain openness around what can (or cannot) be included. Many discussions of technologically specific ideas of citizenship are often future oriented, calling for new kinds of citizen rights. However, this question of what is the real thing bears consideration and helps inform my interpretation of what is or might be meaningful.

There is some indeterminacy around the relationship between technologies and citizenship. Chapter 2 addresses theories of citizenship, particularly T.H. Marshall's multi-dimensional view and ideas of cultural citizenship. This theoretical frame unpacks citizenship conceptually, inviting reflection on the ways current ideas of citizenship might be meaningful. Jan Pakulski argues that the extension of citizenship rights is also about the extension of participation:

The processes of extension of citizenship rights, as Turner (1986) suggests, can be seen as progressive expansion of political community and extension of participation in the nation-state. In spite of political exclusions (e.g. indigenous populations) and historical reversals (e.g. the restrictions of rights under fascist regimes), participatory rights in Western advanced societies have extended in scope and progressed to new domains" (Pakulski 1997: 77).

Information and communication technologies are often important factors in ideas of cultural citizenship and for changing participatory practices in political, social and cultural spheres.

Chapter 3 focuses on establishing some ideational and situational context for technologically specific ideas of citizenship and the case studies. In order to do this, I analyze a sample of technologically specific ideas of citizenship, including "cyber," "electronic" (or "e"), "netizenship" and "technological." This analysis helps develop an indicative sense of the ideational framework informing and

emerging from these kinds of claims. While these ideas propose some technologically specific rights, most bear resemble the kinds of cultural rights addressed in chapter 2. In terms of the case contexts, both have historical precedents in public service television and public art.

Following what Barry Wellman has described as “three ages of internet studies,” social constructionist critiques were especially important in the first hyperbolic age (2004: 124 as cited in Lievrouw and Livingstone 2006: 2). This work assumes that technologies are socially constructed and culturally embedded, in order to contribute to the third age and the move from “documentation to analysis” (Wellman 2004: 27 as cited in Lievrouw and Livingstone 2006: 2). This thesis is my contribution to this “third age,” focusing on *what* is meaningful about technologically specific ideas of citizenship in theory and in the context of two cases. These cases are introduced below.

### **1.3. Participation by the people for the people: Two Cases**

In this section, I introduce my methodological rationale, provide an overview of my research design and introduce my cases. Drawing upon debates among new media researchers, I employ multiple data gathering techniques including participant observation, expert interviews and gathered many textual materials. Analytically, I use discourse and thematic analysis to make sense of how respondents’ discursive strategies position or address citizenship and new media. The methodological issues and techniques are important for the specific details of my project and also for contributing to research methods in citizenship and new media studies.

I examine two *ideal* case studies in what Saskia Sassen would describe as a global city (Sassen 2002; Sassen 1999). I have chosen to concentrate on ideal cases and contexts because findings in some of the best possible conditions are apt to be insightful. In chapter 4, I propose and develop “tiered case studies” as a data gathering heuristic. This approach means identifying common levels across cases to gather like data in each case’s: organizational

contexts; groups of participant (e.g. users and producers); and finally, technological platforms (e.g. a web-site or mobile platform). While the distinctions between tiers were useful for gathering data, the analysis required drawing data from several tiers.

It is important to note that the criterion for case selection is theoretically informed and emerges from the need for empirically questioning such theoretical and normatively oriented claims. As such, the case studies conducted here are indicative rather than comprehensive. The challenge being that rather than conducting grounded research<sup>1</sup> where theory is developed from empirical observation, I have developed a theoretically informed empirical frame. This means that there are a great number of potentially relevant cases and that I have invested careful consideration in the most appropriate cases (see appendix 1.1 for an overview of other potential cases). As discussed further in chapter 4, the most significant criteria for case selection include:

1. Explicit juxtaposition of new media / technologies and citizenship;
2. Emergent, experimental, interesting, elite;
3. Multiple dimensions;
4. Cases must be *applied* (e.g. between grass roots and top down);
5. Culturally oriented rather than formally political;
6. Must complement existing empirical research;
7. Contrasting cases with contrasting aims.

Based on these criteria, I selected two case studies on the cusp of Web 2.0. These cases are both framed as bottom-up, people centred projects. Both rely on user generated content and experiment with the ways communication technologies can foster participation. Both projects are also citizenship initiatives, albeit in complex and contrasting ways.

The first case study is of an award winning BBC new media project called *iCan* (renamed the BBC's "Action Network" in July 2006). Although *iCan* is overtly political, it presents politics from a civic rather than government oriented perspective. The second is of a much smaller location based new media

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<sup>1</sup> Strauss and Corbin argue that grounded theory is especially useful for building theory "that is faithful to and illuminates the area under study", rather than imposing predetermined or widely accepted theoretical suppositions (Strauss and Corbin 1990: 24).

project called *Urban Tapestries* (renamed *Social Tapestries* in 2005). *Urban Tapestries*, henceforth UT, is culturally oriented, aiming to bring together individuals and communities by focusing on neighbourhoods and neighbourhood spaces.

As the last criterion outlines (contrasting cases with contrasting aims), both cases have remarkably different objectives and are also remarkably different in size, scope and scale.

It is notable that during the course of this research, both cases have been closed (e.g. iCan was shut down by the BBC in April 2008) or completed (e.g. upon completion of the technical prototype, UT became Social Tapestries in late 2005). The early closure of iCan and the completion of UT are meaningful. Both of these cases suggest a shortened life span for new media projects. This research is *not* about each case's relative success or failure; instead, I focus on what these projects reveal about the construction and reproduction of power through the framing of citizenship in practice.

### **Case Study 1) iCan: “The People’s Parliament”**

Inspired by BBC commissioned research tackling political apathy and the decreased viewing of BBC political programs, iCan was presented as an innovative way to uphold BBC objectives and reach new audiences. Sparked by the low voter turn-out in the 2001 elections, the report found that political disengagement among young people (under 45's) can be explained by a parliamentary system that is out of step with its constituents, rather than by political apathy or laziness (BBC 2002). Sian Kevill, former head of the BBC's New Politics Initiative, describes the principal conclusions from this research as challenging understandings of why those who are so often “disaffected” and “disconnected” are politically disengaged. For example, Kevill argues:

...young people are not apathetic - they are a new force, 'savvy consumers,' who want answers and solutions; who feel they have a right to have a say and for their voice to be heard; who will not simply accept what is given to them unless it is what they want. They are disenchanted with traditional

institutions and Westminster seems increasingly outdated and irrelevant to them. And the younger they are, the stronger is the sense of disengagement and disillusion (BBC 2002: 1).

In a speech entitled “Engaging the Citizen” published by the Office of the E-Envoy, Kevill offers a solution to voter apathy and outlines the rationale behind iCan:

What we are proposing or what we would like to do is to create, firstly, a *democratic database*. So when people say “I don’t know where to start,” this could be a first point of entry so people can easily find the right contact to help solve their problem whether it’s a local council, an MP, an NHS trust or a campaigning organisation. We can be a portal to guide them to the right place to go (Sian Kevill, then head of BBC’s New Politics Online Initiative, 19/11/2002).

Launched in October 2003, iCan was an award winning website designed to engage the general public in politics. iCan was a popular project and perhaps because it was run through the BBC, it was also influential. For instance, the *World Forum on Politics and Democracy* and *NetPolitics* describe the site “as a unique contribution to e-democracy, and the iCan team were nominated in 2003 and 2004 as one of the top 25 world changers in politics and the internet” (2004: 16). Although iCan was re-launched as the “Action Network” on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005, I refer to it as iCan throughout this thesis because this had been its name throughout most of the research presented here. Ryan describes iCan:

It was originally meant to be a kind of people’s parliament of a way of finding out what people were concerned about, developing some kind of “pulse of the nation” so that we could represent back to root policy makers and to ourselves what people were concerned about (Ryan, iCan Technical manager, interview, 26/03/2004).

iCan has also been described as “a platform for civic participation” and, as the original project manager suggests, “*initiatives like iCan and citizens’ media are ways of reinvigorating the means of holding the powerful to account*” (my emphasis, Derek, former iCan project manager, personal communication, 16/03/2004). As “a kind of people’s parliament,” iCan was intended to provide two things: an information resource and a campaigning platform for ordinary people. iCan aimed to provide an accessible and comprehensive information database covering approximately 1 200 civic issues. Some of these issues

include environmental health, BBC programming or dealing with the NHS, among many others. This information came from team members and also from users. iCan was a public site, open to anyone interested in developing, communicating and/or networking around local or national issues or concerns.

Opening up access to BBC web property was an experimental and hugely innovative step for the BBC. Certainly, allowing audiences to be political through the BBC caused some anxiety about standards of impartiality and the risk of losing editorial control. Nonetheless, BBC members were allowed to write articles or create campaigns for or against issues of their choosing. Some 2004 examples of campaigns were: "broadband access in Lincolnshire," "tackling the Stansted expansion," "tenants' and residents' rights" and "confronting noisy neighbours" etc. (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ican/casestudies> 13/09/2004). It is in part this capacity for users to generate their own content and focus on issues relevant to them that so clearly aligns iCan with the democratization of media associated with participatory or web 2.0 technologies, as well as with "bottom-up" kinds of citizenship.

Much of the BBC's charter renewal documents and news reports described iCan as a "new online local citizenship initiative" ( e.g. BBC 2003b; a) providing "power to the people" (e.g. Dean 2003; Kevill 2004; Perks 2003) through an innovative web-based experiment for fostering politics from the bottom-up. The tag-line accompanying iCan promotional materials and heading every page of their web site was "Change the World Around You" (see figure 1.1 below).

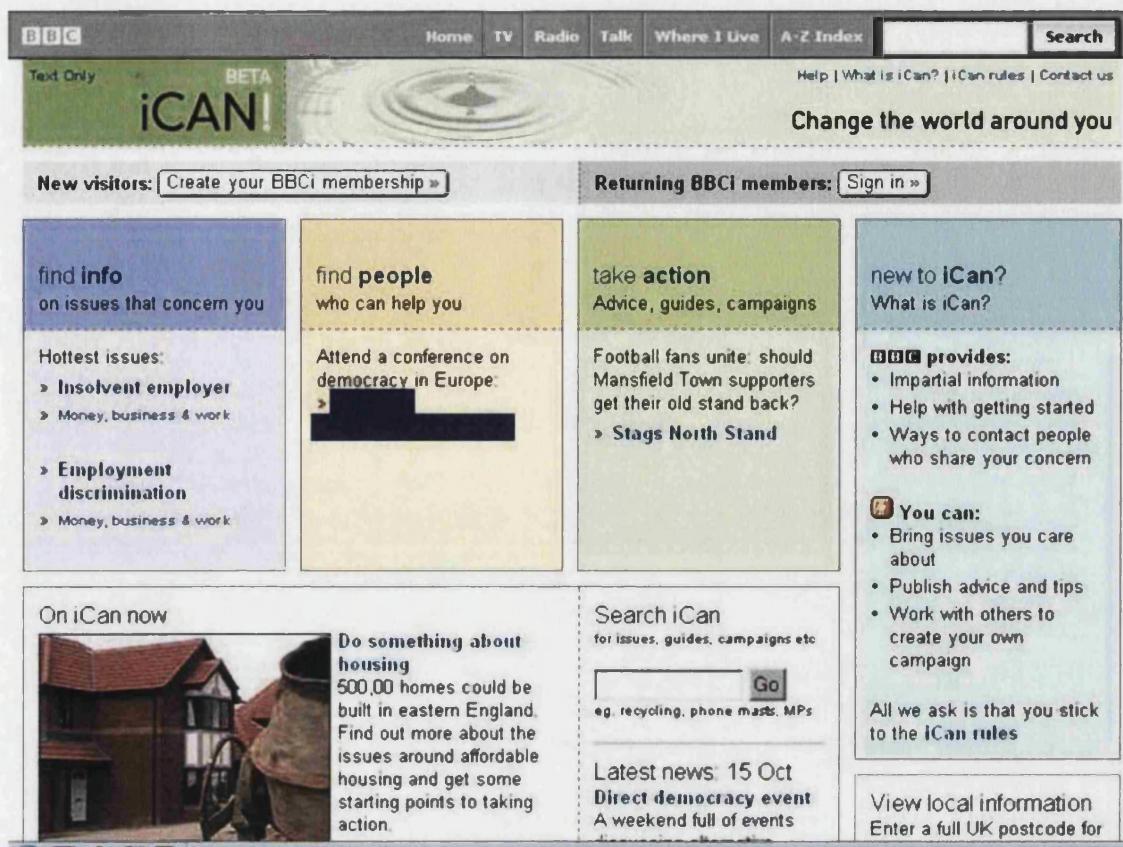


Figure 1.1: Screen shot of iCan homepage, 21/09/2004

By providing BBC web and online spaces (e.g. called “your space” and available through the iCan site), iCan let users publicize issues relevant to their contexts and concerns, while also establishing avenues for users to connect with each other. In these ways, the iCan site was expected to let users “change the world around” them. During this research, iCan had yet to be launched nationally. Yet, the five pilot schemes in Sheffield, Cambridge, Leicester, Bristol and Wales had been described by the BBC and supporters as successful, generating over 4 000 registered users and up to 30 000 “unique users” on a monthly basis (BBC 2004a: 16; BBC 2004b).

iCan was allocated an annual budget of £1 million (BBC and Various 2004; Vogel 2004), and was one of several BBC online communities such as H2G2.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> H2G2 is the acronym for the ‘Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy – Life, the Universe and Everything’ (URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/>). Although this site does not have any direct emphasis on politics or even forums feeding directly into the offices of BBC decision makers, it

These sites were presented by BBC employees and its supporters as embodying and enabling BBC values of public openness, communication and exchange, while also fostering an active engagement with both the BBC and other licence fee payers. The BBC's long history of fostering citizenship and national identity through its programming and public service remit drew my attention to iCan. The BBC's role as a powerful national and cultural public institution provides a fascinating case study for empirically examining ways technologically specific ideas of citizenship are taken up in practice.

## **Case Study 2) Urban Tapestries: "Public Authoring"**

The Urban Tapestries software platform allows people to author their own virtual annotations of the city, enabling a community's collective memory to grow organically, allowing ordinary citizens to embed social knowledge in the new wireless landscape of the city. People can add new locations, location content and the 'threads' which link individual locations to local contexts, which are accessed via handheld devices such as PDAs and mobile phones (Urban Tapestries web site, 12/07/2005).

I do see it [Urban Tapestries] as one way of helping people and communities to hold onto and extend their relationships with each other and their environment and to build pride and belief. This way of belonging is what citizenship is all about. So I do think that UT is absolutely and intrinsically related to citizenship. I don't think it is just about enhancing - it is about allowing new routes and approaches and encouraging new communication and investment by people in their communities (my emphasis, from interview with Christina, co-director of Proboscis and co-founder of UT, interview, 08/03/2005).

While UT was a remarkably different project from iCan, the original juxtaposition of new technologies in order to *initiate* and enhance citizenship are shared by both cases, as Christina emphasizes above. Conceptualized in 2002, the Urban Tapestries project sought to develop a set of wireless, location based content publishing tools. User generated content was intended to become part of a public storytelling database by and for the ordinary person, as described in the opening quotation. The unique feature of UT was that content was accessed and generated on the street, through geographically specific points chosen by the user. This new media project aimed to make the collection,

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does offer a forum for anyone to participate, contribute and create web-site content, subject to editorial approval.

exchange and generation of place based stories and/or experiences readily accessible to the average resident or passer-by. Theoretically, this set of tools enabled a richer understanding of urban collectives and neighbourly relations.

Many respondents struggled to understand the purpose of UT, and as such, I describe how it works as clearly as possible. First, by using a mobile device (originally conceived as a mobile phone or personal digital assistant), users would log in to the wireless network hosting the UT platform. During the beginning of the project (2002-2005), this system was trialled in central London's Bloomsbury neighbourhood. Upon logging in to the system, users could then access and use the public authoring platform while in Bloomsbury; and later via the web from outside the trial area. Early iterations of the platform are depicted in Figure 1.2 below:



**Figure 1.2: First iteration of the UT prototype**

The first PDA in figure 1.1 shows a map of the UT area. Similar to satellite navigation systems, the map was location sensitive and followed the user. If, for example, a user was in or near to "Russell Square," the map would show this area and indicate if there was any previously uploaded content at or near to that location. The second PDA shows what UT designers called a "pocket." This is the interface used to display any uploaded or user generated content such as text, sound or images. If someone uploaded a story about the history of Russell Square, this would come up while logged on to the system. The third

image shows an empty pocket. This is the kind of screen users would use to create and publish content on the network. This public authoring framework was developed to connect people to others *and* to the places they might otherwise only pass through. UT offered a way to realize the rich and vibrant histories connected to urban environments, often from the perspectives of ordinary people rather than formal histories. Thus, the public authoring provided an outlet for bottom-up histories and place based information to be shared amongst peers and members of the public. See Figure 1.3 below.



**Figure 1.3: Second iteration of the UT prototype**

Based on this public authoring platform, UT served two primary functions. The first of these was to provide a kind of database system for keeping track of and sharing local histories and personal experiences. UT enabled a new kind of public forum for anyone interested in exploring a particular geographic area and in exchanging stories about that area. The second function was to create "a public resource for local information similar to the geographic equivalent of the internet" (Silverstone and Sujon 2005: 6). In this way, UT was about experimenting with publicly generated knowledge resources, developed by the public for the public.

Although both cases were structurally different, UT exhibits numerous and important commonalities with the iCan case. Both were publicly funded (albeit

by different funding bodies). Both envisioned and actively pursued the ways in which new technologies could enrich and empower the lives of ordinary citizens. Both encapsulated an ethos of social media before the emergence of “social media” and the web 2.0 boom. Along these lines, both projects were also experimental, trying to create user oriented platforms with new technologies. Finally, both, at least at the outset, claimed to be about citizenship. Despite these similarities, the cases are different. For instance, the BBC is an extremely large and complex organization with a £1 million annual budget for iCan alone. In contrast, Proboscis is a much smaller organization, effectively run by two individuals. iCan was in its pilot phase during the research presented here, and was spoken about by producers as a longer term project expected to grow in size, scope and scale. In contrast, Proboscis is a small organization with less than 5 core employees working on the UT project, which was short term project. Contingently, Proboscis had much fewer resources and very different support systems. Although some kinds of data (e.g. public documents, press reports, publicity materials) may not be equally available across cases, there are ample sources of data from both cases.

#### **1.4. Empirical Structure: Extending Cultural Rights and Public Citizenship**

Technology is not only artefact but actor; or as I put it later, it is machines that have teleological insight.... In this fragile society technology and communication, then, created the hope of economic, political, and cultural unity.... Small political units thinly dispersed in space could be collected into one political organism. Small cultural enclaves thinly dispersed over a continent could be collected into one great community (Carey 1992: 8).

This research contributes to a fuller understanding of the ways in which new technologies are directly and indirectly enrolled in processes of inclusion and patterns of public participation. As discussed in chapter 5, the analysis of each case shows a cleavage between producers and users. Users tend to participate in each case through largely superficial and individually oriented patterns of interaction. In contrast, producers show more collectively oriented patterns of interaction and develop deeper connections to more people and other participants than users. In order to make sense of this cleavage, I argue

that dual systems of membership, one formal and one informal, are at work in both cases. Producers and those sharing cultural, political and technologically specific values tend to be formal *and* informal members; whereas most users are predominantly *only* formal members.

The formal terms and conditions regulating use of and participation in each case are addressed in chapter 6. These conditions of use provide an entry point for understanding cultural rights in practice. However, this chapter shows that producers are allocated a significantly higher number of rights than users. This is discouraging because the potential of each case to meaningfully extend participation, membership or citizenship oriented behaviours the uneven distribution of cultural rights paints a rather pessimistic outcome. This pessimism is justified because the uneven distribution of cultural rights contradicts each case's citizenship objectives and public orientation. For example, instead of claiming to provide a "public authoring" platform and a "parliament for the people," cases should ask users to "give us your content so we can own it." However, as I argue in the next section, other empirical findings demonstrate that while this pessimism is legitimate, there are also grounds for optimism.

"Freedom" is articulated differently with different points of emphasis in each case. For instance, both cases created their respective projects to enable the enjoyment of "all privileges of membership or citizenship," iCan primarily focuses on "freedom" oriented toward "political independence," whereas UT employs "freedom" largely in terms of culture and "freedom of the city." Nonetheless, articulations of membership (who members include or exclude), rights and obligations (who has what rights and who has which obligations) and strategies of participation (how membership and rights are or are not connected) are intrinsically related to the mechanics of power and citizenship. As such, this chapter offers theoretical insights for ways of making sense of the constellations of citizenship discourses, new technologies and of power.

Building upon the analyses of membership and rights and obligations, I argue in chapter 7 that the relationship between new technologies and citizenship in

both cases is multiple, contingent and contradictory. Technologically specific ideas of citizenship may well hold tremendous promise but the empirical picture does not reflect such optimism. While there is ample evidence that each case manipulated the language of “citizenship” to gain better positions and more power in the public realm, there is also evidence to the contrary. For example, each project enabled collectively oriented and deeper kinds of connections mostly between those working on producing them. Such stark differences indicate that there are conflicts, particularly between producers and organizational practices, over how ideas of citizenship and participation can and should be applied.

I present the evidence on public participation through three rather discordant snapshots. There are patterns in the ways that respondents (dis)engage each site and these are clearly visible in the ways respondents tend to participate. The first of these is a snapshot of limited kinds of participation resulting in the conclusion that each case has little to do with citizenship and such language is used in a strategic self-serving fashion. The second is that of partial forms of public participation and differential constructions of citizenship depending upon which audiences are expected to be there. Each case enables different patterns of participation: users tend to demonstrate limited kinds of participation in contrast to producers who demonstrate partial participatory and, as I explain next, networked forms of participation. The third takes an organizational view, showing the extension of cultural forms of citizenship. Most notably, I argue that producers and those users who share pre-existing networks (e.g. UT’s “prod-users”) engage in deeper patterns of participation compared to users. By this, I am suggesting that producers are more able to benefit from the ways each case (and the new technologies within them) fosters bridging *and* bonding social capital, develops collectively oriented and public networks and genuinely prioritizes publicly oriented strategies for richer citizenship practices and structures. Each case made significant contributions to enabling individual creativity and group innovation, which is an important element of cultural forms of citizenship.

Finally, I argue that both cases show a reorganization of citizenship structures to include ordinary people. I argue that this remodelling can be thought of as “public citizenship.” Of course, this is not a *new* model. It is a model that reflects the institutional extension of cultural citizenship. The organizational practices and structures of both cases institutionalize a publicly oriented citizenship frame, even if in problematic ways. The model of “public citizenship” captures a shift in ideas of citizenship where media are increasingly represented as crucial sites for cultural participation. Yet, despite this shift, the potential for public citizenship is fragile because it is not formally protected. The position, constitution and articulations of the *public* are contradictory within each case’s organizational practices. Users and user generated content also occupy a tenuous position marked by very few formal rights and freedoms. The struggles found within each case to centralize *their* projects and media organizations as centres of and for the public can be seen as manipulative and self serving. Yet both cases’ organizational contexts are problematic. Some of the conflicts and difficulties reflect genuine attempts to open up public forms of participation in cultural organizations.

In closing, this dissertation has asked what, if anything, is meaningful about technologically specific ideas of citizenship. Multiple perspectives are used to paint a picture not only of what such ideas of citizenship include, but also how such ideas empirically take shape in two innovative cases. The research presented in this thesis is original in design and is based on looking at “ideas of citizenship” discursively and empirically. In tandem with providing an analytical historical record of two fascinating new media projects, this thesis offers an original contribution to citizenship, cultural and media studies.

## Chapter 2. Making Sense of Citizenship: Membership, Rights and Participation

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### 2.1. Introduction

How we define citizenship is inseparable from how we define democracy and the good society; notions of citizenship thus remain ultimately contentious (Dahlgren 2009: 63).

Citizenship is fundamentally about equality and often the various ways *better* equalities are (and are not) negotiated and made possible. Citizenship is also messy. It is messy in practice and it is messy in theory. As discussed in the previous chapter, this research questions what is meaningful about technologically specific ideas of citizenship. Understanding what is at stake when thinking about ideas of citizenship in relation to media and new technologies helps to address this question. In order to do this, this chapter focuses on a sociologically informed view of what I consider the most helpful ways in which media and cultural studies help *make sense* of ideas of citizenship. The concept of citizenship defies a simple definition as the implications and meanings of the term are vast, often debated and often dependent upon the context of use. As Peter Dahlgren suggests above, “notions of citizenship thus remain ultimately contentious.”

Citizenship is also pervasive. From Aristotle to Derrida, many have argued that citizenship cannot be understood through a single definition or as static (c.f. Heater 2004: 17). Attempts to define citizenship often do so narrowly or broadly. I suggest that broader notions of citizenship are more valuable than narrower conceptions.

Drawing from T. H. Marshall's work on citizenship and ideas of cultural citizenship, I argue that citizenship is best understood broadly as a multi-sited and multi-dimensional framework for action, often oriented towards the public or common good. Amidst the "pluralization" or "efflorescence" (Kivistö and Faist 2007; c.f. Dahlgren 2009) of citizenship forms, I argue that cultural notions of citizenship rearticulate and extend social rights as mediated and symbolic. The relationship between media, technologies and citizenship play a crucial role in this rearticulation, generating cultural rights and extending sites of and for participation. This chapter establishes key theoretical tenets for understanding the participatory capacity of new technologies in two cases.

These thematic elements are discussed further in section 2.5 of this chapter and include issues of membership, rights and participation. These elements also structure the interpretative frame (chapter 4) and unpack key concepts for the empirical analysis (chapters 5, 6, and 7). Notions of technologically specific forms of citizenship are nominally introduced here and only as they have been alluded to through discussions of cultural citizenship. Chapter 3 takes these ideas up further in two parts. The first assesses a small sample of technologically specific ideas of citizenship (e-citizenship, netizenship, cybecitizenship and technological citizenship). It is here that I more closely examine the content, particularly the rights and claims within this sample. The second part situates each of the case studies within two separate trajectories according to each case's respective context. For *iCan*, this includes public service broadcasting and for *Urban Tapestries*, this means public art and locative media. It is notable that both cases offer public services and both provide very interesting insights into the extension of cultural citizenship. Power is both explicit and implicit in the exercise and conceptualization of citizenship,

and its significance is reflected upon in relation to freedom and media technologies at the end of this chapter.

## 2.2. Defining Citizenship: Frameworks of and for Action

As Dahlgren suggests in the quotation opening this chapter, citizenship is “inseparable” from how we define “democracy and the good society” (see also Janoski and Gran 2002: 18). This relation has had many historical articulations. For the ancient Greeks, “man was *zoon politikon*, a political animal” who shared “the right and opportunity – indeed the responsibility – to shape the life of the polis”; albeit such rights were only granted to men and property owners (emphasis in original, Heater 2004: 3-4, 28). Derek Heater describes this as an early model of “civic republicanism,” while others describe it as an “original” type of “direct or participatory democracy” (Held 1993: 15). The American and French Revolutions marked the emergence of citizens as “we the people” and the “citoyen,” groups who were strongly linked to the fight for democratic republicanism (Schudson 1998: 52 ff.; Heater 2004: 69; Faulks 2000: 30-35). Habermas’ bourgeois public sphere is based on the application of deliberative democracy where “private” rational citizens are able to come together and “something like public opinion can be formed” (Habermas 1984: 49). The social and civil rights movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century battled to “widen the web” of citizenship and include minorities and women in the practice of the political franchise (Nash 2000; Schudson 1998; Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999; Isin 2002; Lister 2003). All of these influential historical moments mark different configurations of the political franchise, and all define *who* participates as citizens.

Narrow definitions often carry the strength of brevity but also risk reductionism or oversimplification. Broader definitions may more accurately convey the complexity and richness of citizenship but risk being too abstract or diffuse. For example, the UK Border Agency, which is responsible for managing migration and applications for citizenship, defines British citizenship narrowly as “one of the six different forms of British nationality” (UK Border Agency 2010).

Citizenship here refers to a formal membership status within the geographic and national boundaries of the United Kingdom. Citizenship is thus equivalent to “a matter of documents” which designates geographic areas of residence and the socio-legal framework governing those jurisdictions (Rosaldo as cited in O’Toole 2000: np). While ideas of citizenship-as-status are widely accepted, there are differing ideas of what else citizenship might include and how additions or extensions might unfold. For political scientists, citizenship is often primarily defined as a membership status and participation in political life; both of which are key.

Bryan Turner offers a narrow starting point for thinking of citizenship as “a bundle of rights and obligations that formally define the legal status of a person within a state” (2001b: 11). Yet, this starting point becomes much broader as Turner also suggests that the right to citizenship also “defines one’s identity as a public person” and is “intimately bound up with the sentiments and emotions of membership” (Turner 2001b: 11). Broadening out definitions of citizenship enables better understandings of how citizenship is also bound up in “a set of values, symbols, experiences, imagination and identification” (Loader 2007: 5).

Gershon Shafir offers a particularly broad and useful view when he suggests that citizenship functions not only as a kind of political framework but also as a kind of “sociological perspective” or “vision of humanity” (Shafir, 1998: 3; c.f. Citizenship Studies, 2003):

The tradition of citizenship commences as a framework of political life. But it doubles as a sociological perspective and becomes one with humanism itself. Organizing social life around the political goal of securing freedom for the citizen generates a general vision of humanity (Shafir 1998: 3).

Articulating citizenship as a status, as a framework and as a vision of humanity . . . . . recognizes what might be termed different registers of understanding, for example, from an experiential perspective or as an analytical heuristic. The notion of citizenship as a framework suggests that citizenship is a basic structure that organizes patterns of membership and participation across various dimensions. Yet, as a framework there is some flexibility in how these

dimensions are put together, experienced and oriented; which allows for some contestation around political differences. Nira Yuval-Davis and Pnina Werbner offer the view that citizenship is an “always already becoming, historically contingent social [political and jural] formation” which:

...both compounds and confounds contradictory tendencies: of universalism and particularism, freedom and order, individual rights and collective responsibilities, identity and difference, nation and individual (1999: 2-3; c.f. Marshall 1992 [1950]: 7, 20, 18, 43).

At its heart then, citizenship provides a container for often contradictory and densely woven relations or what Seyla Benhabib et al. refer to as “governing relations” (2007: 9). As such, the features or details of citizenship are immensely debatable. Presumably, most could accept that citizenship involves some kind of structural frame informing who are (and who are not) citizens. Most could probably also accept that citizenship is often oriented towards the “common good”:

Conceived as membership in a community of shared fate, *citizenship consists in action aimed at governing relations* of interdependence for the sake of a *common good*. Over time, a widely accepted sense of shared fate may generate strongly shared identities, loyalties, and mutual affection among citizens, but it is far from clear that this is necessary for the society to function or be perceived as legitimate by its citizens (Benhabib, Shapiro et al. 2007: 9).

While there may be some useful distinctions between citizenship as a framework, a historically contingent formation or as “action aimed at governing relations,” I argue that these ideas of citizenship are most valuable when taken together.

In summary, citizenship is best understood broadly, as a framework with a collective orientation towards the “common good.” As the title of this section suggests, citizenship includes a framework of and for action. Citizenship then is a centre-point for action, not only in the actions themselves but in establishing the ground *for* action and inaction. And in marking, in *making*, the boundaries between who can or cannot act in which ways and to what extent, citizenship is also about what happens within those boundaries. Numerous tensions arise in

understandings of the construction of such boundaries, between the particularities of individual citizens and the “universalism” of citizenship.

It is here that T. H. Marshall's work on citizenship proves a salient starting point. Marshall's work, particularly his essay on *Citizenship and Social Class*, has been described as the “founding document of modern citizenship studies” (Isin and Wood 1999: 25). Marshall's work is rooted in the finite boundaries of the nation state, yet also usefully articulates many issues and questions still central to contemporary ideas of citizenship.

### **2.3. T. H. Marshall and the dimensions of citizenship**

In my view, one of Marshall's most important and basic contributions is his understanding of citizenship as multi-dimensional and dynamic. Marshall outlines a useful schema for making sense of how multiple rights and obligations come together to form thematic dimensions of citizenship (civil, political and social). In addition to the multi-dimensionality of citizenship, Marshall offers several useful and important starting points for thinking about citizenship; I've chosen to focus on three. These include: 1. the emphasis on the relationship between citizenship and social inequality; 2. the role of rights in shaping citizenship; and 3. the role citizenship processes play in shaping citizens.

I elaborate upon each of these points below, followed by some of the most relevant issues and criticisms raised through Marshall's work. Notably, Marshall's conception of citizenship goes significantly beyond thinking of citizenship only as a status or form of membership (Shafir 1998: 13) and has generated a great deal of further thinking on and about citizenship. However, the Marshallian view of citizenship needs to be further developed. Ideas of cultural citizenship, as discussed in section 2.4 below, open up critical avenues to do this. I argue that while such ideas elaborate and make important additions to Marshall's schema, they also differentiate partially latent aspects within Marshall's social dimension as cultural.

## **Social inequality and multi-dimensional citizenship**

Marshall was interested in the relationship between citizenship and social inequality, particularly those inequalities associated with class. Isin and Wood (1999: 26) suggest that Marshall's work was motivated by a long standing sociological question that is still relevant today:

Is it still true that basic equality, when enriched in substance and embodied in the formal rights of citizenship, is consistent with the inequalities of social class? (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 7).

To address this question, Marshall conducted a socio-historical analysis of the development of citizenship in Britain. In this analysis, Marshall argues that the basic equality of citizenship and the social inequalities of class are "still compatible, so much so that citizenship has itself become...the *architect of legitimate social inequality*" (1992 [1950]: 7). In seeming contradiction, Marshall also states that "in the twentieth century, citizenship *and the capitalist class system have been at war*" (1992 [1950]: 18). For Marshall, this means that the citizenship rights have been successful in legitimating *some* inequality by reforming some of the harsh cruelties of capitalist or *illegitimate* social inequities. Marshall emphasizes this point when he concludes "that the preservation of economic inequalities has been made more difficult by the enrichment of the status of citizenship" (1992 [1950]: 45). While the definitions of what constitutes legitimate or illegitimate inequalities are debatable, the idea of citizenship as an architect of any kind of inequality is compelling. The question of what kinds of inequities are associated with technologically specific ideas of citizenship is taken up further in the empirical analysis (chapters 5-7).

Shafir offers another view, suggesting that Marshall's ambiguity (c.f. Turner 1990: 193) reflects the "at once cumulative and contradictory" relations coming out of the expansion of citizenship rights (1998: 14). Certainly, Marshall's project and his understanding of citizenship is complex, particularly in terms of conflict, time frame and rights.

For example, although Marshall has been critiqued for ignoring the political struggles involved in securing citizen rights, he considers numerous "conflicts in

principles" to be bound up in the emergence of citizenship dimensions. Marshall attempts to identify a series of conflicts: between social justice and economic necessity; between "principles of equality" and "systems of inequality;" between class abatement and "legitimate social inequality;" and between "incentives of personal gain" and "public duty" (1992 [1950]: 7, 20, 18, 43; c.f. Barbalet as cited in Nash 2000: 162). Marshall concludes that such:

... conflict of principles springs from the very roots of our social order in the present phase of the development of democratic citizenship. Apparent inconsistencies are in fact a source of stability (1992 [1950]: 49).

In this sense (and as echoed by Yuval-Davis and Werbner above), such conflicts are a necessary stabilizing force for the structure of citizenship.

Marshall's time frame (from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries) encompasses numerous moments where such principles shift in relation to laws, to citizens and to citizenship rights. While Marshall identifies three distinct "strands" of rights equivalent to "parts, or elements" of citizenship, I argue that these strands are historically and contextually specific (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 8). See Table 2.1 for an overview of these elements of citizenship.

**Table 2.1: T. H. Marshall's Dimensions of Citizenship**

Dimension	Rights	Obligations
<b>Civil:</b> "Courts of Justice" circa 1832	<p>"the rights for individual freedom – liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice" (1992: 8, 17)</p> <p>"the right to work (1992: 10)</p>	Responsibility to others: e.g. to ensure labour equity through fair wages and unionization (1992: 41-43).
<b>Political:</b> "Parliament" and "local Government" circa 1918	<p>"the right to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body" (1992: 8, 17)</p>	Obligation to work: in order to contribute to the economy and support the government through taxes (1992: 45-48)
<b>Social:</b> "Educational system[s] and social services" circa 20th Century	<p>"the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the</p>	Public duty: to ensure the betterment of the individual and the polis or common good through education (1992: 37, 43)

While we have come to know these strands as dimensions of citizenship, each "strand" of rights had a different impact on and relationship to the structure of social inequality. Each strand of rights functioned differently during its formation and in relation to other nascent or more established strands. For example, Marshall discusses the history of the Elizabethan Poor Law which began as a "champion of the social rights of citizenship" until the "Act of 1834" which forced the destitute to "forfeit" any civil and political rights (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 15). In this sense and at this time, poverty protections and relief "offered alternatives to the rights of citizenship, rather than additions to them" (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 15). Marshall argues that in this period civil rights promoted individualism and class inequities, developing hand in hand with capitalism:

And civil rights were indispensable to a competitive market economy. They gave to each man, as part of his individual status, the power to engage as an independent unit in the economic struggle and made it possible to deny him social protection on the ground that he was equipped with the means to protect himself.... civil rights, which confer the legal capacity to strive for the things one would like to possess but do not guarantee the possession of any them (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 20-21).

In contrast, twentieth century social rights involving the universal provision of education, a National Health Service and welfare enabled a deepening of citizenship. Similarly, Marshall argues that the problem with political rights in the eighteenth century was one of distribution because "less than one-fifth of the adult male population" were voters (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 12). The shift following universal suffrage in 1918 attached the political franchise "directly and independently to citizenship as such" (Marshall 1992 [1950]:13).<sup>3</sup> Marshall's examples illustrate that the meaning and consequences of civil, political and social rights varied greatly with the particularities of time and place. Marshall's account demonstrates that each strand of rights did not mean the same thing or have the same consequences for everyone at all times. In these ways, Marshall's elements of citizenship are dynamic and contextual.

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that only women over the age of 30 were granted the vote in 1918; all women were not granted equal voting rights to men until 1928 (Phillips 2004). As such, the political franchise was not universal in 1918.

However, many have critiqued Marshall's historical accuracy and implicit evolutionism (e.g. Turner 1993, 1990; Manning 1993; Shafir 1998; Delanty 2000; Nash 2000; Soysal 1994). For example, Marshall's presentation of citizenship ignores geographic, historical, cultural or social variability and differences (Turner 2001a: 191). As feminists argue, the historical development of citizenship followed a rather different trajectory for women and this has a tremendous impact on the sequence and shape of citizenship rights (e.g. Walby as cited in Nash 2000: 163-164). Such differences call into question the accuracy and applicability of Marshall's schema. However, the historical details of how each strand of rights fits together are not that important here. Instead, I focus on the basic shape and implications of Marshall's argument. Marshall's account of citizenship is multi-dimensional and although contentious, I argue that it also highlights the fluidity of citizen rights and the dynamics of citizenship.

## **Rights and citizenship**

Notably, Marshall offers a rights-based account of citizenship. This account has three important characteristics: rights are central to ideas of citizenship, rights are institutionally based and the expansion (rather than the creation) of rights historically marked the emergence of new citizenship dimensions.

First, rights are central to Marshall's account of citizenship. The most important implication here is that the development and allocation of new or existing rights are crucial forces in the development or consolidation of citizenship dimensions. For Marshall, "the rapidly developing concept of the rights of citizenship" greatly contributed to the "enrichment of the status of citizenship" (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 49). This enrichment of citizenship provided important protections for the reform of severe economic inequity. As outlined in Table 2.1, Marshall also identified obligations associated with each dimension of citizenship. Of these, Marshall emphasized, above all, the obligation to work, followed by responsibilities to others and education as a public duty. Marshall also makes reference to "the general obligation to live the life of a good citizen" (Marshall

1992 [1950]: 45). While Marshall comparatively overemphasized citizenship rights, his conception of obligations are closely connected to those rights (see table 2.1).

Second, in Marshall's account, rights are institutionally based and granted from the top-down; a point that has received ample criticism (e.g. Turner 1990; Pakulski 1997; Delanty 2000). Based on a critique of Marshall and Mann's institutional or passively biased accounts of citizenship, Turner proposes a citizenship typology that takes into account the top-down and bottom-up development of rights (Turner 1990: 200, 201, 207). Marshall's schema is considered to be top-down because rights are based in the courts, parliament and schools. Marshall's account positions British citizens as passive and citizenship rights as being handed "down" from institutions to the people (Turner 1990: 201, 207; Delanty 2000: 19). Turner describes citizenship as "bottom-up" when "citizens" who are "active bearer[s] of rights" are the sources of rights (1990: 207). The French and American revolutions and social movements are a good example of Turner's bottom-up notion of rights. For this research, the distinction between "bottom up" or active and "top down" or passive is one that is especially useful and is discussed further in this chapter (and also chapter 7).

Keeping in mind this critique, Marshall describes the emergence of the political dimension of citizenship as consisting "not in the creation of new rights ... *but in the granting of old rights to new sections of the population*" (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 12; c.f. Turner 2001b; a). Thus, the extension of political rights changed the scope of civil rights and opened up enriched capacities for social rights. The implication is that the extension of rights is as important as new rights for the emergence of new articulations of citizenship. Contingently, new rights are not necessarily equivalent to new forms of or claims to citizenship. Michael Schudson would take a similar view, as illustrated by his argument that battles over the allocation of rights are often associated with the extension of civic participation to those who had previously been excluded. For example, Schudson connects the feminist and civil rights movement with struggles over expanding spheres of action for women and blacks to the courtroom and in federal government (1998: 264, 250, 258; c.f. Arendt as cited in Benhabib

2004). In this way, social movements are important forces in “widening the web of citizenship” and enabling the capacity for citizen participation (Schudson 1998: 264, 250, 258; c.f. Nash 2000). As such, the contestation and negotiation of rights open up avenues for people to be political or social actors in ways and in places that had been previously institutionally closed or denied.

## **Citizenship and the production of citizens**

Not all theorists agree with Turner’s critique of Marshall’s conception of citizenship as passive. For example, Isin and Wood (1999: 31) claim that “Marshall thought of citizenship as constitutive of subjectivities rather than [as] a passive status.” In my view this is an important although latent aspect of Marshall’s conception of citizenship. It is an important point for two reasons. First, it highlights the question of *who* citizens are and who they *might* be. Second, citizenship rights enable particular possibilities and particular “citizen” capacities. This has an impact on the kinds of possible actions citizens can think about and/or pursue. As such, the possibilities for public action are in some ways enabled or disabled through the particularities of rights and the particularities of citizenship. Contingently, certain behaviours or practices are likely to be favoured or discouraged through the particularities of citizenship rights.

Although Marshall’s use of the term “universal” (1992 [1950]:12, 13, 18, 20, 28, 44) has been critiqued as problematic, it points to a broader scope for who might be included as citizens. In principle, citizenship rights are intended to be universally or “uniformly” applicable, regardless of “class, function and family” (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 21). Turner argues that the emergence of multiple citizenship dimensions led to the emergence of “an abstract political subject:”

Thus the emergence of the modern citizen requires the constitution of an abstract political subject no longer formally confined by the particularities of birth, ethnicity or gender (Turner 1990:194).

While the “modern citizen” or “abstract political subject” may have fit a greater number of people than it did prior to the twentieth century, it was still exclusive.

For instance, although many acknowledge that Marshall was writing in post-war Britain, his discussion of citizenship has been widely noted for the absence of women, minorities and non-whites (e.g. Pateman 1994 [1989]; Lister 1994 [1990], 2003; Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999; Nash 2000, etc.).<sup>4</sup> Thus, Marshall's citizenship schema implicitly favours particular identities. By implication, the uniform or universal application of rights ideologically produces particular political subjects as citizens and particular subjects as non-citizens.

While Marshall opposed the goal of "absolute equality" (Kivistö and Faist 2007: 54), he also noted practical challenges and hinted at the ways in which citizenship rights might be internalized. For example, Marshall claims that "a modicum of legally enforceable rights may be granted, but what matters to the citizen is the *superstructure of legitimate expectations*" (my emphasis, Marshall 1992 [1950]: 34). Citizenship rights make crucial contributions to this superstructure. Marshall illustrates this when he describes many early attempts at class abatement, such as educational initiatives, early health service and segregated education as "class-making at the same time as it was class-abating" (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 34). In a related vein, Marshall saw the right to education as a powerful source for "stimulat[ing] the growth of citizens in the making," capable of instilling reason and intelligent behaviour (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 16).<sup>5</sup> In these ways, citizenship rights were hugely influential in shaping citizens' expectations and horizons of possibility. Citizenship rights can partially

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<sup>4</sup> There are at least two problems associated with understandings of the universal in Marshall's work. First, Marshall's view of citizenship ignores the particularities of things like gender, race and sexuality. In this way, the "universal" is implicitly premised upon hegemonic notions of the citizen as white or British, male and heterosexual. Second, while Marshall does occasionally situate his work as about Britain, there is an "implicit universalism" where his account also proposes a "general model of the development of the relation between citizenship and social class" (Nash 2000: 163). It is at least in these ways where notions of the universal, even if only implicit, are problematic in Marshall's account.

<sup>5</sup> Despite significant advances in social rights, the role of capitalism is still central in the constitution of citizenship. Many have continued to question models of the consumer-citizen (Altamirano-Jimenez 2004; Lewis, Inthorn et al. 2005; White 1999; Gandy 2002b; Bennett 2003; Scammell 2003). Class and economic stratification are still relevant today, even if they are "no longer the characteristic struggle that affects the (post) modern economy and society" (Gouldner, 1979 as cited in Isin 1997: 128-129; c.f. Stevenson 2003: 10). In a related note, Individualization, often closely associated with advanced capitalism and neo-liberalism, can be marked as the commodification and fragmentation of citizenship. It can also be marked as characteristic of hybridity and pluralism. Individualism is also often associated with the postmodern turn and as characteristic of the pluralization of belonging (c.f. Bauman 2001; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2001; Benhabib, Shapiro et al. 2007).

produce patterns of behaviour and ways of being. To state the case strongly, citizenship structures produce citizens. Citizen rights and citizenship structures significantly shaped citizens' potential and actual behaviours and subjectivities. While this point is only nascent in Marshall's account, I argue that the implication is meaningful.

The turn towards the pluralization or "efflorescence" of citizenship challenges the classic Marshallian view of the nation state as the sole citizenship container (Kivistö and Faist 2007: 1). Many have theorized that models of citizenship are shifting and, for example, must: incorporate flexibility, become nationally and geographically unbounded, are increasingly intimate, are global, are cosmopolitan, are post or transnational, increasingly multi-cultural, increasingly multiple and increasingly polysemic etc. (e.g. Soysal 1994; Kymlicka 1995; Delanty 2000; Dower and Williams 2002; Douzinas 2007; Kivistö and Faist 2007; Ong 1999; Plummer 2003; Cammaerts and Van Audenhove 2005, etc.). Such models of citizenship build notions "that the state is no longer the exclusive reference point" and that there are "new possibilities for participation and rights both within and beyond the state" (Delanty 2000: 53). For example, globalization, multiculturalism and pluralism often provoke experiences of multiple political communities, national identities and cultural identifications (c.f. Nash 2000). While the specifics of these ideas of citizenship are not central to this research, the point here is twofold. First and related to the production of citizens, ideas of citizenship are no longer exclusively bound to the nation or state.<sup>6</sup> Ideas of cultural citizenship are especially useful in addressing the implications of this shift. Certainly, the decline of the nation state in ideas of citizenship has huge implications for who citizens are, for how they are citizens and for understanding territories of citizenship.

In closing, Marshall's work has generated wide spread critique of and research about citizenship. So far, the work discussed here suggests that citizenship ranges from "frameworks for everything" to a normative vision or strategic

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<sup>6</sup> Bryan Turner claims that Marshallian citizenship is being eroded primarily because of globalization and the decreasing influence of the nation-state. According to Turner, "new patterns of citizenship" are illustrated by a "new regime of rights" that shifts the locus of "social rights from nation-states" to human rights from global actors (2001a: 204-205).

concept for organizing collective practices and individual acts. Marshall's work makes a great contribution to making sense of citizenship, particularly as it is firmly embedded in the infrastructures governing citizens and the exercise of power. Thus, despite the many valuable critiques of Marshall's work (e.g. Turner 2001a, 2001b, 1990; Shafir 1998; Soysal 1994; Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999; Pederson 1993 etc.), it is still relevant today.<sup>7</sup> Marshall raises key issues and questions contributing an understanding of citizenship as a multi-dimensional rights based and generative framework. However, as Marshall himself acknowledges, he does "not include culture" (Marshall 1994: 46; c.f. Nash 2000: 18, chapter 3; Stevenson 2003). It is on this note that I turn to notions of cultural citizenship.

## 2.4. Cultural citizenship

Cultural citizenship is complicated and there are debates about what cultural citizenship is and how culture and citizenship do and should come together. Cultural citizenship has been thought of as a counterpoint to political citizenship, highlighting the significance of culture in shaping citizens' experiences (e.g. Rosaldo 1999).<sup>8</sup> These ideas of citizenship provide a fundamental critique of the Marshallian view of citizenship as state or ethnocentric, a point emphasized by the location of cultural rights in public service and media institutions (e.g. Stevenson 2001; Murdock 1999). Before examining some of these ideas, I first turn to definitions of culture.

Raymond Williams describes culture as "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" (1983: 87). Williams touches upon

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<sup>7</sup> For further arguments largely supporting Marshall's continued relevance amidst critical engagement with both his ideas and the implications of his ideas see Bulmer and Rees 1996; Fraser and Gordon 1998; Manning 1993; Low 1997; Rees 1996; Mann 1996; and Meade 1996 to name a few.

<sup>8</sup> See also Sara MacKian who emphasizes the importance of thinking about citizenship beyond the formal political arena. MacKian states, "To draw a metaphoric parallel with membership of the sick role, in our current discourse on citizenship we are excluding the 85%. We are failing to see their activity as citizens simply because they are not playing to our tune. To study just the political nature of citizenship, though an interesting and necessary part of the whole would be as insufficient and out of context as trying to study illness through the eyes of just the doctor [because only 15% of people receiving some kind of medical care or treatment receive professional consultation]" (1995: 213).

common usages of culture, three of which include culture as: “a general process of...development,” “a particular way of life,” and as “the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity” (e.g. music, literature, film etc. 1983: 92). These three articulations of culture are useful in illustrating the breadth and specificity of culture. Yet for Williams, one of the most significant meanings of culture involves the *relations* between “material production” and “signifying or symbolic systems” in general human development and/or “a particular way of life” (1983: 93; c.f. Nelson et al. 1992 as cited in Daryl Slack and MacGregor Wise 2006: 142). It is important to note that however you define culture, it is intimately associated with media: as cultural artefacts, as *mediating* culture and/or as *producing* meaning (e.g. Silverstone 1999). Adorno and Horkheimer have argued that “the culture industry remains the entertainment business” and “all the trends of the culture industry are profoundly embedded in the public by the whole social process” (1972: np; c.f. Hesmondhalgh 2007). Thus, the organization of media has long been connected to culture.

Akin to Williams’ definition of culture, cultural citizenship is best understood as involving a set of complex relations. What those relations involve and how they are connected are questions open to debate. I argue that cultural citizenship is not entirely “new” and one of the core cultural rights is marginally present in Marshall’s broad description of social rights:

...the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society (1992 [1950]: 17).

This core cultural right involves “full participation” which is arguably implied in Marshall’s above statement. Echoing and elaborating on Marshall’s point, Graham Murdock suggests that cultural citizenship means “*the right to participate fully* in social life with dignity and without fear” (my emphasis, 1999: 8).<sup>9</sup> Marshall might allude to the idea of *full* participation with his emphasis on *the right to share to the full in the social heritage*. Although participation is

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<sup>9</sup> Murdock’s view of cultural citizenship is unique in its insistence on situating “cultural rights” in public institutions. Thus, Murdock extends Marshall’s “protective” elements, principally from the corporate erosion of the “public domain” as seen in the demarcation, commercialization and niche marketing of public television (1999: 13-15).

central to many ideas of cultural citizenship, the meaning of participation is often unarticulated. While I turn to this point later in this chapter, it is worth noting that there are debates regarding how ideas of cultural and traditional citizenship fit together. Some would place culture as a kind of fourth dimension and some suggest that the idea of culture completely changes our understandings of citizenship. In my view, ideas of cultural citizenship add to Marshall's schema by changing territories of citizenship (e.g. in groups, ethnicities, communities etc.) and recognizing different kinds of citizenship claims.

Following Delanty, I argue that the cultural citizenship literature can be distinguished in three ways; I concentrate on two of these distinctions. In a review essay, Delanty usefully suggests that thinking on cultural citizenship can be divided into two camps. The first employs more of a "cultural sociology" approach and emphasizes a broad definition of culture as central to citizenship (e.g. Stevenson 2001; 2003 as discussed in Delanty 2002; c.f. Turner 2001b). The second draws upon narrower definitions of culture as the particularities of ethnicity, nationality and difference. This second conception employs political science and political theory to extend existing notions of citizenship (e.g. Kymlicka and Norman 2000 as discussed in Delanty 2002; c.f. Ong 1996).

While these perspectives are both valuable, the former is of particular interest here and I would argue can be further distinguished through two streams with differing points of emphasis. The first stream prioritizes media and communications technologies as "mediating" citizenship through increasingly central sites of cultural production, knowledge and interaction (e.g. Hartley 1999; 2008b; Uricchio 2004; c.f. Hermes 2006; Jones 2006). The second stream places much less emphasis on media and communication technologies, prioritizing broader ideas of culture (e.g. Pakulski 1997; Isin and Wood 1999; Stevenson 2001; 2003). I have loosely grouped the literature into either the first stream, which emphasizes the *mediation* of citizenship, or the second stream, which emphasizes *culture* and citizenship. For examples of the first stream, I concentrate John Hartley's idea of "DIY citizenship" and William Urrichio's work on "P2P citizenship." For the second, I look at the meanings of cultural

citizenship as proposed by three different authors, Jan Pakulski, Engin Isin and Patricia Wood and Nick Stevenson.

These are broad distinctions meant to help make sense of a wide body of work that brings culture and citizenship together in different ways. Yet many ideas of cultural citizenship here are increasingly characterized by emerging rights, sites of participation, collectivities and identities. Of course, there are numerous overlaps and at times, concurrent or even conflicting ideas.

## **Mediating citizenship**

Media technologies, particularly those associated with news are often understood as central to citizenship processes. Marshall relates the institution of laws such as freedom of the press, habeas corpus and the defeat of press censorship with the emergence of the civil dimension of citizenship. “Freedom of the press” is often regarded as an index of democratic health, acting as a measure of civil rights such as the “freedom of expression” and “freedom of thought” (e.g. Splichal 2002; Habermas 1989 [1962]; Keane 2005 [1988]; Reporters Without Borders 2007). Thus, a well established link exists between citizenship and the technological means used for expression (c.f. Sparks 1988; Miller 1994; de Sola Pool 1983; Barnett 2003).<sup>10</sup> Many have elaborated upon such links, arguing that media (help) set public agendas and inform “public opinion” (e.g. Entman and Herbst 2001; McCombs and Shaw 1972; Graber 2007); “frame” public issues (Gamson 2001; Norris, Kern et al. 2003) and act as the “fourth estate” or government watchdog (e.g. Sparks 1988; Curran 2001). In these ways, media are charged with responsibilities to inform, define and represent citizens to citizens and citizens to society. While news media may have dominated such ideas of mediated citizenship, there are many other ways media and communication technologies relate to citizenship (e.g. Hermes and Stello 2000; Hermes 2006; Jones 2006).

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<sup>10</sup> Toby Miller (1994) points to technologies of voting, including ‘balloting,’ campaigning and the means of measuring political participation as several other instances of the role media may play in the exercise of citizenship. Further, Daniel Ogden argues that the radio, the press and the internet not only extend the scope of democracy but also act as “a source of social power” (1998: 79).

In terms of new media, many celebrate new technologies as enabling cultural democratization or the “participatory turn” in citizenship practices (e.g. Uricchio 2004: 139 ff.; Hauben and Hauben 1996; Hauben 2007; Coleman and Götze 2001; Jenkins 2006b etc.). Others lament the role of new technologies in eroding community and civic culture, cautioning against increased commodification and the hollowing out of citizenship (e.g. Gandy 2002; Gutstein 1999; Putnam 2000 etc.). While this debate is relevant, the dualism between the techno utopic and dystopic views have been well documented and are not the focus here (e.g. Wajcman 1991; Cammaerts 2008). Both perspectives share the view that social practices involving new media to some degree determine social organization and carry political consequences. I adopt the social constructionist view which posits that media technologies *shape* the social world in complex ways. Ultimately, this view means looking closely at technological contexts and practices rather than assuming causal relationships.

For John Hartley, cultural citizenship encapsulates widened strategies for creative engagement. Hartley associates active audiences with new kinds of “DIY” (do it yourself) citizenship which are modelled on television viewing. DIY citizenship invokes “... the practice of putting together an identity from the available choices, patterns and opportunities on offer in the semiosphere and the mediasphere” (Hartley 2008a: 178). In these ways, Hartley positions television as “teaching” cultural or “DIY” citizenship which means that:

‘citizenship’ is no longer simply a matter of a social contract between state and subject, no longer even a matter of acculturation to the heritage of a given community; DIY citizenship is a choice people can make for themselves.... And although no one is ‘sovereign’ in the sense that they can command others, there’s an increasing emphasis on *self-determination* as the foundation of citizenship (Hartley 2008a: 178).

Thus the mediation of information and the freedom to choose symbolic repertoires in the expression of identity constitute DIY citizenship practices. In terms of information, television has been responsible for introducing ideas, often way ahead of what “public acceptance” might allow. Using the example of issues such as domestic violence or sexuality, Hartley illustrates how television programming made private issues visible to the public. Popular television

programmes brought unspoken issues out of the domestic sphere and into “the everyday conversations of the whole nation-audience-public” (Hartley 2008a: 181).

In this way, television provides a conduit and hub for public information about the public. The mediation of this kind of information assembles the symbolic resources for understanding the self, others and the relations between the two. For Hartley, the citizen plays an active role in choosing which symbolic resources or assemblages to pursue. As such, these assemblages enable a rearticulation of rights, promote avenues of accountability and significantly open pathways for sharing and interpreting the collective, the public and the commons. Television mediates what Hartley views as an ethos of individual empowerment, enabling freedom and choice through “DIY” citizenship.

William Uricchio takes a different view, arguing that sites promoting peer to peer (P2P) platforms such as Wikipedia or Slashdot are “potentially transformative” of citizenship models and styles of citizen participation (Uricchio 2004: 139). For Uricchio it is not as much about the mediation of knowledge or information as it is about “participatory” informational practices. Uricchio states:

... that participation in these P2P collaborative communities constitutes a form of cultural citizenship, and the terms of this citizenship have the potential to run head to head with established forms of political citizenship (2004: 140-141).

For Uricchio, peer to peer and open networks redefine relationships to knowledge, cultural production and habituate users to “Internet-based participatory media applications that are by definition decentralized and de-hierarchized” (2004: 143). Thus rather than broadcasting information from one source to many individuals, “participatory media” facilitates the production of information *by* many and shared *with* many. This model assumes active citizens and like Hartley, the central role of active individuals fundamentally changes the nature of citizenship.

Uricchio points to public access television as the beginning of decentralized participatory cultures, yet suggests peer to peer networks “have radicalized distribution” and consumption of music, telecommunications, news and other cultural texts (2004: 149, ff). These networks emphasize collaborative participation, creativity and “de-territorialized cultural communities” over “territorialized political communities” (which rely on much more rigid relationships between consumption and production) (2004: 156).

Following Giddens’ idea of time-space distanciation discussed in the introduction, peer-to-peer networks reconfigure “modes of information retrieval” and “dissemination.” As such, social systems and ideologies are recreated through peer to peer forms of collaboration instead of through a top-down transmission model more characteristic of television (for example). For Uricchio, this reconfiguration invites new practices of cultural citizenship prioritizing communities, collaborative forms of cultural production and “our rights and obligations as citizens” (Uricchio 2004: 139).

Media and communications scholars emphasize communicative systems as the means for organizing symbolic resources and mediating information. Hartley and Uricchio point to the ways in which media technologies mediate far more than cultural texts. “DIY” and “P2P” forms of citizenship are not just about media technologies, but about the ways in which cultural practices shift traditional sites of and for citizenship. As such, mediated patterns of participation open up the boundaries around who are or can be citizens. Hartley and Uricchio identify numerous characteristics of cultural citizenship, including citizen centred models of participation, the decentralization of knowledge and a radical shift in the production of knowledge / culture based on increased access. Notably, although these notions of cultural citizenship may “run head to head” with traditional forms of citizenship, they are located differently. Arguably, media technologies involve much less formalized cultural practices and broaden political jurisdictions.

## Culture and citizenship

While traditional media (press, film, television etc.) and communication technologies are important aspects of Jan Pakulski (1997), Engin Isin and Patricia Wood (1999), and particularly within Nick Stevenson's (2001, 2003) ideas of cultural citizenship, they are not the only or even primary aspects. Indeed, globalization, social movements, collective rights and the decline of the welfare state are all forces contributing to the intensification of culture as related to citizenship. These ideas share an understanding that the cultural dimension of citizenship is broad, encapsulating numerous and at times conflicting forces. There is also agreement that people are taking a more active role as *citizens* and as *producers of meaning*. However, questions of what these roles include and how these forces come together provoke different answers.

Jan Pakulski defines cultural citizenship as "a new set of citizenship claims" that "involve the right to unhindered and legitimate representation, and propagation of identities and lifestyles" (1997: 80). Pakulski elaborates on this definition when he claims that:

The common denominator of these new claims and pressure for cultural citizenship is the *emphasis on the symbolic and ideational sphere*, as well as the sensitivity to the way in which symbolic representations – and the activities of marking presence and signalling identities (describing, depicting) – affect social relations. Full cultural citizenship is seen primarily as not a matter of legal, political and socioeconomic location, but as a matter of symbolic representation, cultural-status recognition and cultural promotion (my emphasis 1997: 80).

In addition to the "emphasis on the symbolic and ideational sphere," Pakulski suggests that cultural rights are distinctive from social, political or civic rights because their framing "in terms of rights of citizenship" is relatively new (1997: 77). Pakulski rejects the "Marshallian" notion that these "new claims" developed in a sequential order, notably arguing that "new rights affect the old rights" (1997: 74, 77). Pakulski argues that in the Australian context, the development of cultural rights is associated with a decline of social-welfare rights. Culture and "civil society (typically defined in opposition to the state)" increasingly "displace social / welfare claims" (Pakulski 1997: 79, 83). Pakulski does not

explain why or how this displacement occurs, but this point does emphasize the particularities of citizenship processes and the sometimes tenuous nature of rights.

Pakulski refers to “public arenas,” the “mass media and educational institutions” as the key institutions responsible for cultural rights (1997: 78, 83). However, neither the details nor the role of these sites are the focus of Pakulski’s argument. For Pakulski, media and education act as the grounds for enabling representation and ideational or symbolic spheres but are otherwise secondary to cultural citizenship. Nevertheless, “full citizenship involves a right to full cultural participation and undistorted representation” (Pakulski 1997: 83). In Pakulski’s view, the development of cultural rights involves an uneven relationship with social rights and reflects a re-centering of citizenship participation towards the symbolic sphere. In this sense, Pakulski is suggesting that citizenship processes are moving towards the cultural domain; and as such, there is a shift towards cultural forms and away from state based social forms of citizenship. The growth of the cultural domain as a territory of citizenship involves distinct practices and changes the meaning of “full citizenship.”

Isin and Wood propose the idea of “radical citizenship” to capture “the ethos of pluralization” which informs numerous citizenship forms based on group rights (1999: 154). Cultural citizenship is one class of citizenship forms amongst cosmopolitan, diasporic and sexual citizenship; each class is composed of several citizenship forms such as the technological, ecological, aboriginal, gay and/or lesbian. The pluralization of citizenship forms, for Isin and Wood, is based on the premise that group rights are proliferating and such rights claims are hugely important for understanding modern citizenship (1999: ix). While Isin and Wood seem to enthusiastically label various “kinds” of citizenship (e.g. urban citizenship, ecological citizenship etc.), they explain that, for them, modern citizenship “is an articulating principle for the recognition of group rights” (1999: 4). As such, their goal is to understand citizenship as a “process of rights-claims, rather than the rights themselves” (Isin and Wood 1999: ix). The point then of their numerous citizenship categories is to understand the proliferation of rights-claims as a whole. Indeed, thinking of cosmopolitan or

cultural citizenship as broad categories for ways in which citizenship is changing is helpful.

Of particular note here are Isin and Wood's ideas of cultural and cosmopolitan citizenship, what they include and how they are contrasted. Isin and Wood "establish cultural citizenship as a field in which the rights to access to production, distribution and consumption of culture become a field of struggle and conflict" (1999: 123). Culture refers to struggles over material resources including class, capital, consumption and to the symbolic reproduction of such resources. Similar to Hartley, Isin and Wood prioritize active citizens in cultural forms of citizenship, claiming that:

cultural citizenship is about becoming active producers of meaning and representation and knowledgeable consumers under advanced capitalism (1999: 152).

In contrast, cosmopolitan citizenship refers more to globalization, sovereignty and identities (Isin and Wood 1999: 91-92). Although there are many linkages with cultural citizenship, Isin and Wood categorize "new practices of citizenship" through the city, ecology and technology as specifically relating to globalism, and hence as cosmopolitan (1999: 97). Technological citizenship is associated with globalization and particularly refers to the ways in which new media can: 1) amplify identities and political communities (e.g. Zapatistas), or 2) develop cultures of belonging based on collaboration or "many-to-many communication" (Isin and Wood 1999: 111).

Thus in line with Pakulski, new rights claims are closely associated with a growing emphasis on the cultural dimension of citizenship. Isin and Wood use cultural citizenship as a way of thinking through the proliferation of group rights and identities whereas Pakulski identifies symbolic rights such as representation and cultural status. Nick Stevenson also identifies some of the specifics of cultural citizenship but does so using a very broad notion of culture.

Stevenson articulates notions of cultural citizenship across several works (2001; 2003), including a more recent article on "technological citizenship" (2006,

discussed in chapter 3). In all of these works, Stevenson brings together broad and interdisciplinary notions of culture, globalization and identity. In contrast to Isin and Wood, Stevenson suggests that cultural citizenship brings together cosmopolitanism and culture. Stevenson's view of cultural citizenship provides a schema for understanding, first, the complexities of modern life, and second, outlines an agenda for promoting inclusion; both of which involve changing notions of participation.

In the first sense, cultural citizenship helps unpack "the increasing importance of knowledge and culture in shaping the definition of modern society" (Stevenson 2003: 16). For Stevenson, "modern society" involves "social transformation" and refers to the complexities of globalization, multiculturalism, identities, social movements, capitalism, time and space, public and private spheres, individualization, cultural policy, information and media. These forces contribute to a "blurring" of citizenship dimensions and a "deepening and broadening of the politicization of everyday life" (2001: 5). In his attempts to make sense of dense citizenship territories, Stevenson also suggests that the politics of participation are changing, from the "reproduction of national culture" to participatory processes for citizens:

Due to globalization and fragmentation of homogenous national cultures it has become increasingly difficult to describe cultural citizenship as our capacity to be able to participate in the reproduction of national culture.... Instead we might reconceive cultural citizenship as those processes that allow us to participate as democratic citizens (Stevenson 2001: 7).

Stevenson further defines such participatory processes as involving access to the "public sphere" and the capacity "to make an intervention" to that sphere whether it is on the "local, national or global level" (Stevenson 2001: 5; Stevenson 2003: 7). While Stevenson does not define "intervention," he defines the realm(s) of cultural citizenship as:

...centrally concerned with media institutions, cultural texts and the perceptions and practices of audiences. Our capacity to be able to form an understanding of ourselves and others in our shared world is increasingly shaped by the ambivalent technological presence of the media (Stevenson 2003: 125).

Stevenson thus places media institutions as central agencies for assembling symbolic resources (as does Hartley) and for enabling participation within increasingly complex public spheres. For Stevenson, cultural citizenship involves the intricate conditions making up culture as a “way of life” and the ways in which citizens are or can be involved in that culture. As Stevenson suggests above, “media institutions, cultural texts and audiences” are core avenues shaping the conditions of citizenship and the politics of participation.

In the second sense, Stevenson defines cultural citizenship also as an agenda for questioning exclusion and promoting inclusion:

Questions of cultural citizenship therefore seek to rework images, assumptions and representation that are seen to be exclusive as well as marginalizing. At heart, then, these dimensions ask: how might we build an inclusive society? (Stevenson 2003: 18, 33).

Cultural citizenship is synonymous not only with an agenda for greater inclusion and equality, but also with the capacity for making “interventions” on such cultural representations. Notably, responsibility for ensuring inclusion is “position[ed] both inside and outside the formal structures of administrative power” (Stevenson 2001: 2; Stevenson 2003: 7). In some ways, Stevenson’s point here resembles Pakulski’s assertion that “full cultural citizenship” involves recognizing “cultural-status,” particularly ones that have previously been excluded.

Although the points of emphasis are different, all these ideas of cultural citizenship share an understanding that distinct cultural rights have emerged. These rights are of a different genre than those associated with civil, political or social dimensions of citizenship, and as such, require a rethinking of citizenship. For Hartley and Pakulski, these rights involve symbolic capacities for identity construction and for cultural representation. For Uricchio, models of cultural reproduction change with the participatory platforms characteristic of peer to peer media. For Isin and Wood and Stevenson, ideas of cultural citizenship encompass broad territories of social and political life, respectively offering new ways of envisioning claims for group rights and for promoting group inclusion. All of these ideas also share a reconceptualization of the citizen as *active*.

These ideas of cultural citizenship prioritize media technologies as important avenues for public participation, albeit in different ways and to different degrees. In the next section, I consider some of the distinctions between ideas of cultural citizenship and Marshall's multi-dimensional view of citizenship.

## **Cultural rights**

The ideas of mediated and cultural citizenship discussed above include elaborations on and changes to more traditional ideas of citizenship. The proliferation of rights and rights claims are wide ranging and diverse. For example, ideas of cultural citizenship often emphasize rights involving participation, voice, representation, visibility, information, creativity, identity, self determination, active production, collaboration, communities, inclusion, symbolic resources and groups, among others. After providing an overview of the most pertinent rights in relation to this project (see table 2.2 below), I examine what makes cultural rights meaningful. I argue that in addition to a whole host of distinct cultural rights, there are at least five categorical differences associated with ideas of cultural citizenship when compared to Marshall; and these differences demonstrate the ways that cultural rights are significant. In summary, these distinctions include a shift from legal kinds of rights to rights claims, a focus on individual or group particularities, the emergence of bottom-up notions of citizenship, an expansion of citizenship through a proliferation of a) citizenship sites and b) domains of participation, and finally, a notable absence of obligations.

Table 2.2 identifies the kinds of cultural rights in and sites for cultural citizenship. As a point of comparison, Marshall's social rights are also included.

**Table 2.2: Social and Cultural Rights**

Dimension	Rights	Obligations
<b>Social:</b> "Educational system[s] and social services" circa 20 <sup>th</sup> Century	"the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society" (1992: 8, 17)	Public duty: to ensure the betterment of the individual and the polis or common good through education (1992: 37, 43)
	Rights to "participate fully" (Murdock 1999: 8; ); networked participation (Uricchio 2004: 139); "full cultural participation" (Pakulski 1997: 83); "participate as democratic citizens" (Stevenson 2001: 7)	-
	Rights to voice and representation (Stevenson 2001, 2003; Murdock 1999; Pakulski 1997; Isin and Wood 1999; Stevenson 2001, 2003)	-
<b>Cultural:</b> Public arenas, education, cultural policy, public institutions (galleries, museums, libraries) and media institutions especially public service broadcasting circa 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Rights to "creativity and the social conditions enabling creativity" (Stevenson 2001: 6)	-
	Rights to knowledge; information; experience; and participation (Murdock 1999; Hartley 2008a; Stevenson 2003)	-
	Rights to symbolic and ideational spheres (Hartley 2008a; Pakulski 1997; Stevenson 2001, 2003)	-
	Rights to identity/ies (Hartley 2008a; Pakulski 1997); right to propagate a cultural identity or lifestyle" (Stevenson 2001: 3; Isin and Wood 1999)	-
	Rights to inclusion across race, sexuality, gender – embracing diversity and multiplicities (Stevenson 2001: 3, 2003: 18, 33); "recognition of group rights" (Isin and Wood 1999: , ix, 4)	-

An argument can be made for the ascendancy of Marshall's social rights over cultural rights, which would emphasize cultural rights as already part of the "whole range" of social rights (e.g. from the "right to welfare" to the "right to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society"). In this sense, cultural rights could be part of "prevailing social standards." The intensification of the cultural domain in tandem with multiplying cultural rights could be understood as parts of those standards. Identities, representation, voice and the symbolic, for example, are increasingly acknowledged as important parts of modern life in today's urban and heavily mediated societies.

In my view, this partially rings true. There is an overlap between the social and cultural dimensions as illustrated in Table 2.2. However, the form and content of cultural rights are distinct, and I argue, that they have numerous implications as distinct sets of rights, five of which I turn to now.

First, many cultural rights are no longer enshrined in formal laws or policies. As Pakulski explains:

The cultural rights – which are more in the form of negotiated claims than institutionalized legal entitlements – include rights to unhindered and dignified representation, as well as to the maintenance and propagation of distinct cultural identities and lifestyles (1997: 77).

This marks a notable shift in the bases for and consequences of citizenship. For Marshall, the civic, political and social dimensions of citizenship emerged because of the accumulation and consolidation of rights, respectively based in the courts, government and national health, education and welfare. The jurisdiction of “negotiated claims” is broader and fuzzier. Drawing from the theorists discussed above, social movements and minority claims for cultural recognition (e.g. First Nations people) are at the forefront of these negotiations. As such, the sites for making cultural citizenship claims are more likely to involve the circulation of symbolic capital through public representations, cultural institutions and/or media organizations. While this shift may have debatable consequences, the point here concerns differences in the form and location of rights.

Second, Pakulski, Isin and Wood and Stevenson all rightly call for the recognition of difference and rights to identities. In this sense, cultural rights mark a shift toward particularities rather than towards universalism. In this way, ideas of cultural citizenship are considerably different from Marshallian ones. For instance, identity politics mark a celebration of difference rather than the universalization of an “abstract political subject” associated with industrial citizenship. Cultural rights specifically address imbalances of power in representation and visibility. Ethnic, minority and underprivileged or disempowered groups occupy important territory in the cultural domain, partially because the cultural sphere is a key site for reproducing hegemony, ideology

and a politics of exclusion. As such, cultural rights to identities, representation and visibility are important for correcting power imbalances.

Third, the emergence of what Turner would refer to as “bottom-up” sources of citizenship rights, as in DIY or P2P citizenship, mark a prioritization of the citizen as an “active producer of meaning and representation,” which reconfigures the sites and the sources of citizenship (emphasis added, Isin and Wood 1999: 152; Uricchio 2004; Stevenson 2001, 2003; Hartley 2008a). This is significant for two reasons. In one sense, bottom-up notions point to the advance of hyper-individualism. While this is certainly characteristic of advanced capitalism, optimistically, it also suggests a cultural legitimization of the individual. In another sense, cultural forms of citizenship break with Marshall’s dimensional view of citizenship. Culture here is not a dimension to be added on to the citizenship framework, but instead, it fundamentally rewrites the organization and production of citizenship.

Fourth, cultural rights and ideas of cultural citizenship necessarily prioritize media and communication technologies as important avenues for public participation. This indicates an expansion of citizenship through the proliferation of a) citizenship sites and b) domains of participation. As outlined in table 2.2, the cultural dimension is associated with “public arenas” and “institutions” including media organizations, museums, schools, libraries, galleries etc. Quite literally then, ideas of cultural citizenship include more places of and for citizenship. This relates to domains of participation, which indicates a “widening of the web” of citizenship, particularly as the barriers for participating in the symbolic or ideational sphere (e.g. online) are arguably lower than in traditional citizenship institutions (e.g. courts of justice or government). However, the efficacy and consequences of expanding citizenship sites are highly debatable. The point here is that the proliferation of distinct cultural rights mark an expansion of ideas, of practices and of phenomena relevant to citizenship.

Finally, there is a notable absence of obligations in the accounts of cultural citizenship addressed in this chapter. While there are some exceptions (e.g.

Coleman and the obligation of “listening” or Stevenson and “responsible dialogue”), obligations tend to be implicit or indirect. Onora O’Neill would likely argue that the one-sidedness of cultural rights suggests that they are *not* meaningful. O’Neill argues that without obligations, rights cannot be fully enacted because there is no duty to value those rights (1990:160, c.f. O’Neill 2002). The implication of O’Neill’s point is that cultural rights are superficial. However, this also points to differences between the existence of rights on paper and their provision or guarantee in practice. For example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is as much a “*common standard of achievement*” as it is a formal declaration (UDHR 1948). In this sense, the UDHR demonstrates some of the differences between modelling and guaranteeing rights because establishing a right, as a right, does not necessarily guarantee its provision (e.g. many human rights are regularly violated). However, as a “common standard” for basic human rights, the UDHR is powerful. Additionally, excluding article 29.1, obligations are often implied in the UDHR<sup>11</sup> as they are in the accounts of cultural citizenship addressed here.

The third and fourth points are particularly important for my research because both the “active citizen / producer” and the expansion of citizenship domains are especially prominent in technologically specific ideas of citizenship. Media and communications provide axial points for enabling cultural citizenship. While I would caution against media determinism, this research questions this relationship in technologically specific ideas of citizenship. Indeed, the two case studies provide an in depth empirical examination of these tenets in practice. Ideas of cultural citizenship advance the Marshallian view by challenging the content and scope of citizenship. In addition to emphasizing symbolic and ideational spheres, ideas of cultural citizenship also prioritize participation in mediated sites through cultural rights. In the following section, I operationalize the three theoretically informed themes and outline how these themes inform the organization of my empirical analysis.

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<sup>11</sup> Article 29.1. states that “Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible” (UDHR 1948).

## 2.5. Operationalizing Citizenship

Three citizenship themes emerge throughout this chapter. These themes address issues related to membership, rights and participation. The linkages between these components are densely inter-connected to each other (and to other factors beyond the scope of this research, such as identity, class, nationalities – including trans or post-nationalities – communities, etc.).

Membership, rights and participation involve rights – rights to belong, rights to rights, and rights to participate – and untangling these connections means questioning the presence and negotiation of cultural rights in each case.

Bringing together Marshall's idea of citizenship as multi-dimensional with ideas of cultural citizenship also provides critical insights into changing ideas of citizenship. As new media initiatives, both cases also allow an analysis of how communication technologies enable or disable public participation in practice. As such, this section also outlines the conceptual foundation for my empirical analysis in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

### Membership

Citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed (Marshall 1992 [1950]: 18).

Scholars have defined citizenship as a kind of membership "status," as Marshall does above (c.f. Faulks 2000), or as the political means used to "identify subjects" and establish the "conditions for full membership" (Jenson and Papillon 1999: 2). Toby Miller, among others, claims that "citizenship involves membership in a community and therefore political participation in the running of that community" (Miller 1994: 12; c.f. Lister 2003: 8; Marshall 1992 [1950]: 8-17). Citizenship is often articulated as a way of thinking about national membership, social belonging and the regulation and negotiation of membership through citizen practices and citizenship structures. Yet, citizenship is as much about exclusion as it is about inclusion because it involves carving up social identities between members and non-members, insiders and outsiders, citizens and non-citizens (Isin 2002). Citizens are often

defined as citizens *because* they are formally members of a nation state, although many globalization and cultural theorists argue that the territorial boundaries of citizenship and membership are changing. For example, one of the first ways of defining citizenship requires:

...that it constitutes membership in a polity, and as such citizenship inevitably involves a dialectical process between inclusion and exclusion, between those deemed eligible for citizenship and those who are denied the right to become members (Kivistö and Faist 2007: 1; c.f. Isin 2002).

In other words, citizens are citizens because they share a particular membership status within the broader contexts of country and creed, which then opens (or closes) participatory pathways.

Yet, changing ideas of citizenship suggest that formal membership *in a polity* is no longer a pre-requisite for citizenship. Membership and participation in communities, networks and civic society theoretically constitute alternative forms of citizenship, which break the traditional geographic and territorial boundaries defining citizenship. In terms of technologically specific ideas of citizenship, new media are often positioned as democratizing membership and opening the doors for anyone who wants to belong or participate. However, the case studies show complex pictures of membership and participants engage citizenship activities unevenly. In chapter 5, I interrogate what membership means within each case. I ask *who* members are in each of my cases and examine the ways in which patterns of affiliation and membership are enabled or disabled through media platforms. As Dahlgren suggests:

In practical terms, citizenship is central to fundamental issues of social belonging and participation. Identities of membership are not just subjectively produced by individuals, but evolve collectively and in relation to institutional mechanisms in society. Citizenship thus serves as an analytical entry into the study of the dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion (Dahlgren 2009:64).

This is relevant because power is articulated through emerging patterns of membership and informs the constitution of mediated forms of belonging and affiliation. As such, questioning the positioning and constitution of *members* in chapter 5 contributes to understanding mediated articulations of citizenship in

the practices of two cases. Further, drawing from the above discussion of cultural citizenship, each case provides insight into emerging and mediated cultural forms. Both of which suggest that although barriers to formal membership within new media platforms are hugely lowered, participatory inequities continue to exist. The dynamics of membership are powerful, and the analyses of these dynamics contribute valuable insights into *who* can or cannot actualize *which* cultural rights in two cases.

## Rights and obligations

Rights claims entitle persons to engage, or not, in a course of action... Such rights...generate reciprocal obligations among consociates, that is, among those who are already recognized as members of a legal community (Benhabib 2004: 57).

Rights are important; they are important for citizenship, for membership, and for establishing participatory pathways. Rights are also important now and in the future. In this section, I establish why rights are theoretically important and address some of the key characteristics of modern rights, such as distinctions between positive and negative rights and between genres of rights as procedural or substantive. As discussed in the section on participation, these rights (and the distinctions between them) are important for understanding the participatory modes and patterns specific to respondents and to each case (taken up further in chapter 7).

Based on Seyla Benhabib's above point (and in line with many others), rights and obligations are fundamentally connected through action, through implications of potential action and through formal, normative and often future oriented discourses. Rights and obligations are fundamentally also about membership, about who formally belongs and who formally does not. Rights and obligations are also about conduct and how it is possible to act, how to make associations and allegiances, and how such things are (de)legitimated. As I explain shortly, these are the kinds of issues I address in terms of cultural rights in chapter 6.

Saskia Sassen argues that analyzing citizens or “the rights-bearing subject” provides insight on the forces involved in establishing new participatory avenues and are connected to the emergence of “new political subjects” (Sassen 2006: 278-279). Sassen’s point emphasizes the socio-legal aspects of rights in formally defining the relationship between citizen and polity. Rights then, allocate a framework for regulating political and cultural members as well as establishing avenues of action. While this view highlights the fluidity and “historical variability” of citizenship (Prior, Stewart et al. 1995: 7),<sup>12</sup> it also highlights the ways formal rights and obligations express or reflect “frameworks for public life.”

A key distinction is often made between negative and positive rights, a distinction which John Corner positions in terms of media as follows:

Over much debate about how the media should be organized, and how they should act, the idea of ‘freedom’ presides as a stirring but deeply deceptive first principle. The deceptiveness follows largely from the way in which ‘media freedom’ is routinely invoked to indicate a desirable absence of constraint on the media industries themselves rather than to indicate the desirable conditions for members of a democratic public to access a range of information and to encounter and express a range of opinions. Thus a negative and essentially economicistic version of media freedom supplants a more positive and essentially civic version, if not always and not altogether (the idea of Public Service Broadcasting being an outstanding exception, although one often unclear in specific application and increasingly under threat) (Corner 2004: 893).

As Corner identifies above, negative rights (although not always economicistic) are primarily about formalizing “freedoms from” government, state and/or institutional control. Often, negative rights are associated with civil and political or “first generation rights” which aim to secure liberty as “a shield that safeguards the individual, alone and in association with others, against the abuse and misuse of political authority” (1977: 714; c.f. Berlin edited by Hardy 2007). In contrast, positive rights tend to be grouped with the emergence of economic, social and cultural rights and are generally considered to be part of

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<sup>12</sup> Prior et al. eloquently suggest that “the concept of citizenship focuses attention on the issue of the tripartite relationship between individual, state and society. This relationship is not static.... [and] is constituted by a network of rights and obligations, freedoms and restrictions, which is constantly being renegotiated, and which thereby continually redefines the spheres of action of individuals, state and civil society” (Prior, Stewart et al. 1995: 20-21; c.f. Lister 2003: 36).

“second generation” rights, often characterized as “the rights to” things like security, work and protection (1977: 715). Marshall’s account of social citizenship rights fits well in this “generation” of rights. Finally, the third generation of rights are also positive and refer to “rights of solidarity” or “fraternity” and includes collective rights such as “the right to ownership of the common heritage of mankind” (Vasak 1977: 32).<sup>13</sup> Ideas of cultural citizenship, particularly the kinds of cultural rights attached to these ideas, match the positive orientation of the third generation of rights (e.g. Isin and Wood’s work on group rights and group citizenship claims).

Prior et al, make a further distinction between “genres” of rights. For example, they define procedural rights as rights which:

... entitle citizens to participate in processes of social, economic and political life according to procedures that are [theoretically] fair and equitable. Such rights do not guarantee the results or outcome of the process (Prior, Stewart et al. 1995: 11-12).

In contrast “substantive rights” “go beyond this procedural concern” and entitle the bearer to “specific benefits” such as “social security” (Prior, Stewart et al. 1995: 11-12). Although this is a useful analytical distinction, it is often difficult to separate substance from procedure in practice. Without employing a dialectical relationship between rights and obligations, distinguishing between substantive and procedural rights and obligations can lead to tautological judgements. For instance, is regulating abusive content only about how people can participate or is the denial of “special” or negative benefits (such as absolute freedom at the risk of others’ comfort) also about substance? Is copyright merely a procedural right clearly and fairly establishing the allocation of ownership or does copyright carry with it implications for allocating “special benefits” to copyright holders? These concerns are addressed in terms of each case’s cultural rights as either

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<sup>13</sup> Karel Vasak, the former director of the Human Rights and Peace division at UNESCO proposed the generational view of human rights (Vasak 1977: 32). Although this is a very helpful view of an evolutionary model of human rights generally, the generations are not mutually exclusive, and as has frequently been pointed out by many human rights scholars and practitioners, there is often overlap between positive and negative rights (e.g. some positive rights involve the abstention of state involvement).

formally outlined in each case's "conditions of use" or informally invoked in practice.

Thus, rights are central for citizenship in at least two ways. First, rights are formative because they establish a frame for political subjectivities. In both cases, rights and obligations establish formal and informal mechanisms for citizens to negotiate social and political territories and, as such, the emergence of new rights has often been correlated with new kinds of political actors and subjectivities. Second, rights are crucial for "widening the web of citizenship" and extending realms of participation and potential spheres of action (Schudson 1998).

However, rights and obligations necessarily create tensions, complications and overlaps. Negative and positive rights articulate the simultaneous exercise of productive and restrictive power, in part, by simultaneously linking formal and informal rights and obligations through conditions of practice. Thus, these conditions are inseparable from frameworks regulating membership, defining acceptable behaviours and governing relations. All of these complications can also be taken to say as much about the disjunctions, ellipses, absences and exclusions as they can about the inclusiveness, protections and enabling of citizens or of citizenship. Fundamentally, rights and obligations position political, social and cultural subjects through and around the exercise, regulation and (re)allocation of power.<sup>14</sup> Emerging rights and obligations are a critical feature of both the theoretical and discursive applications of technologically specific ideas of citizenship. As such, chapter 6 analyzes the conditions of use formally allocating rights and obligations and regulating participation and membership in each case.

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<sup>14</sup> McIver et al. speak about the importance of "soft law" despite the fact that "there is no agreed upon definition of what constitutes soft law in contrast to hard law;" and refer to soft law as "typically includ[ing] agreements on principles and norms achieved through consensus but do not have binding legal force" (McIver, Birdsall et al. 2003: 11). Lawrence Lessig takes this point even further, arguing that there are 'four modalities' regulating behaviour in overlapping ways, including: law, norms, markets and architecture (Lessig 1999: 507-508). These distinctions are interesting and certainly helpful when thinking about the various ways rights and obligations are produced, enacted and perceived. However, the function of rights and obligations as a form of regulation is not the purpose of this research, so I draw on Lessig's argument in order to emphasize that rights and obligations are expressed in multiple formal and informal ways (c.f. Nye 2004; Davies 2004, as discussed further in chapter 8).

## Participation

The etymology of participation – from the Latin *participare* (to participate), derived from *parts* (part) and the root *capere* (to take) – stresses the transitive verb. We actively become part of a larger whole without necessarily knowing what this might constitute (Frieling 2008: 12).

Many have argued that “participation” is an overused concept and as such, it has become an “empty signifier” (Laclau 1985 as cited in Carpentier 2007: 87). Yet, “participatory media” and the growth of “participatory culture” are often both positioned as increasingly pervasive (e.g. Jenkins 2006a: 3). And new technologies are often thought of as allowing *more* participation and fostering stronger cultural connections. However, in contrast to participation-as-an-empty-signifier, Frieling’s above etymology of participation suggests that it involves “becom[ing] part of a larger whole.” Sherry Arnstein usefully argues that “citizen participation”:

... is a categorical term for *citizen power*. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberatively included in the future (Arnstein 1969: np).

While Frieling’s definition resonates with a citizenship-like “larger whole,” he also leaves the details open (e.g. when he says “without necessarily knowing what this might constitute”). In contrast, Arnstein immediately ties her definition of participation to the politics of power and of inclusion. In this sense, “citizen power” is at once defined in negative terms yet it is also positively oriented. Drawing from Arnstein’s definition, “participatory media” is often positioned as enabling *more* and *new* kinds of “citizen power” for both the “haves” and the “have-nots” (1969). However, tying the politics power to the meaning of participation also means questioning the “redistribution of power” and the politics of inclusion. In a much more pragmatic fashion, Sidney Verba and Norman Nie (both well established political scientists) define participation as:

... a process by which goals are set and means are chosen in relation to all sorts of social issues... [Indeed] Participation is not committed to any social goals but is a technique for setting goals, choosing priorities and deciding what resources to commit to goal attainment (Verba and Nie 1972: 4).

Verba and Nie employ the most instrumental and narrow definition of participation. Such an approach can be especially useful for quantitatively measuring participation through surveys and questionnaires; it can also be useful for analytically distinguishing particular instances of participation from the mess of political or cultural forms of engagement. Based on these four definitions, the meaning of participation ranges from being an “empty signifier,” broadly refers to active although undefined ways of taking part, involves the redistribution of citizen power, and finally, refers to “a technique for setting goals” and making decisions.

Of direct relevance here is the distinction between direct or participatory and representative democracy. Direct or participatory democracy refers to “a system of decision-making about public affairs in which citizens are directly involved;” whereas representative or liberal democracy refers to a system where elected officials “represent the interests or views of citizens” within existing political systems (Held 1993: 15). In terms of participation and media, these distinctions lead to several distinctions such as “coordinated” or “direct” participation either in or through media (Pajnik 2005; Carpentier 2007). Many other projects, similar to my own cases (iCan and UT), are examples of “coordinated participation” for ordinary people by media or design professionals (see Carpentier 2003).

Many “alternative media” scholars draw upon theories of “radical democracy” in order to break unhelpful dualisms and understand participation in terms of voice, community and dialogue, which also reflect cultural rights (c.f. Rodriguez 2001; Downing 2001; Atton 2004).<sup>15</sup> As such, alternative or community media scholars tend to employ models of direct democracy. Citizens’ participation through creating media content and in media collectives (e.g. in and through community radio) is also political; and as such, these understandings of participation often blur distinctions between participation *in* or *through* the media.

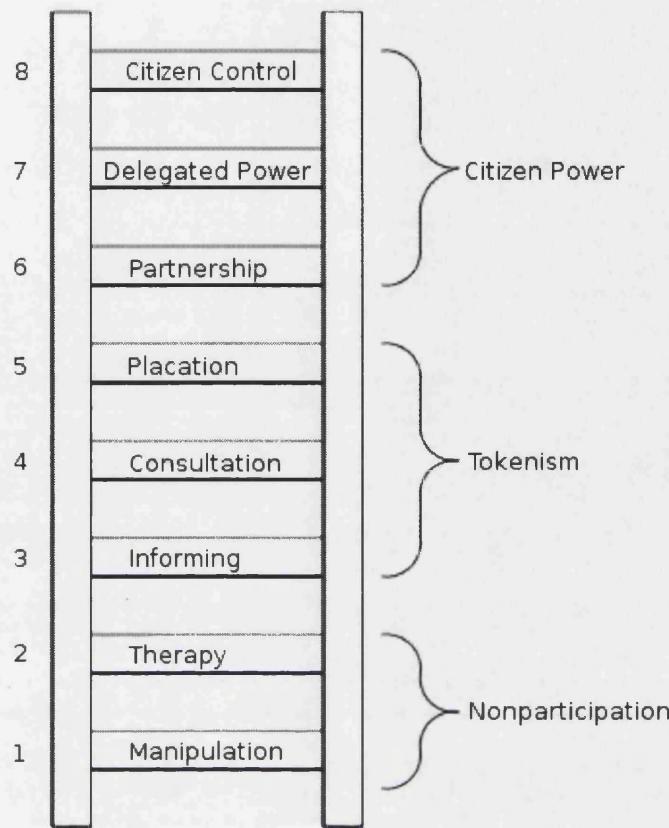
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<sup>15</sup> The work of alternative media scholars is especially compelling and offers wonderful insights into the exercise of power in relation to mainstream media and political systems.

“Participation” is also often framed as involving degrees of action ranging from “full” or “real” (equal participation in decision making) to “partial” or “pseudo” participation (imbalanced participation in decision making) (c.f. for example, Arnstein 1969; Verba 1961; Verba and Nie 1987; Pateman 1970). According to Carol Pateman, full participation refers to “a process where each individual member of a decision-making body has equal power to determine the outcome of decisions” whereas partial participation is “a process in which two or more parties influence each other in the making of decisions but the final power to decide rests with one party only” (Pateman 1970: 70-71 as cited in Cammaerts 2008, in press).

In addition to the definition of participation as a “term for citizen power,” Arnstein also offers a kind of participatory scale which maps and identifies a range of activities from “non-participation” to the actualization of “citizen power.” See figure 2.1 (Arnstein 1969: np).

Figure 2.1: : Arnstein's Ladder of Participation



Arnstein describes each rung on the “ladder of participation,” arguing that full participation is only really achieved when people participate in decision making processes, which when fully engaged equals the deepest kinds of participation as *citizen power* (1969: np). In contrast, forms of “non-participation” are marked by “manipulation” and “therapy.” Arnstein argues that it is a mistake to think of manipulation or therapy as forms of participation because the objectives influencing behaviour are not about citizen power. Ultimately, Arnstein defines “genuine” forms of participation based on how well actors can apply their “right to decide” (1969: np). While Arnstein’s ladder is very useful for making sense of participatory media, it also seems to overemphasize decision making. For example, it might be that not all participants want to make decisions about minor structural details.

Of this substantial literature, there are three points worth emphasizing. First, while there are many points of connection between components of citizenship and its articulation as a whole, I address participation in chapter 7 in order to understand *how* membership and rights and obligations come together in each of my cases. As such, participation is not defined as singular or as a set of practice. Instead, participation refers to a whole host of phenomena that are related to the ways respondents engage their interests and other people, in each case. While the definitions of and scales for evaluating participation are useful for analyzing patterns of public participation in chapter 7, they don't necessarily account for some of the *collective* conditions particular to my cases. As such, I briefly consider how social capital is often presented as shaping, actualizing and enabling participation.

### ***Social capital and participation***

The concept of social capital was frequently referred to by my respondents, particularly those responsible for creating each project and particularly regarding the role of new media in increasing and strengthening social capital. As such, social capital has been a mobilizing force for the development of both cases. As a result, it is valuable to consider participation in terms of social capital and this is carried over to the analysis of participation in chapter 7. Pierre Bourdieu, often attributed with conceptualizing several forms of capital, defines social capital as:

...the aggregate of the actual or potential resources that are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides all of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' that entitles them to credit in the various senses of the word. These relationships may exist only in the practical state, in material and/or symbolic exchanges that help to maintain them (Bourdieu 2001 [1983]: 102-103).

Other definitions focus on things such as "goodwill, fellowship, mutual sympathy and social intercourse" or, as Robert Putnam suggests, the "connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" and are strongly related to "civic virtue" (Hanifan 1916 as cited in Rae 2002: xi; Putnam 2000: 19). Many other researchers have

employed social network analysis based on mostly quantifiable aspects of “how many” connections or “ties” can be found within social networks. Nonetheless, for quantitative and qualitative researchers alike, social capital is often used as a measure of the *quality*, depth and breadth of membership networks and the quality of participation. As such, social capital is an important consideration for understanding how participation is (or is not) mediated in each of my cases. As discussed further in chapter 7, I synthesize notions of “bridging” and “bonding” social capital (e.g. Norris 2002; Coleman and Gøtze 2001) with structural or content participation (e.g. Carpentier 2007; Arnstein 1969). This analytical frame helps pick apart the ways in which each case fosters particular strategies for public participation.

## **2.6. Conclusion: Power, Freedoms and Participation**

...many of our labels are not innocent, they distill power relationships that are equally naturalized and legitimized as if they were organic and necessary hierarchies, and not human constructions. *On the basis of this ‘symbolic legitimization,’ unequal power relationships linger in the lives of real people as long as they go unquestioned* (my emphasis, Rodriguez 2001: 151).

The exercise of power is at the heart of citizenship discourses, at the heart of who is included and who is excluded. And as Rodriguez suggests above, “symbolic legitimization” often obscures “unequal power relationships.” As a social and cultural researcher, it is our job to ask questions about power. While the purpose of this research is to consider the kinds of power relations informing the structure of citizenship, it does so by asking: what is meaningful about technologically specific ideas of citizenship? By asking this question, it is my purpose to unravel the mechanics of such power relations as they are (or are not) theoretically defined and empirically bundled up in two cases.

Theoretically, this chapter has covered a lot of ideas about what citizenship is, what it includes and why it might be important. I argue that this chapter offers a strategic overview of key citizenship ideas. This overview is useful because it picks out important elements related to citizenship. In summary then, this chapter began by thinking about citizenship as a framework of and for action.

Drawing from Marshall, I argued that this must be a multi-dimensional framework that historically has been at odds with the harsh social inequalities of capitalism, while also simultaneously legitimizing other inequalities.

Additionally, Marshall's account of the emergence of civil, political and social strands of rights is useful for thinking about the significance of cultural rights in today's complex media saturated environments. Finally, in my view, Marshall's work also contained elements of constructionism. Marshall's emphasis on the role of the "superstructure of legitimate expectations" and the ways that education was as much about "class-making" as it was about "class-abating." In these ways, citizenship structures and practices help generate often embedded subjectivities and often embedded political or cultural orientations.

Ideas of cultural citizenship are also varied, uneven and contingent. The premises behind these ideas are, in my view, loosely related to the principles shaping social rights. The issue of "full participation" remains at the forefront of cultural citizenship discussion. And indeed, the cultural sphere shifts the locus of what counts as citizenship and what does not. For example, things like identities, groups and freedoms (among many others) have become critical for negotiating the dynamics of membership and the dynamics of citizenship domains. In terms of the latter, many argue that cultural citizenship marks a shift away from the exclusive territory of the nation state to the fuzzier boundaries marking out broad symbolic and ideational spheres (e.g. Pakulski 1997). As such, the role of communication technologies in mediating citizenship or in shaping cultures of citizenship is profound and often debated. Certainly, "new set[s] of citizenship claims" contribute to new citizenship practices and even new kinds of culturally based citizenship institutions.

Cultural rights are important elements emerging amongst the proliferation of citizenship ideas, forms and practices. In addition to a healthy number of distinct cultural rights, as a whole, these kinds of rights are remarkably different from Marshallian notions of citizenship rights. They are different in kind, in form and in substance. Yet, they also very much involve a politics of power. It is here that the role of media technologies offer strategies of engaging these politics and also, shut down legitimate avenues for participation. In closing, this

chapter outlined the ways in which three citizenship themes (membership, rights and obligations and participation) interpretatively frame the empirical analysis.

Yet, before concluding, it is important to return to issues of power. As in all concentrations of power, there are twin and mutually constitutive forces of consensus and constraint, production and prohibition, inclusion and exclusion, liberation and commodification. These twin forces are important for two reasons. First, they are powerful influences in the construction of cultural and citizenship oriented “freedoms,” those that are emerging and those that are already established. Second, the duality of freedom (as I explain in a moment) highlights the duality of citizenship processes and structures. In this sense, ideas of freedom are important in determining the “superstructure of legitimate expectation.”

For Marshall, freedom of the press was one of the bases for the consolidation of the civil dimension of citizenship. Citizenship then is closely linked to communication and the technological means used to communicate. The connection between media and citizenship highlights the importance of a broad definition of citizenship, one that includes the process of communicating (or what Williams refers to as communicative systems) between individuals, their political representatives, levels of government, law-makers, groups, individuals and nations and any others involved in citizenship and citizen practices.

In terms of the dual “powers of freedom,” Rose further suggests that freedom is “infused with relations of power, entails specific modes of subjectification,” is fundamentally dialectical (composed of formulas for “resistance” and “of power”) and also enables processes of governance (Rose 1999: 94):<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Rose contextualizes this notion of freedom as a disciplinary regime, and drawing from Wendy Brown, offers a view on freedoms as one that is both ultimately contingent upon location and is just as much about internalization of power (albeit a productive internalization and form of power), as it is about freedom from constraint: “Freedom is neither a philosophical absolute nor a tangible entity but a relational and contextual practice that takes shape in opposition to whatever is locally and ideologically conceived as unfreedom ... [which] preempts perception of what is denied and suppressed by them, of what kinds of dominations are enacted by particular practices of freedom” (Brown 1995: 6 as cited in Rose 1999: 94).

We have acted upon ourselves, or been acted upon by others in the wish to be free. Freedom has been an objective of government, freedom has been an instrument or means of government, freedom has inspired the invention of a variety of technologies for governing (Rose 1999: 67).

Yet, despite this somewhat contradictory relationship between freedom and control, Rose makes clear that such techniques of governance do “not make freedom a sham or liberty an illusion; rather, it opens up the possibility of freedom as neither a state of being nor a constitutional form but as a politics of life” (Rose 1999: 94). As such, it is precisely the duality of freedom as both a strategy of action unfettered by “alien power” and as “a politics of life” that applies so easily to each case.

I argue that citizenship is better used as a theoretical heuristic for understanding multi-dimensional *frameworks of action*, composed of densely woven governing relations. In this way, questions about citizenship open up the complex relationships between political systems, rights, social relationships and personhood, among others. Many have argued that the elements or features of citizenship are increasingly technologically mediated. This chapter aims to make sense of citizenship as a pervasive set of relationships, as governing and governance systems and as potential frameworks of and for action. The interdisciplinary, contested and highly contradictory nature of citizenship – as a concept, as a process, as a status, as a theory, as frameworks for “becoming”, and what I propose to be a heuristic – means being intensely critical about what comes bundled under the extensive rubric actively linking new technologies and citizenship.

# Chapter 3. Contextualizing Technologically Specific Ideas of Citizenship

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## 3.1. Introduction

The emergence of Web 2.0, participatory media, social networking sites and user generated content (e.g. blogs, wikis, comment boxes on web pages etc.) have softened the edges of what “technologically specific” ideas of citizenship might include. The current wave of social media expands the scope of what is included in core citizenship ideas. Core notions influencing the logic of “many-to-many” participatory media such as “collaborative intelligence” and “social networks” contribute to changing ideas of citizenship. Creative practices such as blogging or writing “fan fiction” change the way information is produced and disseminated, marking a shift from passive consumption to active participation (e.g. Jenkins 2006a; Suoranta and Vadén 2008; Loader 2007; Tremayne 2007; Terranova 2004 etc.).

These informational practices are also citizenship practices, even if not always directly articulated as such. Technologically specific ideas of citizenship often mark a major tension between the democratization of citizenship and the hollowing out of meaningful citizenship claims. Thus, this chapter contextualizes this research and these ideas of citizenship in three ways. First, in order to

highlight some of the ideational contexts for this research, I look at a sample of four technologically specific ideas of citizenship (e.g. cyber citizenship, e-citizenship, netizenship and technological citizenship). Second, I identify the kinds of rights associated with the ideas of citizenship in the sample. Third, this chapter contextualizes each of the case studies, iCan and Urban Tapestries.

Selecting a small sample of technologically specific ideas provides a tighter focus but means excluding several other articulations of these ideas. For example, I do not address “online citizenship” (Harcourt 1999; Morison and Newman 2001; Riemens and Lovink 2002); “cyborg citizenship” (Gray 2002; Gray, Mentor et al. 1995; Haraway 1993); digital cities, citizens and citizenships (Hampton and Wellman 1999; Rommes, van Oost et al. 1999; Hampton and Wellman 2001; Lieshout 2001; Riemens and Lovink 2002; Mossberger, Tolbert et al. 2008); among many others.<sup>17</sup> Yet when considered as a whole, each of these ideas articulate citizenship claims in terms of new technologies. I sense that the proliferation of such technologically specific ideas of citizenship mark an important moment where the cultural meaning of citizenship and technologies change. This thesis questions what is meaningful about this moment and these kinds of ideas.

There are numerous gaps and inconsistencies within these technologically specific accounts of citizenship. Critiquing these gaps is not of interest here. Instead, this chapter examines these accounts in terms of claims and suggests that these ideas are meaningful in several ways, as are the claims for technologically specific rights. In the sample of citizenship ideas I analyze, new

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<sup>17</sup> Of course, this is a rapidly changing and interdisciplinary area and there are several core citizenship concepts or components that do not explicitly link new technologies and citizenship. While research in these areas continues to develop exponentially, some of the broad areas I have excluded could be defined by: communication rights (e.g. Hamelink 2002; McIver, Birdsall et al. 2003; McIver and Birdsall 2004; Ó Siadhail 2005); numerous variants of media literacy such as internet, digital or online literacies (e.g. Warschauer 2003; Livingstone 2004; Livingstone, Bober et al. 2005; Silverstone 2005; Ofcom 2006; Suoranta and Vadén 2008); and the role of community or alternative media and the deepening of both community and citizenship (e.g. Downing 2001; Rodriguez 2001; Atton 2004; Gillmor 2004; Bailey, Cammaerts et al. 2008; Nash 2008). I focus on ideas *directly* associating new technologies and citizenship although the literatures on public service broadcasting, the media as a common or public good and the rich literatures on the role of the media in democracy are certainly relevant (e.g. Sparks 1988; Lichtenberg 1990a; Lichtenberg 1990b; Scammell and Semetko 2000; Ratcliffe 2005 etc.).

technologies are positioned as instrumental to existing dimensions of citizenship or as constituting new kinds or practices of citizenship. Identifying the way new technologies are positioned in relation to citizenship helps unpack the kinds of assumptions attached to new technologies in these ideas, as I discuss shortly. In terms of rights, I argue that technologically specific rights emerge. For example, rights to “access,” “participation,” “education” and “freedom of (collective) association” are re-articulated, thus demonstrating that these rights are still important and are increasingly associated with new technologies. Many of these rights overlap with the kinds of cultural rights discussed in the last chapter. The emergence of technologically specific or cultural rights suggests that these ideas of citizenship *expand* the cultural sphere within citizenship territories.

From a theoretical perspective, responsibility for promoting these rights does not come from political, social or civic institutions. Instead, almost guild like or expert type groups emerge and these groups are responsible for the well being of the technologically uninitiated. In this sense, enclaves of experts and tech enthusiasts become the guardians of basic cultural rights. In contrast, the case contexts suggest that fostering public participation has a long history pre-dating both cases and new communication technologies.

### **3.2. Technologically Specific Ideas of Citizenship: A sample**

Citizenship vocabularies are often used loosely and there is not a great deal of consistency in the meaning of “technological,” “mediated” or of “citizenship.” These discourses lack a common vocabulary, which complicates understanding across concepts. Some of the same words are used very differently. Terms such as “electronic citizenship” (Tsaliki 2002), “cyber citizenship” (Hand and Sandywell 2002) and “technological polity” (Frankenfeld 1992) are used without elaborating on their meaning or broader ideational commonalities or differences. In order to make sense of these variations, and indeed, the meaning of “technology” I focus on the role of “new technologies” in relation to citizenship within these discourses.

Yuval-Davis and Werbner suggest that ideas of citizenship discourses are often future oriented, normative and “aspirational” and, as such, the ideas addressed here are not unique in this way (Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999: 4). The “political imaginary” is important in these ideas and many adopt a manifesto-type tone, outline research agendas, or paint idealized visions of and for the future (e.g. Bogard 1996; Painter and Philo 1995). As such, these ideas are often about “claims-making” rather than about claims already made and accepted. Keeping social constructionist critiques in mind, I identify differences between instrumental and constitutive approaches to new media and citizenship (e.g. Wajcman 1991; Bijker 1999).

### *Instrumental and constitutive approaches*

New technologies are discursively positioned as either mostly instrumental to or predominantly constitutive of the connections between citizenship and communications technologies. The instrumental approach tends to situate ICTs as important tools for actualizing citizens and amplifying citizenship. Scholars employing this approach stress the importance of IT education, access issues and information inequities. Rather than creating new kinds of citizenship, membership, rights and/or participatory mechanisms, new technologies are viewed as important tools for enabling or extending existing ways of being a citizen. By implementing literacy standards in education, many argue that it becomes possible to enrich citizens’ lives and more effectively ensure socio-economic equities.<sup>18</sup> Relevant technologies in these kinds of “instrumental” approaches tend to be limited to communication tools, which might require new

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<sup>18</sup> Although many have written on literacy, Livingstone defines the conceptual usefulness of literacy as: “It is pan-media in that it covers the interpretation of all complex, mediated symbolic texts broadcast or published on electronic communications networks... literacy foregrounds the technological, cultural, and historical specificity of particular media as used in particular times and places” (Livingstone 2004: 5). For further discussion on the importance and changing standards of “computer literacy” and basic literacy in the knowledge based economy, please see Wall 2000: 85. The International Adult Literacy Survey finds that many “leading” countries in the knowledge economy have very low rates of basic literacy. For example, approximately 40% of the adult population in the US, Europe, Canada, Ireland and United Kingdom have “poor or very poor” information retrieval and arithmetic skills (as reported in Wall 2000: 85). While others have also supported this claim by describing the reification of illiteracy through 3 categories (basic illiteracy, electronic illiteracy and finally, “technologically marginally literate”, Reynolds 1992: 24). For a critique of the categories used to define knowledge work and ultimately the existence of the KBE, please see Frank Webster’s (Webster 1994) *What Information Society?*

rules of participation and engagement through the extension of *existing* rights. The civic realm occupies an important domain for instrumentalists and helps “build shared visions … [and] goals for the region” while also providing a foundation for a shared citizen collectivity (Wolfe 2000: 159-160). However, the emphasis on citizens’ rights to education and citizens’ obligation to participate are reminiscent of Marshall’s social dimension of citizenship, as well as cultural citizenship. Accordingly, instrumentalists tend to focus on extensions to existing citizenship dimensions.

In contrast, constitutive approaches refer to claims that new technologies make up new kinds of social relationships, identities, groups and subjectivities, for example. Constitutive approaches are in some ways more complex, often focusing on the limitations of existing dimensions of citizenship in order to justify the need for a “new” technological and communicative dimension. These approaches involve a much broader definition of technology including robotics, ubiquitous computing, genetically modified foods, nuclear technologies etc. (e.g. Frankenfeld 1992; Haraway 1993; Barry 2001). “Technologies” are positioned as pervasive and, reconstituting most if not all aspects of social, political and cultural life through processes like “technology governing instrumentalities” (Frankenfeld 1992: 464). Although technological determinist thinking can be easily detected, the central points are based on the ways new technologies invoke deep and systemic effects on human life. These effects require particular modes of regulation, strong participatory guidelines and create a distinct and technologically specific form of citizenship. Citizens outside of these technologically instantiated frameworks face alienation, disadvantage and significant loss to their potential for “full participation” in culture and society (c.f. Norris 2001; Gandy 2002b; Annan 2003; van Dijk 2005). Thus, these approaches tend to situate existing cultural or Marshallian forms of citizenship as incomplete.

I have grouped these ideas in instrumental or constitutive categories to highlight how technologies are associated with citizenship; where instrumental tends to extend and constitutive tends to create forms of citizenship. However, the differences between the two approaches are not absolute and elements of one

frequently appear in the other. These categories indicate ideas of citizenship, technologically mediated or otherwise, are fluid rather than fixed. Table 3.1 provides an overview of how I have categorized these ideas.

**Table 3.1: Instrumental and Constitutive Approaches**

Technologically Specific Ideas of Citizenship	
<b>Instrumental</b>	<p>1) Cyber Citizenship: Includes the citizen right to a diversity of media and information in order to overcome the digital divide (Mosco 2000; Gandy 2002b); or as the means to actualize a civic sphere composed of fulfilled and educated citizens (Kranich 1992; Harrison 1992; Gray 2002; LITA 1991; Ogden 1994);</p>
<b>Constitutive</b>	<p>2) E-citizenship and E-democracy: E-citizenship generally entails the expansion of citizen participation and for some political scientists also includes the technologies of citizenship (Miller 1993), or in terms of e-governance and e-democracy (Coleman n.d.; Alexander and Pal 1998; Gutstein 1999);</p>
	<p>3) Netizenship: Generally refers to a form of self-identifying membership (e.g. netizen or cyber citizen) in a digitally mediated community or “wired world” (Pal 1998). Or what Cleo Odzer refers to as the “first world of cyberspace,” self-identifying as more of a cyberspace member than of real life (Odzer 1997); c.f. Netizens (Ogden 1994) and user groups claiming to be more committed to cyber communities than actual communities. However the term was coined by Steven and Ronda Hauben in 1992, when they outlined a number of netizenship rights, but only for those “who take responsibility and care for the Net” (Hauben and Hauben 1996: np).</p>
	<p>4) Technological Citizenship: Developed by a select number of scholars from risk communication studies, this view posits that the democratic process needs to be applied in relation to technologies’ developmental trajectories. Philip Frankenfeld (1992) and Carrie Neilsen (2000) argue that technological citizens have responsibilities to know about new technologies, like genetically modified foods or the atom bomb, including their associated risks and potential hazards and must be guaranteed the right of access to new information. Among other virtues, this approach establishes technological literacy and citizen participation as critical values (c.f. Phillips 2003).</p>

“Cyber” and “e” ideas of citizenship are predominantly instrumental. Excluding the introduction of access issues, these views generally extend social, civil and cultural dimensions of citizenship through rights and obligations around participation and education. “Netizenship” and “technological citizenship, in

contrast, are predominantly constitutive. Yet even this simple categorical system contains overlaps and contradictions. To account for this, these are meant to be indicative rather than discrete categories. Following the discussion of instrumental approaches next, I turn to more constitutive perspectives.

## **Cyber citizenship: the doubling of access**

Our First World exists in the computer. The political economists of the nineteenth century would laugh if they knew what we've done to their term First World. To us it no longer represents capitalism. It's the main world to which we belong, the cyber world. Cyber citizenship exists; I know because I live it. My home is in cyberspace (Odzer 1997: 4).<sup>19</sup>

Cleo Odzer implies that participation is central to "cyber citizenship." Indeed, the implication is that participation is a major obligation as well as a privilege. However, this conflation between citizenship and participation is problematic. For example, while participation is important to citizenship, it is not useful to equate the two. "Click here" kinds of participation such as surfing the net, or joining a single issue protest group on one occasion is not equivalent to citizenship. Nor is it equivalent to the legitimization, enactment and mobilization of a community. Despite these limitations, Odzer successfully highlights the importance of a sense of belonging within and membership to electronic communities in ideas of cyber citizenship. Cyber citizenship is thus about belonging to technologically mediated communities and contingently, also about creating new kinds of social networks.

Benjamin Barber notes one of the limitations in this kind of assumption in his critique of the shallow forms of belonging associated with consumer models of

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<sup>19</sup> Cleo Odzer has written a pseudo-cyber ethnography entitled *Virtual Spaces: Sex and the Cyber Citizen*. Unfortunately, her work does not live up to the intriguing title as she does not really engage with any of the literature addressing citizenship and this particular work, reads as a self indulgent foray into Odzer's own troubled psychological past. Nonetheless, Odzer does convincingly argue that cyber sex is a rite of passage leading to her version of participatory cyber citizenship, and establishes a primarily anecdotal basis for assessing the 'real life' effects of cyber interactions (1997). Additionally, Odzer fails to note that the 'first world of the computer,' as she experiences it, can only exist within the socio-economic, political and cultural context of the actual first world. I have chosen to discuss her work under cyber-citizenship because she uses the term 'cyber citizenship,' but in all other regards, her approach to citizenship and the internet definitely fits closer to the constitutive side of the spectrum. For example, Odzer presents the internet as reconstituting human experience and creating a new realm of practices requiring new rules of regulation, modes of thinking and social organization.

citizenship. This critique also applies to many implicit claims made by online community members. Barber states “belonging by default to McWorld, everyone is a consumer; seeking a repository for identity, everyone belongs to some tribe. But no one is a citizen” (as cited in Probyn 1998: 160). There is a tendency to articulate similar notions of shallow participation-as-citizenship in many instrumental accounts. As a result, the distinction between these issues must be noted.

In my view, Odzer’s idea of cyber citizenship characterizes one of the most common views concerning technology and belonging. Users create strong communities of interest and by sharing common (cyber) territory, they also create new ways of being a citizen, regardless of nationality or embodiment (c.f. Pal 1998; Ogden 1998; Poster 1997; Sassen 1996). For Odzer, such issues remain unarticulated and citizenship is reduced to an associational version of participation. Odzer’s idea of cyber citizenship is especially problematic because she ignores issues of access and the digital divide. However, Odzer does highlight an interesting tension between the extension of citizenship dimensions and the creation of new ones.<sup>20</sup>

Vincent Mosco discusses a more sophisticated idea of “cyber citizenship.” Mosco flags the importance of creating an inclusive “culture of technology” that adheres to the values and conditions of technological “have-nots” as well as “haves.” Mosco cites education as the principle vehicle for establishing “this new form of [cyber] citizenship” (Mosco 2000: 377; Turkle 1995). Mosco proposes that we need to utilise cyber citizenship in order to combat the concretization of the digital divide. For example, Mosco states:

Citizenship in the new electronic age means treating cyberspace as a public space or “new commons.” Here, all people have rights of access and participation, reasonable expectations of privacy and security, and, along with these rights, civic responsibilities of active involvement and mutual respect for fellow cyber-citizens. Genuine education for an information

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<sup>20</sup> Building upon Barber’s claim that everyone wants to belong to a ‘tribe,’ it is appropriate to critique Odzer’s use of citizenship here as perhaps an overstatement of what has been termed ‘communities of preference’ predominantly defined by cyber culture or cyber enclaves (Norris 2001:210-12).

society starts by teaching these principles and uses the Net as one among the many means to implement them (Mosco 2000: 383).

Mosco is claiming that new technologies have to be viewed as a central point of everyday praxis because they enable the betterment of the *common good*. As such, it is important to protect and establish “cyberspace” as a common ground so individuals can thrive and to improve communities (c.f. Ogden 1998: 67).

The Library and Information Technology Association<sup>21</sup> (LITA) calls for the recognition of “cyber rights.” For LITA, cyber citizenship means incorporating ICTs into civil society because of their role as important gatekeepers between civil society and citizens. In order to ensure citizens have cyber rights, LITA calls for the institutionalization of a “universal opportunity of access” to ICTs in order to prioritize “equity of access” (Reynolds 1992: 27-28, 31). In this sense, LITA builds upon issues of access by adding both “equity” and “universal opportunity.” LITA also positions information technologies as central tools for full citizenship.

The meaning of “access” here is doubled. Access is not only about the rights to have access to the tools mediating information, but it is also about “access” to knowledge about technological systems and mediation processes *through* education. In this sense, new technologies are conflated with equality in civic life and the development and enrichment of public goods. This resonates with Marshall’s social dimension and the ways an educated citizenry ensures the “betterment of the individual” (for the benefit of the individual and of the public). Notably, and also like Marshall, these ideas of cyber citizenship emphasize the institutionalization of access to ICTs and to education.

Marshall does directly mention “the right to participate in the exercise of political power” and claims that education is one of all citizens’ public duties, as part of

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<sup>21</sup> A large part of LITA’s (1991) published essays revolves around citizenship rights to government protection from information abuses, invasions to privacy and the exemption of the private sector to the FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) (Reynolds 1992: 5, 8-22). For further information on privacy in relation to library and information technologies, please see Kapor 1992: 65; on library patron records Harrison 1992: 121ff; and on legislation King 1992; Kling 1999. Additionally, there are excellent critical inquiries into the changing nature of individual privacy in relation to the increasing surveillance capacity of governments and corporations (c.f. Mulgan 1991; Bogard 1996; and Gandy 2002b, Gandy 1996; 2002a).

the social dimension of citizenship. Marshall does not directly address issues of access, privacy or security. For Marshall, Mosco and LITA, an educated citizenry ensures the “betterment of individuals” by bettering the individual and enriching the surrounding public domain. Cyber citizenship discourses extend the social dimension of citizenship, rather than promote the creation of new forms of citizenship. Mosco claims that in order to be cyber citizens, people are obligated to respect other cyber citizens. Ideas of cyber citizenship are positioned as a future oriented agenda calling for the prioritization of access issues as an important part of basic citizenship rights.

## **E-citizenship: Extending deliberative and direct democracy**

The explosion of projects such as Citizens Online, UK Online, and the Citizen’s Portal (see Morison and Newman 2001), the Telecities E-democracy working group (Mangham 2002), “government on-line” initiatives and the Hansard Society’s many e-democracy projects make explicit claims about creating and developing “e-citizenship.” “E” citizenship is not just limited to political activities or the realm of government. For instance, in a recent literature review on technology, education and citizenship, Neil Selwyn writes:

There is no doubt that the networking of ICTs and the globalization of society is redefining the notion of citizenship. On this basis some technologists and government agencies are currently lobbying for an ‘e-citizenship’ element to be integrated into citizenship education – with the aim of preparing learners for life in the expected ‘online society’ (2002: 3).

In this sense, Selwyn draws attention to the idea that “e-citizenship” must be implemented as part of the general citizenship curriculum to accommodate a rapidly changing socio-political landscape. Yet, many theorists tend to situate citizenship as a relatively unproblematic concept that can be superficially tagged onto all things electronic (e.g. Odzer 1997; Tsaliki 2002; Ogden 1994, 1998; Hand and Sandywell 2002). In contrast, Mosco (2004) and Lusoli (2005) have done admirable work identifying the mythic qualities of technology and e-democracy (respectively).

Communication technologies are becoming increasingly institutionalized. For example, the growth of “e-democracy” departments in the corporate ranks of every major software and hardware producer (Lusoli 2005) among other practices. On the other end, blogs and other kinds of “easily” accessible social media democratize culture and politics by opening public fora to “everybody” (e.g. Shirky 2008). One of the central differences between “cyber citizenship” and discussions of e-democracy or e-citizenship is the focus on the political arena as the principle avenue leading to the enrichment of the common good. E-citizenship is a difficult area to classify because frequently e-democrats invoke instrumental tactics in order to instantiate what they argue are fundamental transformations to the political arena.

Although there appear to be easily identifiable threads in these discussions, there also appears to be a lot of overlap and contradictions. Elena Larsen and Lee Rainie illustrate this when they discuss “the rise of the e-citizen,” but neglect to explain what being an e-citizen actually entails. Larsen and Rainie situate e-citizenship as the process of citizens using government web sites in order to learn about public policy, communicate to public officials or to “decide how to cast their votes” (2002: 1-2). Thus, e-citizenship is often portrayed differentially and as various processes concerning engagement and formal politics through “technolgocial” tools (e.g. the internet). However, why Larsen and Rainie refer to “e-citizenship” remains a mystery because they are really addressing citizens who use electronic services rather than the e-citizen as a political subject or distinct citizenship framework.

Arjuna Tuzzi et al. conducted a content analysis of e-democracy discourses and narratives, ranging from the works of Jay Blumler and Stephen Coleman (2001) to Steven Clift (2003), among others (Tuzzi, Padovani et al. 2007). Tuzzi et al. draw from IDEA and offer the following definition of e-democracy:

[a] political concept, concerning the collectively binding decisions about the rules and policies of a group, association or society. Such decision-making can be said to be democratic to the extent that it is subject to the controlling influence of all members of the collectivity considered as equals (Tuzzi, Padovani et al. 2007: 31).

Tuzzi et al. note that Clift (2003) and Blumler and Coleman (2001) articulate sophisticated uses of democracy, citizenship and representation (particularly when compared with other documents from the EU e-Government Unit and the Commonwealth Centre for e-Governance). Yet issues of transparency, accountability, responsiveness and particularly rights and obligations are “problematic” and underdeveloped (Tuzzi, Padovani et al. 2007: 51-52). They conclude with the suggestion that although there are some “common linguistic elements” across discourses, there “is not yet a common vision” (Tuzzi, Padovani et al. 2007: 56, 60). In Tuzzi et al.’s definition, collective decision making emerges as a key component.

In 2002, a “Round Table on E-citizenship” brought together several other projects including the Camden E-Services Development Team, the Telecities E-democracy project, DEMOS (online mediation and consensus forming system), the International Teledemocracy Center and EVE (Evaluating Practices and Validating Technologies in E-democracy) (2002: n.p.). Alasdair Mangham, chair of the Telecities E-democracy project, defines e-citizenship as “the ability for citizens to be able to partake in the affairs of their municipality in a virtual space” (2002: n.p.). Along similar lines, Laurence Monnoyer-Smith and Pierre-André Merlin define electronic citizenship:

...as the use of information technologies and communication in order to develop, to facilitate, and to give more transparency to citizen's influence on the decision making process (2002: n.p.).

The critical difference between these two definitions is that Mangham concentrates on participation through a “virtual space,” instrumentally applying ICTs for the creation of new political platforms. In contrast, Monnoyer-Smith and Merlin situate ICTs at the centre of deliberative participation, employing a more constitutive vision of e-citizenship.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Monnoyer-Smith and Merlin’s argument is emblematic of a great number of e-citizenship claims and illustrates the importance of thinking not only about public spaces but also the kind of citizen spaces associated with ICTs. Many theorists claim that ICTs break down barriers between the public and deliberative fora, and as such, constitute an enhanced (if not entirely transformed) version of direct and participatory democracy.

Similarly, Stephen Coleman defines e-democracy as “using new digital technology to enhance the process of democratic relationship between government and governed, representative and represented” (as cited in Cross 2003). Coleman’s definition highlights his vision of e-democracy as an extension of existing democratic practices, and as such, does not necessarily instigate new sets of democratic issues or ideological concerns. For Coleman, ICTs are powerful democratic tools because they enable a social shift towards direct democracy and away from the limitations of representative democracy. Coleman also situates the transformative potential of e-democracy in the possibility of creating a “civic commons online,” and the capacity of the internet to “bring together large numbers of people in a form of civic dialogue” (Blumler and Coleman 2001: 2). For Coleman, e-citizenship is about improving existing processes of citizenship and “enriching democracy” (2001: 5).

There are several e-citizenship, e-governance and e-democratic projects that are predominantly oriented towards extending political processes, affairs and information through new technologies. In the UK, some of these would include UK Online, the government’s “e-participation program,” the Hansard society’s e-democracy program and youth vote, the citizen’s portal. Yet, as Lincoln Dahlberg elaborates, there are also many other similar projects:

In the USA, for instance, ‘independent’ online democracy projects such as Democracy Network ([democracynet.org](http://democracynet.org)), Project Vote Smart ([vote-smart.org](http://vote-smart.org)), the California Online Voter Guide ([calvoter.org](http://calvoter.org)) and Politics.com are using the internet to increase the amount of information available to the individual voter so that they can make the best possible election choice. Some of these projects also enable direct interaction between individuals and politicians (Dahlberg 2001: 161).

Somewhat problematically, the precise differences between these concepts (e-citizenship, e-democracy and e-governance) are not entirely clear (c.f. Mangham 2002). Additionally, most e-citizen projects work towards establishing new platforms for citizen deliberation, political participation and the

distribution of information, highlighting the role deliberative democracy occupies as a foundation for the projects discussed in this paper.<sup>23</sup>

Although Lisa Tsaliki (2003) also omits a definition of "e-citizenship," Tsaliki conducted a very interesting analysis that set out to test the efficacy of the internet in enabling and actualising global participation. In some ways it is very problematic to link "global" environmental movements directly with electronic citizenship (and e-citizenship with cosmopolitan democracy). However, Tsaliki does this to test the role of ICTs in enabling political participation set out by many of the above e-citizenship advocates. Tsaliki looked at two kinds of content promoted by global environmental agencies. This content included web content and internet presence. In a systematic analysis of this material, Tsaliki compares what these agencies communicate in relation to their size, activities and networks.

For Tsaliki, the potential capacity to communicate environmental issues over transnational platforms provides an ideal-type of "democratic global citizenship." As an ideal-type, this is an interesting hypothesis and her fieldwork is an innovative way of testing how "democratic global citizenship" is or is not practiced through the environmental movement.<sup>24</sup> Tsaliki concludes that the internet does contribute to "the enlargement of public space," but also that "there is a lot more to be accomplished before we can talk about global participatory politics" (2003: 15). Given the failure of these transnational agencies to connect with governments, environmental policy makers and legislators, Tsaliki is sceptical that ICTs can actualize democratic global citizenship.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See Lincoln Dahlberg (2001) for an analysis of the 'liberal individualist assumptions' dominating discussions of e-democracy and a summary of alternative democratic models such as communitarianism and deliberative democracy.

<sup>24</sup> However, the problem with this assumption is that it means foreclosing any kind of analysis about what happens to the citizen and processes of citizenship in relation to these kinds of engagements with ICTs. As Tsaliki notes herself, the unequal distribution of who has access to ICTs seriously impedes the possibility of enabling truly inclusive democratic practices, so it is a problematic site for observing the role of the internet "in the way democracy occurs" locally or globally (2003: 14).

<sup>25</sup> Pippa Norris' work on cyber culture, particularly that those who are active on the web are also active off the web is especially relevant for thinking about how e-democracy and e-citizenship can be applied, who will be most likely to participate and how successful such initiatives will be.

There is a vast amount of literature on electronic democracy, including critical works challenging the democratic and political models supporting, inspiring and underpinning e-citizenship initiatives (e.g. Bucy and Gregson 2001; Macintosh et al. 2003; Sclove 1994; Strijbos 2001; Poster 2001; Coleman and Norman 2000; Axford and Huggins 2001).<sup>26</sup> The selection of ideas here represents a small sample, but hopefully highlights the central issues surrounding the implementation and conceptualization of e-citizenship. E-democracy initiatives aim to make political representatives more accountable to their constituents and open the process of political communication to a larger proportion of the citizenry.

For e-citizenship advocates, ICTs can enable new levels of citizenship engagement by creating new or at least augmented deliberative fora. This is important because it seems that the dominant political model in e-democracy comes directly from deliberative democratic theory. This suggests that enabling political participation improves levels of citizens' social and civil engagement. The political sphere clearly dominates e-citizenship discourses, and as such, political and civil participation are seen as essential rights (c.f. Coleman n.d.; Office of the e-Envoy 2002). What appears to be unique about participation in electronic democracy is the emphasis on the government's responsibility to create conditions conducive for citizens' participation.<sup>27</sup> Thus, one of the significant changes inspired by the use of ICTs is that access and the conditions for political participation can be, to some degree, configured by the user as a citizen.

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Please see Jon Katz (1997a; 1997b) and Stephanie Stewart Millar (1998) for an additional analysis on the homogeneity and potential political influence held by the most active segments in 'cyber culture.'

<sup>26</sup> Complementing this literature are issues of globalization and the relation between ICTs and the creation of a transnational citizenry, and in some ways, this is what Tsaliki wrote about. The e-citizenship and e-democracy theory points to ICTs as the means of institutionalising global citizenship, yet based upon the above mentioned local and European projects, the current efficacy of these kinds of objectives is questionable.

<sup>27</sup> For example, the Office of e-Envoy reports the need to "provide greater opportunities for consultation and dialogue between government and citizens" (2002: 23).

In contrast to instrumental approaches, constitutive approaches to technological citizenship have several distinct features. First, technology and new media are conceptualized as qualitatively different from previous forms of communication, and as such, act as a catalyst for qualitatively different ways of existing. Second, constitutive approaches directly engage citizenship rights and obligations. Third, netizenship and technological citizenship are especially future oriented. Each attempts to articulate the technical applications and social and cultural values needed to implement inclusive and generally idealized systems of citizenship.<sup>28</sup>

Constitutive approaches comprise a much smaller literature than instrumental approaches. However, this is an extremely difficult set of theories to engage with because so much of the impetus driving these theories is about capturing social, political, civic and cultural potential. As such, they raise questions about the kinds of “symbolic materials” that do and may possibly exist in our local surroundings. Given the complexity and commonality of this material, I will briefly outline the central tenets of each of these positions. I conclude this section by opening questions about what constitutive approaches can contribute to understanding technologically specific ideas of citizenship.

## **Netizenship: Participation, collectives and freedom of association**

The Net is not a Service, it is a Right. It is only valuable when it is collective and universal. Volunteer efforts protect the intellectual and technological common-wealth that is being created. DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF THE NET and NETIZEN” (emphasis in original, Hauben and Hauben 1996).

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<sup>28</sup> In this respect, it would be very easy to pick out the technologically determinist logic justifying these visions. However, the disadvantages and erroneous assumptions embedded within the technological determinism – or presentism, techno-utopianism or dystopianism for that matter – have been covered in detail (e.g. Mackenzie and Wajcman 2001; Bijker 1995; Star 1991). Drawing from actor-network theorists, social constructionists and feminist epistemologists, it should suffice to say that technologies are not the only causal factors of social change. Technologies are part of social, cultural and material processes and may incite change in tandem with these larger processes, and as such, cannot exist in isolation from the social and political realities of which they are a part. In contrast, I am more interested in attempting to uncover what these theorists have to say about the socio-cultural imagination and the symbolic materials of citizenship.

Netizenship is not entirely instrumental and not entirely constitutive. There is a tension between the original almost entirely constitutive conception of the netizen, and how the netizen (as online community or net participant) is instrumentally presented (e.g. Pal 1998; Odzer 1999; Ogden 1998). New technologies in these discourses are presented as important tools or instruments for establishing and negotiating collectivities. Through the use of such tools, new political and social subjectivities and associations are constituted (Pal, 1998; Odzer, 1999; Ogden, 1998). The Haubens, attributed with inventing the term “netizens” in the early 90s, argue that the term captures the moment when “citizens of the Net” emerged. Such citizens carry invigorated rights and obligations and are “people who care about Usenet and the bigger Net and work towards building the cooperative and collective nature which benefits the larger world” ([1995] 1996: np). This was an important time for the history of social media, marking strong community identifications and the conflation of citizenship claims with technological cultures.

The Haubens’ work was inspired by the 1994 National Telecommunications Information Association (henceforth, NTIA) conference intended to bring together people who were interested in seeing the internet expand.<sup>29</sup> Their book contains hundreds of excerpts from participants’ posts before, during and after the conference, reflecting in some ways what the Haubens’ envisioned as an increasingly universal democratic forum. For the Haubens, the internet enabled an empowering platform for the freedom of expression and the democratization of participation (for those that had the technical access, knowledge and time to participate in the netizens’ community). In this sense, netizenship also promotes the doubling of access rights found in ideas of cyber citizenship.

Perhaps the most significant set of issues to emerge from the conference was the US government’s decision to privatize the US internet infrastructure in 1995.

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<sup>29</sup> The connection between NTIA and the development of a particular kind of citizen is remarkable, particularly because there are a number of communication rights movements (e.g. CRIS, APC, WDR) that are effectively lobby groups. Yet, it is exactly this kind of connection I hope to challenge and interrogate. If such movements and/or their events can inspire at least claims about and at most new kinds of citizenship, the symbolic and cultural power of such movements must be seriously assessed.

For the specific “netizens” in this conference and for the potential netizens of the future, this decision raised serious questions about the government and corporate power hierarchies exercising control of the internet’s infrastructure. In addition, Hauben argues that the government ignored NTIA participant’s suggestions and concerns on internet policy, despite having initiated the conference in order to hear citizen’s concerns (1996: np). Government accountability was a central issue associated with netizenship and was reflected in the rights claims associated with netizens. Accountability was even more prominent than other more culturally oriented rights such as freedom of association (with the internet, its users and net communities) and engaged participation (1996: np).

More recently, netizenship is also strongly associated with the Korean “citizen journalism” site OhmyNews, likely due to the involvement of the Haubens with the site (Hauben 2007b; Hauben 2007a; Seok 2005). The director of OhmyNews, Oh Yeon Ho, challenges some of the premises of early netizenship. Oh raises interactivity, shifts in power and the importance of political and cultural contexts as key factors for realizing technologically mediated capacities and positive political change (Oh 2004: n.p.).<sup>30</sup> For Oh, the issue is not about unique and inherent technological capacities, or rights; instead, it is about people achieving their own capacities to enable positive social change.<sup>31</sup> In this way, the associational and membership expanding potential of the internet crumbles without the motivation, preparedness and will of citizens.

Finally, Alex Argote explicitly outlines a unique characteristic of netizens, that is, the:

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<sup>30</sup> Specifically, Oh argues that the success of OhmyNews is because of the distinctive political and cultural history of Korea. For example, Oh explains that Korea has ‘active netizens’ because Koreans have long struggled against military dictatorships silencing citizens (e.g. the Korean War in 1950 and The Kwangju Massacre in 1980), and this long history has contributed to a citizenry keen for alternative news sources and an end to the repression of information (Oh 2004).

<sup>31</sup> Oh historicizes OhmyNews’s slogan, ‘*every citizen is a reporter*’ when he refers to times when news and information were passed on through face to face interaction rather than through media technologies (Oh 2004: n.p.).

...great mission and duty to lift humanity to even greater heights.... [to] thunder across the digital void...to break...down the barriers to total change and prosperity for all (Argote 2007: n.p.).

Although comparatively understated in the Haubens' earlier accounts, there is an almost missionary zeal used to hail netizens; encouraging them to take responsibility of and for "enlightening" and connecting the "unconnected" (Hauben and Hauben 1996: n.p.). This responsibilization has two connotations. First and in terms of rights, this suggests a formalization of *citizen to citizen* associations and a shift of responsibility to citizens for citizens, as individuals, from state or government. Second, "the great mission" highlights a disjuncture between the democratization of participation with and between engaged subjects and a kind of colonial logic where the digitally "unenlightened" need to be taught how to participate in the world.

Similar to cyber citizenship, netizenship re-prioritizes rights of access and participation while positioning the individual, the collective and the freedom of association to and within a kind of "technological commonwealth." Self defined netizens call for recognition and legitimization of a technologically connected public, merging civil, political and social rights through new technologies.

## **Technological citizenship: Educating, informing and learning**

[Technological Citizenship is] a set of binding, equal rights and obligations that are intended to reconcile technology's unlimited potentials for human benefit and ennoblement with its unlimited potentials for human injury, tyrannization and degradation. Such status, rights and obligations are thus intended to reconcile democracy for lay subjects of technology's impacts with the right of innovators to innovate.... TC affirms human freedom, autonomy, dignity, and assimilation [versus alienation] of people with fellow people and with their built world (Frankenfeld 1992: 462).

Philip Frankenfeld defines technological citizenship, specifically in relation to risk communications, as a general means for instituting protective measures against dangerous technologies (e.g. the atom bomb, genetically modified foods, pharmaceuticals like thalidomide; 1992: 470). Frankenfeld is arguing that science and technology are pervasive forces capable of transforming everyday life, and without a system regulating these forces, their capacities can

invite threatening and negative consequences. These points suggest a diffusion of the national or institutional locus of citizenship power across a number of corporate, agricultural and civil sources, culminating in technologically bounded (and responsible) collectives.

As a result of this pervasiveness and the technological capacity to inflict individual and cultural damage, humans must formalize new spheres of citizenship to account for and protect against such hazards. Frankenfeld presents a complex and compelling argument. In addition to the doubling of access rights, technological citizenship calls for the formalization of collective associations, not only by those in science and technology fields but also by and to “lay subjects.” Frankenfeld repeatedly emphasizes the reciprocity between informing and *learning* (1992: 472, 462). Informing and learning are not only an extension of the “right to education” but also introduce specific rights and responsibilities to intervene in the “unavoidable” advance of technologies in the social world. In this way, the importance of balancing both the negative and positive sides of technological capacities is also being formalized as the responsibility of individuals. Further, Frankenfeld’s constitutive model of citizenship is not confined to geographic boundaries because technological citizenship applies to the “national, state, local, or global level or at levels in between” (1992: 463).

As discussed in chapter 2, Isin and Wood hold a different view. For them, technological citizenship is directly related to the role information and communication technologies have in mediating globalization (1999).

Technological citizenship refers to the ways identity claims and community making are related to new citizenship practices, such as those Odzer discusses in relation to cyber citizenship (Isin and Wood 1999: 111).

Drawing on the work of Manuel Castells and Paul Virilio, Nick Stevenson argues that “an adequate model of technological citizenship” must include “an engaged practice that seeks to foster conversation” and develop a “politics of ‘voice’” (Stevenson 2006: np). For Stevenson, Virilio and Castells offer insights on “the structuring power of technology” in contemporary ideas of citizenship.

In this sense, Although globalization is equally prominent in both accounts, Stevenson differs from Isin and Wood because technological citizenship is an overarching feature of citizenship practices.

In contrast, Isin and Wood situate technological citizenship as one particular kind of citizenship amongst many other kinds of citizenship (e.g. ecological, cultural, cosmopolitan etc.). Yet for Frankenfeld, ideas of technological citizenship include technologically specific rights involving access, education, equality, information, participation, communication, privacy and security. Frankenfeld also emphasizes the reorganization of citizenship processes from civil, political and social institutions towards expert and “lay” technological enclaves.

### 3.3. Technological and Cultural Rights

Finally, the fourth [citizenship] mood, the most recent decisive innovation, is the postmodern guarantee of access to the technologies of communication as crucial integers in the set of polity and identity” (Miller 1994: 25).

Toby Miller argues that “technologies of communication” are “*crucial integers in the set of polity and identity*” (see above). Following technologically specific ideas of citizenship, new technologies are crucial in the set of polity and identity, as well as informing new kinds of globalized citizenship practices. While Bryan Turner claims that the Marshallian framework for citizenship is being *eroded* because of globalization and the decreasing influence of the nation-state, others discussed here suggest a proliferation of citizenship forms (2001: 204-205). Even within the erosion of Marshallian citizenship, Turner identifies “new regimes of citizenship rights” as revealing “new patterns of citizenship” (2001: 204-205). And as Miller suggests above, the “guarantee of access to technologies” are one of many technologically specific rights associated with emerging ideas of citizenship. This section looks at what kinds of rights are bundled up in citizenship ideas discussed so far, before questioning what is or might be meaningful about these rights.

Table 3.2 serves two purposes: first, the table provides a summary of the kinds of rights that are important in the sample of technologically specific ideas of citizenship discussed so far. Second, including Marshallian and cultural rights provide an interesting comparison. For example, technologically specific rights share commonalities with cultural rights, particularly around issues of access, as emphasized in both instrumental and constitutive approaches (see appendix 3.1 for more details). These issues of access are clearly bound up with rights to freedom of expression, to informed consent, and with rights to information and participation. ICTs and new media are not just mediating political, cultural and social access points, but are also presented as constituting new kinds of citizenship.

**Table 3.2: “Technological” Rights (Overview)**

Technologically Specific Rights							
Right	Cultural	Cyber	E-Citizenship	Netizenship	Technological	Marshall's Dimensions	Total
<b>Access</b> [Technical]	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	*	4
<b>Access</b> [knowledge and information]	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Social In the form of education	5
<b>Right to Participate</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Political	5
<b>Right to Privacy and Security</b>	-	✓	✓	-	-	Social Security [privacy excluded]	2
<b>Freedom of Expression</b>	✓	-	-	✓	-	Civil	2
<b>Right to Political Equality</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Political	5
<b>Freedom from Commercial Manipulation</b>	-	-	-	✓	-	Class inequities	1
<b>Right to Mobility**</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
<b>Total</b>	5	5	5	6	3	6	30

\* It is arguable that this right is included in Marshall's social dimension of citizenship, as discussed in chapter 2. Similarly, although Marshall did not specify technical access to ICTs, privacy, freedom from commercial manipulation or mobility as unique rights, they could be seen as implied social rights.

\*\* "The right to mobility" is highly prominent in ideas of "cyborg citizenship;" urban citizenship (e.g. Gray, Mentor et al. 1995; Gray 2002; Jacobs 1961; Hayward 2007) and (post or trans)nationality and citizenship (e.g. Soysal 1994; Ong 1999).

There are several commonalities between the rights identified above and the cultural rights discussed in chapter 2. Some of these commonalities include: an overemphasis on rights rather than obligations; a prioritization of access and active participation; rights to identity claims based on communities of choice; and an emphasis on knowledge and information. These commonalities suggest that technologically specific rights are deeply cultural and are indeed, about citizenship in the cultural domain.

With the exception of “technological citizenship” (Frankenfeld 1992) and one version of “cyber citizenship” (Mosco 2000), all of these ideas of citizenship neglect obligations. For example, Frankenfeld calls for the technological citizen’s obligation to: “learn and *use* knowledge (for self validation, safety and peace of mind),” to participate and “to accept the will of majority” and to exercise civic literacy and technological civic virtue (emphasis added, 1992). Mosco outlines that cyber citizens are obligated to respect other citizens (2000). Many specific “technological” rights include access to technologies, freedom from commercial manipulation, the right to privacy and, elsewhere, the right to mobility. Thus, there are unique rights associated with the ideas of citizenship addressed here. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize the correlations between technological and cultural rights.

### **3.4. In Practice: Case Backgrounds and Contexts**

While media have always been social, electronic communication tools have rapidly developed in the last two decades (1990-2010). From the days of the early internet, significant developments included Usenet (1979) and the WELL (1985); both important gathering places for what would become influential web communities. In the mid 1990’s, people began to actively identify as belonging, in significant ways, to the web or to web based communities as the ideas of cyber and netizenship suggest. Netizens and “WELL beings” were active communities whose members spoke of their online experiences as so much more than community and so much more than “virtual” (Rheingold 1991; 1995;

Shirky 2008). As discussed above, people spoke of their participation in these mediated communities as reconfiguring their senses of selves and as, ultimately, being about new kinds of citizenship.

These kinds of densely knit communities gave way to new models of online interaction, leading to peer to peer and web publishing applications such as Napster, Indymedia and Blogger, which emerged in 1999. Just a few years later, Wikipedia and the Creative Commons changed the way knowledge could be created and licensed. Between 2002 and 2006, social networking sites also proliferated (Jenkins 2006b; Bruns 2008; Boyd and Ellison 2007; Boyd 2009). Sites like Friendster (2002), Second Life and MySpace (2003), Flickr and Facebook (2004), YouTube (2005) and Twitter (2006) led to different kinds of interaction and radically different models of information publishing. Tim O'Reilly describes these kinds of social and user generated content sites as having “*a natural architecture of participation*” (my emphasis, O'Reilly 2005: np). And these kinds of sites are characteristic of what has come to be known as “Web 2.0.”

iCan and Urban Tapestries were slightly ahead of “social media” and were developing alongside with collaborative social networking sites. Both cases captured early attempts to design a participatory ethos through the available technology. Both cases faced challenges in organizational structures (particularly iCan) and with their respective technical platforms because these were new ideas and immature technologies. Although the technological platforms were yet to come, the social ethos of each case was not unprecedented. Urban Tapestries draws from a much longer history of cultural participation in public art and locative media. iCan, in contrast, draws upon traditions of public service broadcasting and local “small p” political campaigning. Beginning with public service broadcasting, I contextualize each of the cases in relation to their histories.

## **iCan and the BBC: Public Broadcasting**

Public service broadcasting in Britain began with the formation of the BBC ‘as a state-regulated monopoly in 1927’ (Scannell, 1996a). Public service

broadcasting in the early twentieth century was seen as a vehicle for the promotion of a national, more inclusive, mass audience (Thumim 2007: 65).

As Nancy Thumim describes above, the nationalization of the BBC in 1927 promoted the British public as a “more inclusive, mass audience.” The BBC mission to “enrich people’s lives with great programmes and services that inform, educate and entertain” invokes Reithian principles often connected with citizenship and national cultural heritage (Statements of Programme Policy 2003/2004). The idea of *public service* broadcasting is an important one. As Paddy Scannell and David Cardiff suggest, public service was thought to enable the democratization of information and inspire a “new and mighty weight of public opinion”:

In addition to providing public education on an easily accessible mass scale, Reith also advocated the view that public broadcasting had the effect ‘of making the nation as one man’ and ‘had an immense potential for helping in the creation of an informed and enlightened democracy’ (Scannell and Cardiff 1991: 7-8).

However, the idea of what and who were included in or represented as the national public was greatly contested. Using the example of “British music” and its “automatic equation with English Music,” Scannell and Cardiff claim that English culture dominated the music scene at the “expense of different cultures and identities” such as Scotland, Wales and Ireland (1991: 303). Thus although the tradition of public service broadcasting enabled a common national culture, there were many conflicts over what should be included within this common culture. These kinds of debates still continue today.

In order to preserve its service to “the public,” the BBC is governed by a Royal Charter and is funded by licence fees (paid by the public for commercial free television). Licence fees supply 94% of the BBC’s annual funding (£2 659 million pounds). The Royal Charter is renewed every 10 years and guarantees the BBC continues to be a national public service broadcaster. During the time of this research, the BBC was gearing up for its Charter Renewal in 2006, a factor that plays heavily in the BBC’s relationship to iCan and as I argue in chapter 7, also in its 2008 closure.

Throughout its history, the BBC has been at the forefront of radio and television development, commissioning many projects to better serve the public.

According to the BBC web site, the first television service was launched in 1936 although it wasn't until the 1950's that the BBC entered the "decade of TV."

Similarly, the first BBC microcomputer may have been launched in 1982 but the BBC did not enter the "digital age" until the 1990s (Butterworth 2007).

The BBC launched its "bbc.co.uk" domain in 1994, made its first webcasts of the Glastonbury festival and other sporting events in 1998 and began using desktop computers for processing television content in 2000 (Butterworth 2007; BBC history site). In 2001, BBC Online was rebranded BBCi (2001-2004).

Martin Belam, the BBC's Senior New Media Development Producer, recalls the painfully laborious process of manually editing a BBC search database in 2000-2002 while Google indexed "*billions* of web pages" (Belam 2007). At this time, the BBC web site was the "tenth most used in the UK – about 3.5 million users, reaching a quarter of the then online population of 14 m" (Highfield 2007).

According to Ashley Highfield, the BBC's former Director of New Media, this audience was young, male and upwardly mobile. Highfield describes iCan as one of "many forays into social media" targeting larger and more diverse online audiences (2007).

It is at this moment in 2002, when the BBC was struggling to find its place in the new media environment by working on a wide range of technical and content based initiatives that iCan was first conceived. As discussed in the introductory chapter, iCan was inspired by BBC commissioned research called "Beyond the Soundbite" (BBC 2002). Sparked by the low voter turn-out in the 2001 elections, this research addressed political apathy and the decreased viewing of BBC political programs. The report found that political apathy and disengagement reflected an out of date parliamentary system (BBC 2002). iCan was designed to open up political processes for young people who might not know what to do or where to start. Thus although iCan was an innovative project employing an experimental technological platform, its aims fit strongly with the aims of the BBC and public service broadcasting.

## UT and Proboscis: Locative Media and Public Art

[Urban Tapestries] will explore the interface between *technological change, knowledge, community and citizenship* (emphasis added, excerpt from original aims of the Urban Tapestries project, circulated internally, 12/2002).

Like the founders of Mass Observation in the 1930s, we were interested creating opportunities for an 'anthropology of ourselves' – adopting and adapting new and emerging technologies for creating and sharing everyday knowledge and experience; building up organic, collective memories that trace and embellish different kinds of relationships across places, time and communities (Urban Tapestries project, *Proboscis* web site, 2008).

On a practical level, UT is one of many research projects conceptualized and executed by a London based cultural think tank called Proboscis. By facilitating collaboration between a wide range of technical experts, industry professionals, creative producers and academics, Proboscis spearheaded the development and iteration of the UT prototype (see chapter 1, figure 1.1 for an illustration).<sup>32</sup> The development of this prototype is particularly interesting for the research presented here because it brings together a diverse range of industry partners, public funding bodies and research groups around a technical proposal. For example, Urban Tapestries had partnerships with Hewlett-Packard Labs, Orange and Media@LSE. Funding came from The Department of Trade and Industry, Arts Council England and the Daniel Langlois Foundation. Collaborators include France Telecom R&D, Locustworld and the Ordnance Survey. Additional sponsors include Sony Europe, Apple Computer UK and Garbe (UK) Ltd. The Urban Tapestries project combined private and public funding and as such, provides another insight into the kinds of projects granted public funding at this time.

In contrast to the BBC, Proboscis does not have a long history of fostering a common national or even community based public. Instead, Proboscis is an

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<sup>32</sup> Proboscis has developed its own system architecture for annotating geographic space with multimedia content, which supports client applications for wireless PDAs (HP iPAQs running Pocket PC) and Symbian Smartphones (Sony Ericsson P800s – developed with France Telecom R&D). The Ordnance Survey has provided map data for the system architecture and advice on geographic information systems. Proboscis has adopted Locustworld's MeshAP 802.11b wireless networking solution for installing and maintaining a local Wi-Fi mesh (which connects UT clients to the internet) for tests and trials.

artist led cultural think-tank, specializing in complex and innovative research projects. Proboscis describes themselves as combining “artistic practice with commissioning, curatorial projects, design and consultancy to explore social, cultural and creative issues” (Proboscis web site, 2008). While Proboscis has spearheaded many projects, they prioritize collaboration in a wide range of fields ranging from “medical research, music, community development, housing and urban regeneration, pervasive computing, [and] mapping” to “sensor technologies” (Proboscis web site, 2008). There are two participatory traditions that Proboscis brought together through UT. The first of these is public art and the second is locative media.

In terms of the latter, UT was one of many emerging applications focused on re-inscribing urban spaces with its occupants’ stories. Some other location based projects include, for example: “Song Lines” in New York (c.f. Chatwin 1987), “GeoNotes” (Persson, Espinoza et al. 2002) “Mobile Bristol” (May and Stenton 2003; Mobile Bristol 2003), “Moblogging (Greenfield 2002), “Geographiti” (Tuters ), “Neighbourhood Markup Language” (Rokeby 2003), “Murmur” (Unattributed 2003) and even the BBC’s “Capture Wales” or “Video Nation” (as public storytelling projects, Thumim 2007; Carpentier 2003).

These location based projects provide ways of telling stories and annotating these stories to the physical spaces in our urban environments. These kinds of storytelling practices also have a long history. Bruce Chatwin talks about how Aboriginals have long used songs and stories to follow “invisible pathways that meander all over Australia” (1987: 2). Similar to some of the location based applications mentioned above, these platforms offer ways of unravelling the secrets stories of everyday and urban places. Murmur, aims to preserve Toronto’s cultural history and places placards containing a telephone number and title in public locations around the city. City dwellers call the number and listen to stories about where they are as they are there (Unattributed 2003).

In line with blogging and many other forms of participatory media, UT aims to break down the barriers to public fora, facilitating the exchange of everyday voices from and for everyday people. UT provides a software application for

users to leave what can be described as digital post-it notes at fixed locations, a process called “public authoring.” It is because public authoring is location based that the stories people leave can potentially connect communities and create a digitally shared sense of community.<sup>33</sup> It is important to note that there was a lot of competition in the development of locative media. The success of Google maps points to some of the stakes invested in UT and similar projects.

While the UT team distinguished itself from other location based platforms by emphasizing the *public* rather than tourist or consumer orientation of UT, the team also identified two historical roots. These roots come together under “public art” as a broad category but specifically include graffiti and the “unitary urbanism” practiced by the situationists in the late 1950s (Debord 1958). The latter involves a:

‘drifting’ through the city, as a method of understanding the city not only through an experience of it, but also through the exchange of those experiences. In this sense, ‘derive’ and especially unitary urbanism allowed the functional surface of the city to be lifted, opened up and out, revealing the psychogeographical unconscious (Debord 1958; Ross And Lefebvre 1983). These practices then are not just about place, but also aim to playfully deconstruct the abstractness of space, the rituals of place and ‘the geographies of action,’ and deepen the connections between people and the places they occupy (Silverstone and Sujon 2005: 43).

Guy Debord and the situationists are well known in the history of public and participatory art (Groys 2008: 27; c.f. Frieling 2008). While public art could once be understood as “murals, monuments, memorials and mimes,” it has evolved to include “almost anything and everything artists can think up” (Becker 2002: np). The situationists were important in this history because they performed a kind of public art located in psychogeography of the city. Graffiti was also public but tends to be created in furtive rather than spectacular ways. However, it was the subversive and public character of graffiti art that captured the imaginations of UT producers. Producers envisioned rich layers of meaning unfolding through UT, rather like a “clean” form of graffiti.

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<sup>33</sup> As opposed to fly-posters and local advertisements, UT concentrates on leaving stories that connect not just users to their places of interest, but other members of the community to those places through public authoring. It is this form of connection that renders UT an interesting case study ([www.proboscis.co.uk](http://www.proboscis.co.uk)).

In conclusion, UT was public in at least two ways: through funding from public sources and through publicly generated content development. UT provides a technological platform for citizenship as a sense of locally constituted experiences ideally culminating, for its designers anyway, as an enriched sense of community belonging and neighbourhood citizenship. Further, UT's original funding proposals and publicity materials situate citizenship as an important inspiration and justification for UT. Thus, similar to iCan, the juxtaposition of new technologies and citizenship in the UT case was considered to be potentially meaningful. As such and also similar to iCan, UT is a conceptually and technically complex new media project whose team members clearly embrace the positive, inclusive and socially enriching aspects of citizenship discourses.

## **Current contexts and organizational environments**

At the beginning of this research, the iCan and UT teams were composed of small groups, which due to rapid technological and organizational changes have shifted radically since the completion of my fieldwork.<sup>34</sup> This kind of rapid change and continual restructuring points to an unstable environment and amplifies the high levels of internal (especially for the BBC) and external (mostly for UT) competition. For example, Cara, upon being informed that I was interested in the structure of the BBC as well as iCan, told me "not to bother" partially due to constant restructuring and organizational change (iCan Development producer / Product manager, pre-interview discussion, 17/03/2004).

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<sup>34</sup> For example, iCan had 14-15 team members in 2004 and was down to 5 in 2007; and UT had between 9-12 team members during the 2003-4 developmental phase of the UT project. In addition to the changing composition of team members, the structure of the BBC and iCan's position within the BBC has also shifted. For example, the BBC structure in 2002 was depicted as the "BBC flower" (see appendix 1, received from Lizzie Jackson, Former Editor of BBC Communities, now a Research Fellow at Westminster University, personal communication, 12/02/2004). At this time, iCan was situated within "News", "New Media" (now called "Future Media and Technology") and "Nations and Regions"; and is now solely a part of "News Interactive" (Russell, Editorial project leader, interview, 16/03/2004; Bridget, Action Network Project Manager 2006-7, interview, 18/09/2007, respectively).

In addition to rapid change, iCan also had a low profile within the BBC. For example, Russell stated that only 10% of BBC employees were aware of iCan (2004). This is a remarkably low figure considering that iCan received numerous prominent features in BBC documents, won several awards and received significant press coverage. Even in 2007, Bridget claims “there are still people in the BBC that haven’t heard about us” (iCan Project leader, interview, 18/09/2007). Bridget, among others, also a competitive environment marked by conflict implied struggles with others, namely with technology and with the BBC:

However, when we launched, we were new and nobody had ever done anything like this, like iCan. Things have changed. Things have moved on. Technology has changed. We’re a big organization and we don’t move on as quick as everybody else (iCan Project leader, interview, 18/09/2007).

Other producers also spoke of the difficulties of working within a large organization and pointed to rapid structural changes. At the beginning of this research, iCan was situated as a part of the “New Media and Politics,” “Nations and Regions” and “News” divisions or petals of the BBC (see appendix 1.2 for the organizational structure in 2002/3). In addition to these kinds of structural changes, team members also highlighted conflicts within the team and with the BBC. Conflicts revolved around issues of copyright, around political content and impartiality, and around the very nature of the iCan site. Bridget also emphasized the competitiveness of technological developments within the media landscape more generally. For example, web 2.0 platforms and new social networking such as Facebook, MySpace, PledgeBank and Bebo (among others) emerged around 2004. These “new” applications were not regarded as threats per se, but were seen as vastly improving upon the core ideas inspiring iCan in the start. Additionally, these kinds of platforms far outstripped the technological capacities available to the BBC, especially at the time iCan was originally launched. These factors contribute to what Bridget suggests is an unstable environment marked by change, competition and conflict.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Additionally, respondents hinted towards conflicts within the team, which are in part demonstrated by the high turn over of team members, a feature that also characterized the UT case. For example, the original team was composed of 8 people, and these members changed, and although some of the team never worked together, the total team membership was reported as 15 by the end of 2005 (UT web site, 2007). Additionally, one team member contextualizes

In some ways, similar competition and conflict is also prevalent in the UT case. For example, Benjamin relates a tale about two private corporations “adopting” a core research technique from Proboscis for their own product development:

This is why I think for instance the two organisations have ... created their own version of bodystorming. So Intel and Hewlett Packard [HP] with Modelstorming, they've misunderstood bodystorming. They think that it's only one thing, whereas ... the idea of bodystorming is that you just adapt it to whatever the situation is (Benjamin, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 08/03/2005).

Although Benjamin is certainly committed to the open exchange of ideas, Intel and HP creating their own versions of bodystorming suggests that there is competition amongst other organizations for ideas, strategies and techniques. Yet like iCan, this largely occurs within technological developments and because of the threat of technological obsolescence. While some UT respondents referred to occasional tensions between team members, the real sources of competition were perceived as other location based projects. Although the UT project was completed in 2005, Proboscis continues to work on other projects, including “Social Tapestries” which directly builds upon UT research and objectives. Proboscis and Social Tapestries have also had significant shifts in the size of composition of core team members.

Comparatively, the Urban Tapestries project did not undergo structural changes and overall, faced much less upheaval. In terms of functionality, Figure 3.1 shows a map the first Wi-Fi network used to host the UT platform. The second map in this figure shows the “pockets” developed by users during two field trials with users experimenting with the UT prototype.

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this when he describes an important part of his role as: “... you know, you're just trying to get people to communicate with each other, or stop arguing, or just kind of do what they say they're going to do” (Brian, UT Interface designer, interview, 26/07/2004).

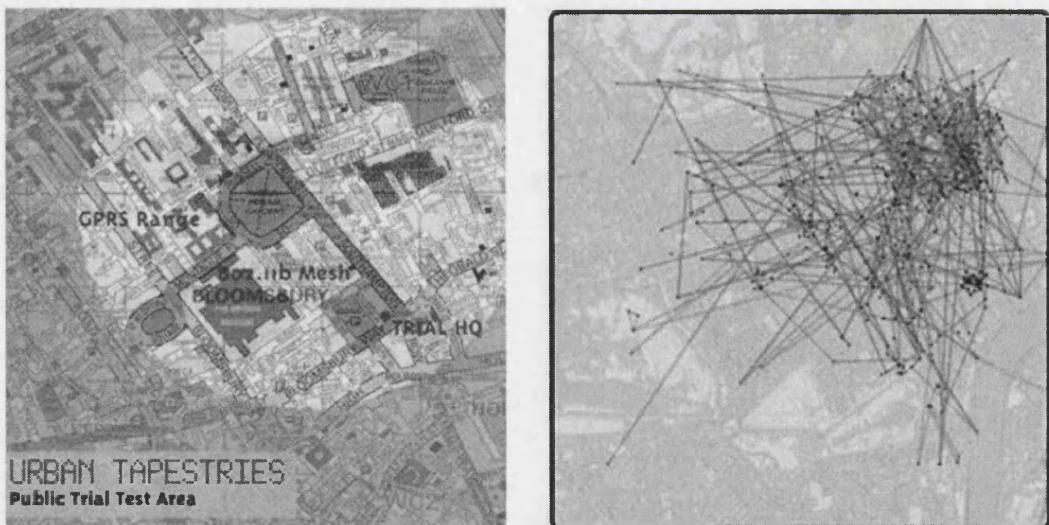


Figure 3.1: Map of the UT field trial area and of user generated location based content

The above figure shows the area where Urban Tapestries prototype was trialled. While Proboscis is still based near to this area and the UT project remains documented on the Proboscis web site, the platform is no longer functional.

### 3.5. Extending Citizenship: Technological Collectives and Cultural Rights

At the same time that communities are struggling to exercise their freedoms to participate meaningfully in the digital age, governments and commercial forces are marshaling tools to surveil and profile the public in pernicious ways. Some leaders have referred to this century as the battleground for a new civil rights struggle - that of control over the manipulation of information, communications, and technology (Wilhelm 2004: 59-60).

Technological determinism plays, to varying degrees, an ideological role in cyber, e, netizenship and technological citizenship (for critiques of technological determinism see for example, Mackenzie and Wajcman 1999; Winner 1999 [1980]; Silverstone 1994). Arguably, the cultural rights associated with these technologically specific ideas of citizenship indicate a shift in the locus of citizenship, extending into and reconfiguring citizenship as cultural. As outlined in chapter 2, cultural rights include rights involving access, participation, freedom of collective associations, and finally, of education. While these kinds of rights make sense in theory, what, if anything, is meaningful about these

rights? Are technologically specific or cultural kinds of rights important in practice? One of the challenges in addressing these questions is the ellipsis between implied and direct rights. This challenge is taken up in chapter 6, showing differences and occasional conflicts between formal rules and standard practices.

Despite the multiple tensions, contradictions and overlaps within and between these ideas, there are a few notable commonalities. First, these ideas point to the creation of a fourth dimension or generation of technologically rooted rights. This fourth dimension includes the emergence of important public resources that not only reintegrates existing rights, but also establishes technological prerequisites for actualising citizenship. Such perspectives position a kind of “technological commonwealth” (or a technologically supported public, such as the “blogosphere”) as an emerging polity. Identities are increasingly mediated if not centred within this technological polity. The re-articulation of individual rights in terms of technologies provides a means to “widen the web of citizenship.” The darker side of this point is that new technologies also provide a narrowing of citizenship by organizing rights through access to technologies and technological configurations.

The right to equality is present in all the technologically specific ideas of citizenship discussed here, and this has two implications. First, this right emphasizes that things are not equal. Many of the rights and freedoms included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have yet to be guaranteed for citizens from advanced democracies as well as emerging ones (1948, see Appendix 3.2; c.f. Benhabib 2004; van Dijk 2005; Isin 2002). Second, there is a tension between elite and ordinary citizens and who is able to actualize their rights, new or otherwise, and who cannot. This tension is highlighted in terms of rights to and obligations of knowledge in technological citizenship; but is also prevalent in cyber citizenship and netizenship. For example, Mosco bases the importance of cyber citizenship, in line with traditions of “negative rights,” as a protective force from the “concretization of the digital divide.” For Mosco, socio-economic inequities mean that people have differential levels of engagement with new technologies and as such, with citizenship. In the ideas discussed

here, guaranteeing an equal capacity for citizenship means reprioritising rights and obligations in terms of shifting material (and technological) standards.

Related to the digital divide, both netizenship and technological citizenship implicitly refer to establishing new “technological” or “internet” associations, positions which support Pippa Norris’ work on the role of new technologies in “connecting the connected” (Norris 2001: 65, further discussed in chapters 5, 7 and 8; c.f. Verba and Nie 1972). Perhaps one of the unique elements of technologically specific ideas of citizenships relate to the shift from an “industrial” model of citizenship, where the rights to work, welfare and education are preeminent, to a kind of “technological” model of citizenship. In the second model, the responsibility for the development of public resources is individualized and the regulation of the “public” is shifting more towards networks of individuals and the private sector. This marks a tension from rights being developed from “below” as implied through participatory cultures versus a diffusion of citizenship power through the responsibilization of individuals and elite enclaves.

In conclusion, although carrying “new” technologically specific names, such ideas of citizenship do not replace pre-existing forms of citizenship. Rather, technologically specific ideas of citizenship incorporate and expand existing dimensions and models rearticulating rights in cultural terms (sometimes in technologically deterministic ways). This marks a tension between the legitimacy of emerging citizenship claims and the hollowing out of citizenship by shallow neologisms and an over prioritization of the technological. I argue, instead, that such citizenship claims are meaningful although they do mark diffusion of the locus of citizenship, where responsibilities to others are increasingly individualized.

## **Chapter 4. Capturing Ideas of Citizenship: Methods, Procedures and Interpretation**

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### **4.1. Introduction**

In the process of trying to write this difficult chapter, I have discovered a number of obstacles. First there are the inherent challenges of trying to develop an empirical project for a theoretically informed idea. Second, there are the difficulties in observing, substantiating and investigating an idea that is rather intangible and abstract. Third, there is the struggle to develop a coherent narrative about the empirical process used to “capture” and examine this idea. The approach I have developed has been useful; however, it also provides a rich source for further methodological reflection.

This struggle has been amplified by the ways in which methodology and epistemology are implicitly interconnected and mutually constitutive. My own empirical methods have been informed by debates around how to study the “new” in new media (or in any phenomenon) and of researching “messy” objects (c.f. Law 2004; Couldry 2000a; Shields 2004). The growing literature on new media and research methods provides a clear indication of the importance of such methodological reflection. For example, the issue of what is “new” is

problematic. For example, is it possible to use old tools to study new phenomena? Or will using traditional and well established techniques and methodologies mask core innovations? As some internet researchers have suggested:

... the most exciting suggestion is that CMC [computer mediated communication] is a new kind of discourse. Some communication theorists claim that CMC is unlike any genre previously studied; that it is a 'language that never existed before' (Ferrara *et al.*, 1991: 26). The most common claim is that CMC produces text which is historically unique because it is a hybrid showing features of both spoken and written language (Mann and Stewart 2000: 182).

The issue of "newness" relates to a question dividing those researchers who claim the internet requires new methods, and those who argue for the continued use of existing methods (Mann and Stewart 2000; Jankowski and van Selm 2005).<sup>36</sup> As a possible solution to this dilemma, Steve Jones argues that:

...possible research methods for new media [are] mainly extensions of existing methods ... the new media researcher should consider alternative methods, or even multiple methods (Jones 1999: 25; c.f. Bauer and Gaskell 2000a; Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Flick 2002).

This is an important point, one that helps position this research. As such, my own methodological framework draws from multiple data-gathering methods, analytic and interpretative techniques. Rather than addressing the many tensions related to new media and methods, this chapter concentrates on the relevant methodological techniques I have developed for this research. I present the rationale and implementation for both my data-gathering and analytical frameworks: tiered case studies for the former, and both discourse and thematic analysis for the latter. There are a number of issues that although important cannot be addressed here (e.g. ethical challenges in new media

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<sup>36</sup> An important element of not only the methodological frame but also the methodological implications is the question of how to research new media, particularly in relation to the rapidly developing literature. For example, do interactivity, intertextuality and the linked nature of many web based fora necessitate the development of new methods? Methodological conventions call for a 'both / and' approach. Of the many interesting works about these issues, the most authoritative and interesting accounts address the complexities of not only 'doing internet research' but also for thinking about the implications of research methods and new media include work by Steve Jones (1999); Christine Hine (2000, 2005); and Annette Markham (1998). Hewson *et al.* (2003) and Mann (2000) have provided accounts that offer an excellent introduction to the field and specific practicalities of internet based interviews, surveys and other standard research tools.

research,<sup>37</sup> long-standing and emerging methodological debates, and the connection between epistemology and research methods). I summarize the methodological choices I have made, emphasize why these choices are important and contribute some useful methodological techniques.

## 4.2. Research Questions and Sample Selection

As introduced in the preceding chapters, this research questions what, if anything is meaningful about technologically specific ideas of citizenship. In order to address this question, I bring together citizenship theory (chapter 2), a sample of technologically specific ideas of citizenship (chapter 3) and two case studies (chapter 1 and 3). Chapter 3 examines the contours and the kinds of rights claims made within a sample of technologically specific ideas of citizenship; many of which resemble cultural rights. This research asks: How do technologically specific ideas of citizenship unfold in practice? And questions how new technologies are positioned, in the particular case studies in question, to enhance citizens' participation?

During this research, it was not clear if these ideas would or could fit with the cases. The research design, methods and interpretative frame were put together in order to "capture" what appeared to be a fleeting and sometimes ephemeral set of ideas at the beginning of this research. The empirical component of this research focuses on two very different new media projects as cases for answering these questions. Introduced in chapter 1 and contextualized in chapter 3, the cases are on:

- iCan, renamed the Action Network in 2006, which is the BBC's innovative and experimental civic campaigning web site; and

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<sup>37</sup> There are a number of emerging ethical issues around research involving the internet. For example, how might one approach anonymity with people who have voluntarily put their real names on the internet, are committed to promoting awareness about a social issue or problem. Is that information considered public? If so, is it necessary to get consent for your research? Although not specifically addressed in this chapter, I argue that yes it is important to inform people how you are going to use their words and their image. However, due to space limitations, the importance of the many emerging ethical considerations and the obligations of and to social scientists must be addressed elsewhere.

- Urban Tapestries, continued as Social Tapestries, which is an equally original project aiming to connect people with others and with their communities via a new mobile platform.

These cases both experiment with the potential of new media to “initiate” citizenship and offer especially interesting insights for making sense of technologically specific ideas of citizenship. Both cases foster public participation via new technologies. The complexity and richness of both cases called for some innovation in data-gathering techniques and I have developed “tiered case studies” for these purposes. This technique facilitates looking at citizenship *in situ*. This means looking at ideas of citizenship and the role of new technologies within these ideas as they unfold across a spectrum of instances. In this sense, tiered case studies are a data gathering heuristic designed to capture the somewhat fleeting instantiations of citizenship within the everyday life of two new media projects. Before describing my research design and methodological techniques, I expand upon the logic informing the use of case studies and the case study selection criteria.

## **Case studies and sample selection**

Cases are rarely chosen because they are thought to be representative, but generally because of their illustrative significance. Criticism of case studies should therefore be directed towards their logical consistency and not towards their statistical generality (Mitchell as cited in Jackson 1984: 107).

As discussed in chapter 2, the empirical part of this project is theoretically informed. This means that the empirical criteria, in part, emerge from the literature and the theoretical framework (see chapters 2 and 3) rather than through empirical observation. Uwe Flick refers to “theoretical” or “gradual sampling” and this can easily be confused with the kind of approach I am employing. For Flick, theoretical or gradual sampling involves selecting the research sample based upon “criteria concerning their content instead of using abstract methodological criteria” (Flick 2002: 66). This kind of approach tends to draw from grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990) and engages a theoretically inductive approach to the data that has been

gathered.<sup>38</sup> In contrast, the theoretical frame developed in chapter 2 set the criteria for the analysis of the empirical cases, corresponding with in-depth thematic analysis organized around membership, rights and participatory strategies in chapters 5, 6, and 7. These “themes” are not only identified in the citizenship literature, but also form an integral part of the interpretive frame.

Instead of employing Flick’s alternative to grounded theory (“abstract methodological criteria”), I am analyzing two cases using theoretically informed criteria.<sup>39</sup> Although each criterion is analytically distinct, when taken together they justify why I have chosen these particular cases over a number of others (see Appendix 1.1 for an overview of the other potential cases). Both cases fulfilled the selection requirements and each offered ample perspectives for looking at how new technologies are positioned in changing ideas of citizenship. Although explained in detail below, a list of these criteria includes:

1. Explicit juxtaposition of new media / technologies and citizenship;
2. Emergent, experimental, interesting, elite;
3. Multiple dimensions;
4. Cases must be *applied* (e.g. between grass roots and top down);
5. Culturally oriented rather than formally political;
6. Must complement existing empirical research;
7. Contrasting cases.

First, both cases had to *explicitly* juxtapose new media and citizenship, a criterion that many of the other potential cases did not meet (e.g. communication rights, DRM, global civil society). While both cases met this criterion at the beginning of this research, they did so differently and, notably, the ways these explicit juxtapositions were discursively constructed shifted over the course of this research (as further discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7).

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<sup>38</sup> Strauss and Corbin argue that grounded theory is especially useful for building theory “that is faithful to and illuminates the area under study,” rather than imposing predetermined or widely accepted theoretical suppositions (Strauss and Corbin 1999: 24).

<sup>39</sup> This is important because Flick has clarified an important aspect of my methodological approach. The differences between theoretically grounded and theoretical sampling point to a useful way to identify emergent properties, characteristics and/or phenomena. Such a sampling strategy also compensates for some of the emerging complications associated with such a multi-dimensional research object, rather than attempting to empirically capture every instance of TC.

Second, following the highly normative characteristics of citizenship, it was important to select cases that would facilitate observation of *emergent* aspects of technologically mediated membership, rights and participation. Both cases were experimental. Each case experimented with new technologies in innovative ways in order to initiate citizenship (both were originally described as “citizenship initiatives”). *Urban Tapestries* was an experimental project developed by a small cultural research organization. *iCan*, was also a highly experimental project, particularly within the rigid institutional context of the BBC. Both projects were interesting, bringing together a wide range of participants, generating a lot of media and research attention and wide spread support (as well as criticisms). The ample resources required for both projects meant that each was to some degree, an elite case. By looking at elite cases, I hoped to gain insight into *patterns of inclusion*. Both cases provided an opportunity to observe the technological mediation of citizenship in some of the best possible circumstances.

Third, it was important to assess multiple dimensions of technologically mediated citizenship discourses across and within multiple dimensions. As such, both cases focus on the local as starting points for citizenship. While *iCan* connects “ordinary” people with national audiences, *UT* focuses on deepening community connections. By discursively validating local spheres of action through media platforms and facilitating users’ choice in how they might choose to contribute, generate content, or “participate,” both cases are culturally oriented (although *iCan* also prioritizes civic and political dimensions through its focus on campaigning).

Fourth, in line with bringing together an empirical project with a theoretically informed question, I wanted to analyze empirical cases that *applied* (or at least tried to apply) technological dimensions to ideas of citizenship. In this sense, I did not want to look at grass roots activist networks like those found among self-identified “netizens” (see chapter 3). This strategy provided real insight into both the emergent characteristics of and the gaps or absences between new media and citizenship rights. Thus, it was important to qualitatively research the features and discourses of these gaps and absences in practice. For

example, the primary aim of multiple case studies is not only to compare and contrast each case with the other; rather, it is far more helpful to establish a nuanced sense of what is going on in different projects, in order to develop a broader picture of ideas of citizenship. Although comparisons will be made where appropriate across cases, I am primarily conducting what some have called an "internal analysis" of iCan and UT.<sup>40</sup> Some have defined internal analysis as concentrating the investigator's "attention on the underlying processes that operate within the system" (Lipset, Trow et al. 2004 [1956]: 124). In this sense, it is precisely the differences between cases which offered such a unique vantage point towards ideas of citizenship and the role of new media.

Fifth, it was important to look at the cultural dimensions of citizenship, rather than within the formal political realm. Focusing on the cultural dimension contributes to a great deal of existing work around the politics of citizenship and new media. One of the reasons Marshall's work on citizenship is so compelling is because he defines citizenship as multiple. Following theories of cultural citizenship (see chapter 2), media technologies are increasingly central as public sites and participatory pathways. Given the richness of research and projects in this area (c.f. Appendix 1.1), I wanted to focus on cultural rights. In line with this criterion, both cases were also publicly funded (UT was a partially publicly funded cultural research organization, whereas iCan, is funded by the BBC's licence fee). Each case is based within cultural institutions outside of formal political institutions and politics.

Sixth, further supporting the above criterion, a lot of research has been done on the role or use of new technologies within the formal political realm (outlined in chapter 2 and 3). For example, there is a lot of work being done on the role of new media in e-democracy, citizenship and formal politics (e.g. voting, campaigning, political communication, e-government, MP's use of e-mail, mobile phones and new technologies etc.) and the democratizing impact of new media generally (e.g. blogging, online communities, citizen's media, netizens

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<sup>40</sup> Lipset et al. argue that removing the comparative component of the analysis increases the possibility for "a deeper explanation of the phenomenon and to generalization of a more fundamental kind" (Lipset 2004 [1956]: 124).

etc.). The research developed and presented here was intended to complement this work with empirical findings that may contrast or correspond to existing research. Thus, the aim of the cases I have chosen is to complement existing and current research in these areas by contributing an understanding of citizenship from outside of the institutional and grassroots extremes. By offering an analysis of two public cases, I hope to assess not only the material practices of citizenship, but also the dynamic ways that conceptualizations and expectations of citizenship are being linked with new media.

Finally, the cases were selected based on their differences. Each case is complex, often contradictory and unique. As such, the cases have been selected based on a principle of *contrast*, rather than similarity. The qualitative and quantitative differences between cases provide important contextual clues and insights into the role new technologies play in ideas of citizenship. As such, iCan and UT provide two views on the role of publicly funded and cultural projects in citizenship practices. iCan does so via local politics and the communication of everyday civic or politically oriented issues. UT does so via a deepening of local connections to others, to neighbourhoods and the everyday histories of urban space. More evenly matched case studies with similar histories and on a similar scale may risk sacrificing not only the texture of experiences in and around each case, but also may foreclose unpredictable empirical data pointing to emergent or “new” ideas of citizenship so vital to this research. In this sense, this variation between cases is an asset of this research because both cases are part of a rich media landscape claiming to enrich political engagement, foster deeper forms of membership and initiate citizenship. Consequently these cases also provide insight on how new media practitioners frame and talk about the connection between new media and citizenship. Despite the contrasts and differences between cases, interesting similarities have emerged that would not be apparent if the cases were more empirically balanced (e.g. the problem oriented character of each case, as discussed in chapter 5). While it is difficult to make comparisons across such different cases, the tiered case study approach makes any commonalities and/or differences especially notable.

In order to counter some of the difficulties associated with both the experimental nature of each case and the challenges of comparability, I developed the tiered case study approach. This kind of case study helps highlight the contrasting and like ways in which each new media project is organized and discursively constructed. As emphasized throughout this chapter, the tiered case study is a data-gathering heuristic rather than a methodology and, as such, the multiple methods used for each tier are explained below.

### **4.3. Constructing a Methodological Frame: Tiered Case Studies and Multiple Methods**

One of the significant challenges posed by this research is the somewhat ephemeral quality of citizenship. As discussed earlier, citizenship does not only exist in an “abstract” act of voting (Miller 1993: 56), but refers to a far more fluid set of relationships and experiences. This fluidity invites a number of potential methodological approaches depending on the research focus. For my research, the focus is on qualitatively<sup>41</sup> researching two new media projects that have the express aim of enriching the cultural fabric of citizenship. The object of study is ideas of citizenship and the ways in which technologies are used to inform such ideas.

Drawing from conventional methodological design principles (Yin 1994; Bauer and Aarts 2000; Yin 2004), I chose case studies because they provided an appropriate basis for structuring an understanding of ideas of citizenship. Multiple methods are necessary and, contingently, the data from each case is compiled from a number of different sources via multiple methods: namely, interviews, participant observation and documentary analysis. Multiple case studies are also often thought to be valuable because there tends to be more than one instance or process to substantiate findings (Yin 2004; Yin 1994;

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<sup>41</sup> Strauss and Corbin, well-known for their work on grounded theory, argue that qualitative methods are particularly useful when the research question addresses the intricacies of experience or “the details of phenomenon that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods” (1990: 19). Although quantitative work may be useful in the future, my project first calls for identifying and questioning TC on a small scale and detailed level – an aim that cannot be achieved using quantitative methods.

Gomm, Hammersley et al. 2000; Stake 2000a; Stake 2000b). Sharply divergent kinds of data and the rapid pace of change and development of each case complicate both data gathering and analysis. Tiered case studies, as discussed below, provide a solution to some of these complications.

## Tiered case studies: Data-gathering heuristics

With its own unique history, the case is a complex entity operating within a number of contexts – physical, economic, ethical, aesthetic, and so on. The case is singular, but it has subsections... *a concatenation of domains* – many so complex that at best they can only be sampled (my emphasis, Stake 2000a: 439-440).

I have exercised what C. Wright Mills refers to as the “sociological imagination” in developing tiered case studies as a flexible and innovative research design (Mills 1959; c.f. Roderick 2000).<sup>42</sup> In order to craft such a research design, or what I describe below as tiered case studies, I have employed multiple data-gathering techniques including interviews, participant observation, documentary analysis, and web or interface analysis.

Case studies also often involve a “concatenation of domains,” as Robert Stake claims above. I have proposed tiered case studies as a way to identify or map these multi-sited new media domains and organize the data gathering process. Stake also emphasizes that case studies are “not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be studied” (Stake 2000a: 435). Rather, the case study is an organizational strategy concerning what to analyze. However, because research design is so closely connected with methods, I explain the methods I have used as I explain each tier. Thus, the first thing this section does is elaborate upon and explain the concept of tiered case studies, followed by a

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<sup>42</sup> For example, Mills explains the sociological imagination as prompting social analysts “to grasp history and biography [among other social phenomena] and the relations between the two within society. That is its task and its promise” (1959: 3). Such innovation has long existed in social science and is an important ingredient in social science. For example Nicholas Jankowski and Martine van Selm discuss the role of innovation in the development of content analysis throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century (2005).

description not only of each tier but also of the methods used to gather data for each tier.<sup>43</sup>

Martin Bauer further supports this call for tiered case studies when he argues that units of analysis should be kept distinct to ensure that any variations are based upon the data rather than upon differences of genre or form (Bauer and Gaskell 2000a; Bauer and Gaskell 2000b; Bauer and Aarts 2000; Bauer 2005). Looking at technologically specific ideas of citizenship involves analyzing multiple and sometimes contradictory units of analysis (e.g. interviews, documents – ranging from official to informal, notes and contextual cues from participant observation etc.). Often, and emphasized by Bauer, different units of analysis present different findings. For example, official documents indicate a much clearer and articulated position on citizenship than any other unit of analysis (e.g. interviews or data presented on the technological platform). Bauer would argue that this is an important distinction that may compromise your findings if such differences of genre are not accounted for.<sup>44</sup>

The tiers organize data at the point of collection and as such, help establish an analytical frame. By this, I mean that the tiers organize like kinds of data with other like kinds of data, and help enforce boundaries around interview, observation based and textual kinds of data. Nonetheless, even within tiers there are important differences. For example, tier one contains different kinds of documents, with different purposes and different kinds of distribution, which

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<sup>43</sup> It is also important to emphasize that tiered case studies are distinct from “embedded case studies” and case studies focusing on organizations. According to Robert Yin (2004) and Martin Lipset et al (2004 [1956]), ‘embedded case studies’ involve multiple objects of study, characterized by a single unit of analysis and related ‘subunits’ of analysis (e.g. unit of analysis = an organization, while a subunit could include a “random sample of 434 employees”) (Lipset 2004 [1956]: 113). As such, embedded case studies also tend to employ both qualitative and quantitative data-gathering and analytic methods. Tiered case studies differ from this approach because although I have employed a number of methods, each tier consists of more than a subunit and also contains multiple methods. In this sense, tiers cover a broader range of phenomena (as outlined in table 4.1, tier 1, organizational background, includes interviews, documentary analysis and in the case of UT, participant observation).

<sup>44</sup> However, these distinctions are not always possible to maintain, particularly when there are important distinctions or even subtle contradictions across units of analysis (e.g. interviews and documents). A factor that emphasizes the importance of methodological flexibility and innovation are necessary components to empirically open up the richness of the relationship between technology and citizenship (c.f. “intrinsic” case studies Stake 2000: 437; Hammersley 2000: 609, Hammersley 2000: 142). I present an ‘open’ analysis of these tiers in chapter 4.

points to the well known difficulties of comparing unlike data. For example, the BBC is a large organization with a long and complex institutional history of fostering informed citizenship and cultural identity (dating back to 1927). This rich history cannot be compared to Proboscis because of the latter's small size and much shorter history (founded in 1994). Proboscis is a very different organization, with different aims, and enrolls a much smaller and more specialized audience with different objectives and responsibilities. Despite these differences, tiered case studies provide a frame that facilitates examination of structural and team based commonalities as well inherent differences. In these ways, the tiered case study approach is a useful empirical heuristic, as discussed below.

### Case tiers: Mapping new media projects

Despite the many differences in size, scale, purpose and technological platform, both cases exhibit similarly complex structural layers which can be broken into three primary domains or what I have called tiers. It is important to note that each tier loosely corresponds to a primary form of data, (theoretically) facilitating analysis of that data:

**Table 4.1: Overview of Case Study Tiers**

Tier	iCan Data	Urban Tapestries Data
<b>1) Organizational Context</b> (Documentary Analysis)	BBC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- official BBC, DCMS and Ofcom documents</li> <li>- 4 supplementary interviews with BBC employees</li> </ul>	Proboscis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- original project proposal and related materials</li> <li>- funding applications</li> <li>- Proboscis' general aims, and motivations</li> <li>- participant observation in team meetings and public events</li> </ul>
<b>2) Citizen / Subject</b> (Interviews)	iCan team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interviews with current and former team members, current iCan mentors</li> <li>- supplementary content analysis of campaigns and material posted on iCan</li> </ul>	UT team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interviews with current and former team members</li> <li>- data on users has been gathered via experimental ethnography (with Roger Silverstone), a public and field</li> </ul>

		trial conducted by Proboscis
<b>3) The Interface (Technological Platform)</b>	<p>iCan website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 8 months archive of the iCan website</li> <li>- thematic content analysis of site with special focus on structure, mentors campaigns and BBC guides</li> </ul>	<p>UT platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- thematic content analysis of pockets and threads</li> <li>- public trial, field trial and experimental ethnography threads and pockets</li> </ul>

These tiers are analytically useful for mapping and navigating the case terrain. However, in actuality, tiers are “messy” and overlapping and it is inaccurate to present them as discrete entities. However, for collecting data and creating a methodological strategy, such tiers have been useful. For a more comprehensive overview of the data presented here, see Appendix 4.1: Materials for Case Studies.

As Table 4.1 illustrates, there is a close connection between the case study tiers and the data I have gathered. This connection stems in part from the importance of mapping the contours of each new media project, and in part from the importance of analyzing similar kinds of data together (e.g. documents with documents, interviews with interviews, and interfaces with interfaces). It is worth noting that despite these differences, all textual material from each tier (e.g. documents, interviews, web or mobile content), was analyzed using Atlas.ti. Each tier is organized around the following themes and the following data-gathering methods: tier 1: organizational context and documentary analysis; tier 2: citizens / subjects and interviews; and tier 3: the interface and thematic content analysis.

#### ***Tier 1: Organizational context and documentary analysis***

Data from this tier has primarily been gathered from official and/or public documents that somehow promote, present, discuss or refer to citizenship, citizens, new media and each new media project. The aim here is twofold. First, it is important to ask what kinds of connections are being made outside of each case in terms of new media and citizenship. For example, how does the BBC construct its relationship to citizenship and how does this complex

institution present this relationship to the public? Second, and more specifically, what kinds of claims are being made about each case, both in terms of citizenship and in terms of each project's potential efficacy in enabling some kind of technologically mediated form of citizenship? Thus, with these aims in mind, I describe the data-gathering process for both cases below.

For the first case, I analyzed 23 BBC and DCMS public documents, many of which have been produced for or in relation to the BBC's upcoming charter renewal. In addition, I looked at promotional materials developed by the iCan team, press releases and blog postings by those interested in commenting on the BBC (particularly the launch of iCan) or those who were interested in new media and political engagement. Of particular interest in these documents was the discursive construction (and positioning) of citizenship and citizens, in relation to membership, rights and obligations, participatory strategies and new media. Following this, I examined how each project has been organized, justified and presented within these documents (e.g. the BBC's position on citizenship and new media and how iCan has been presented in terms of this relationship).

In addition to this analysis, I conducted four interviews with BBC employees outside of the iCan project and was a participant observer in relevant public seminars and events. Although not based on documents, this supplemental data has provided further clarification and insight into the BBC's organizational culture. The second case, UT, has been created and developed by a much smaller organization and as such, does not have a comparable organizational or institutional context. In order to both fund and develop UT, Proboscis generated numerous project and funding proposals. While these documents cannot compare to the quantity of BBC documents, they do provide important insights for assessing the ways in which Proboscis discursively constructs and situates ideas of citizenship and new technologies.

Further supplementing this documentary analysis, I conducted 8 months of participant observation as a member of the UT team, attended numerous public

events promoting UT and soliciting public feedback.<sup>45</sup> Although the data gained from the participant observation cannot be neatly allocated to a single tier, it has provided raw data greatly informing understanding of this and other tiers. Participant observation is particularly important for this case because unlike iCan, there are far fewer points of access to the UT team largely due to Proboscis' small size. Participant observation was valuable because this research provided an important – and otherwise inaccessible – vantage point. This vantage point facilitated an insider's view of the ways in which team members connect, relate and conceptualize new media to and with citizenship. In addition, I gathered news articles and textual materials promoting the organization's activities (2002-4).

The organizational contexts (the BBC and Proboscis respectively), are important for understanding the social and cultural scope of such initiatives, as are the kinds of public support invested in such initiatives. It is in this sense that I focused on "organizational contexts." However, the object of analysis is on the new media projects themselves, particularly the ways in which citizenship discourses are or become juxtaposed with new media, rather than the organizations. This means that this research is *not* about the BBC or Proboscis, but each case study is instead analyzed within a larger frame, even if those frames are remarkably different. Thus, although the parent organizations provide important contextual and material insights, they are not the primary focus for this research overall. Rather, the focus of this tier is on how such organizations discursively construct each project and that project's connection to citizenship.

#### ***Tier 2: Citizens / subjects and interviews***

This tier was loosely organized around producers (the iCan and UT teams) and users or consumers (selected from those that have used or participated in either project in any other capacity other than as a team member). As such,

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<sup>45</sup> Although space limitations preclude an examination of the many issues around participant observation – such as access, reliability, validity, 'going native' and the many debates around 'observer effects' – the following provide comprehensive and a thorough examination of these and related issues (Adler 1998; Cottle 1977; Jorgenson 1989).

this tier focused on “citizens” and *who* technologically mediated citizens might include (or exclude). More precisely, this tier targeted the ways in which participants talked about their role in the project, how that role was or was not connected to (or with) citizenship, and more generally, the position and role of “citizens” in relation to each project. In other words, drawing from interviews with team members and case participants, it was possible to examine the discursive practices of, about and for the “technological citizen.” As such, I outline the interview research beginning with iCan and followed by UT.

In 2002-2004, iCan producers consisted of a small team including: the project manager (Derek); three team leaders (Cara, product manager; Ryan, technical manager; and Helen, outreach team leader)<sup>46</sup> and “non-leader” team members from a variety of backgrounds ranging from technical design, editorial or journalistic training, politics and media industries. In contrast and as noted above, Proboscis, was (and continues to be) a much smaller, more flexible, artist led, cultural research organization. Proboscis organized and managed the UT team, and primarily focused on fostering cultural forms of engagement. The team was composed of a mix of artists, technology designers, academics and creative producers.<sup>47</sup> This contrast shows that iCan, in keeping with the BBC’s organizational structure is (or was) more hierarchically organized than UT.

Six of the iCan respondents were part of the iCan team during my fieldwork with producers in 2003-2004. I also interviewed two former team members who took part in the original brainstorming group (Simon and William) and conducted a follow-up interview with the last project leader, Bridget (2007). All of the UT respondents were part of the original UT team, although not all of them continued to work with Proboscis or the UT team for the completion of the UT

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<sup>46</sup> I made several unsuccessful attempts to interview two iCan team leaders who were responsible for organizing and running iCan road tours and user outreach teams (at the time of my fieldwork), in addition to attempt participating in one of the road tours in Guildford. However, potential interview dates were cancelled as was the Guildford road tour and alternative dates were cancelled at the last minute on several occasions.

<sup>47</sup> The two members of the UT team whom I was unable to interview (Stephen, UT’s technical manager, and Josephine, UT’s interactivity designer) were outside of the country during my research and were unavailable for online or telephone interviews.

project.<sup>48</sup> Additionally, the UT team grew to include 9 more members by 2005. All of the producer respondents are summarized in table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Respondents from producer teams**

iCan (primarily 2002-4)	Urban Tapestries (2003-4)
Bridget, Project manager (2006-2007)	Benjamin, Co-founder of Proboscis and UT director
Derek, Project manager (leader of team leaders, 2002-2006)	Christina, Co-founder of Proboscis and creative director
Ryan, Technical manager	Oliver, Information architect
Cara, Development producer / Product manager (team leader)	Brian, Interface designer
Russell, Editorial project leader (team leader)	Stephen, Network application designer
Melissa, Editorial team member	Denise, Cultural researcher
Theresa, Editorial team member	Josephine, Interaction and usability designer
Simon, Former web designer (and one of the original team members)	
William, Former team member	

For iCan, I interviewed 6 core team members, two former core iCan team members and interviewed three of the five iCan users featured on the site as “mentors.”<sup>49</sup> Launched on November 24<sup>th</sup> 2004, mentors were described as:

a new feature on the site to help users make more progress in addressing the issues they care about... We have five users who have agreed to become our first iCan mentors. They will answer questions you send them, write articles and share their experience of charity work, civil life and campaigning. You can contact any of our mentors, listed below, by private message if you'd like to get their help.

For UT, I interviewed 5 of the core team members and conducted 9 in-depth interviews with a diverse range of potential UT users.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Names have been withheld on this point on request of informants.

<sup>49</sup>, Although I personally contacted each mentor, it was only possible to arrange interviews with three of the respondents.

<sup>50</sup> Although the interviews with core team members were conducted independently, the interviews with potential UT users were conducted under the supervision of Roger Silverstone for collaborative research. The results of this work has been published as a Media@lse

As repeatedly noted throughout this thesis, the case studies are imbalanced in terms of user and team member research. While it might be preferable to select cases with a more balanced distribution of empirical data across tiers, I argue that this imbalance is justified. Both iCan and UT proved to be a popular case for numerous social scientists; which means that gaining access to respondents (particularly iCan users) was complicated, and it seemed more logical to conduct research that supplemented rather than repeated others' research.<sup>51</sup> As such, I chose to complement UT user research with discourse analysis of citizenship and iCan in 23 BBC documents generated around the charter renewal period (2003-7). Additionally, I conducted 4 interviews with other BBC employees (not working on iCan) in order to better understand the professional context, current projects and organizational culture of the BBC. Comparable interviews could not be conducted with other Proboscis members.

For an overview of respondents from the user population, see table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3: Respondents from the user populations (2003-5)**

iCan	Urban Tapestries
Helen, 50, female, PhD, IT support, single	Mandy, 30, female, university graduate, journalist, musician, single mother
	Stanley, 36, male, GCSEs, labourer, musician
	Jill, 28, female, university graduate, teacher / musician, single
Michael, 49, male, further vocational education, coach driver, married	Mark, 29, male, some college, staff nurse, in a relationship

electronic working paper at <http://www.lse.ac.uk.collections/media@lse/mediaWorkingPapers/ewpNumber7.htm>. This paper is a thorough analysis of the ways in which UT did or did not resonate with our respondents. In contrast to this research, I am proposing to analyze these interviews to detect how these respondents construct their relationship to new media.

<sup>51</sup> For example, I contacted 4 other iCan users but was unable to organize an interview or meeting (only three out of the five mentors agreed and/or were able to be interviewed, and two other randomly selected users were unable to complete an online or offline interview). Most notably, Stephen Coleman conducted user research in 2004 with Helen Marsh (parts of which are included below) so in consultation with my supervisors, the imbalance in case study research was considered acceptable. Lance Bennett (unpublished), Axel Bruns and Mark Deuze (2007), among others, have also conducted research with iCan producers and users.

	Justin, 43, male, some college, chief executive, unmarried partner
	Maria, 61, female, some college, public relations consultant
Aaron, 72, male, GCSEs or below, retired, married	Betty, 27, female, post-grad, freelance copywriter, unmarried partner
	Armand, 60, male, vocational college, reception / security, married
	Joe, 19, student / stock control, single
	Jason, 30-39, male, post-grad, software interface designer, unmarried partner
Focus group	Stewart, 30-39, male, post-grad, scientist, married
	Toby, 30-39, male, post-grad, researcher, married

These respondents came from a variety of socio-economic strata, cultural positionings and exercise a range of relationships to and with technologies. At the time of the individual interviews with a small sample of mentors, iCan users had been using iCan for over a year (early 2004 – mid 2005) and as such had different kinds of extended experience with the site, with the team and with the BBC. Indeed, “mentors” were like “ideal” users as they had been selected by the iCan team and were featured prominently on the iCan home page as helpers.

In contrast, the 9 UT users I interviewed individually had only used UT for one day (2003) and had very little or no interaction with Proboscis, related events or other team members. The UT focus group respondents used a later iteration of the UT platform for a month period (June – July 2004). I asked them to reflect on their experiences, among other considerations, in a focus group. Second, the 9 UT respondents were selected based on their differences in age, socio-economic strata, area of residence and occupation. These respondents raise stark contrasts not only in relation to each other, but specifically in relation to iCan users and UT focus group respondents.

Additionally, Proboscis conducted two field trials – the first with 100 respondents and the second with 11 respondents spanning a month – which provided an exceptionally rich source of original and unanalyzed data on UT “consumers.” While I did not conduct either of the field trials, I did contribute to the design of open-ended questionnaires that were administered to users on a weekly basis. These questionnaires more closely resemble semi-structured diaries rather than typical questionnaires.

The somewhat asymmetrical selection of respondents (as producers or as consumers) within and across cases is acceptable for a number of reasons. First, this research is not evaluating the efficacy of technologically mediated citizenship aims or discourses, and as such, the number of respondents does not have to be equally divided into producers and consumers. Second, given the differences in size and scale of both cases, it is not possible nor is it necessary to match the number of respondents across cases. Finally, the interviews with users and producers were intended to provide insight into an important dimension of each new media project as a messy object.

Because of the differences between cases and between respondents (new media producers and new media users or consumers), I developed four different semi-structured interview schedules, each of which targets case specific details around comparable themes. As illustrated in the interview schedule in Appendix 4.2, these themes include: basic demographic and contextual respondent information; respondent’s background and relationship with new media, the case in question and politics; and finally, the “key concepts” section drew upon theoretical work (asking questions about the commons, membership, democratization of culture, participation and the reconfiguration or emergence of “new” kinds of citizenship etc.). Each of these themes was then re-shaped to fit each case and respondents (e.g. as producers or as users). As I explain below, all respondents were given an informed consent form (see Appendix 3.3) that outlined the purpose of the research and following several ethical guidelines, detailed respondents’ rights

including their freedom to ask questions and to cease their participation at any time and for any reason.<sup>52</sup>

### ***Tier 3: The interfaces: Discursive and thematic content analysis***

The third tier focused on the technological interfaces used in each case. For example, this includes the content of the iCan web site in the first case, and the content of the mobile phone browser used for UT in the second case. Both are rich sources of data for understanding not only how users engage the project on conceptual and material levels, but also provides similar insights regarding the efficacy and realization of the ideas behind each project. In order to generate data for this tier, I employed complementary techniques designed specifically for each case. In essence, both interfaces are analyzed in terms of what kinds of content are presented, contained and developed for each case. Drawing from this basic map of each case, I apply analytical techniques developed from critical discourse analysis with an interpretative frame drawn from the themes extracted from the literature and theoretical frame (see chapter 2).

For iCan, I archived the iCan home page, campaigns, postings and site information on a bi-weekly basis over a period of 8 months (May – December 2004). This extensive archive includes campaigns developed by users and either campaign or issue based guides and other exemplary material developed by the iCan team.

Again the differences between cases, renders UT much more difficult to examine, particularly because unlike iCan, the platform content (either producer or user generated) is not available to the public and/or users. Instead, UT has been made available to specific groups of users at specific times; namely via creative labs, the public and field trials, and on a much smaller scale, during the individual user interviews. In this sense, although the interfaces are remarkably different, like iCan, the content presented on the UT interface has been

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<sup>52</sup> For example, some of these ethical guidelines include those approved and recommended by the Association of Internet Researchers (Ess 2002), London School of Economics (2005), the Association of Social Anthropologists (ASA 1999) and a number of other associations with clear ethical principles and guidelines.

developed by users and by some of the UT team. As such, analysis of the UT interface includes not only what kinds of information and material is contained within the interface, but also analysis of how respondents made sense of and responded to that content. Below, I explain the rationale for developing the tiered case study approach, followed by an exploration of some of the most prevalent potential methodological caveats.

#### ***Limitations and points of caution***

Although both cases are rich, innovative and exciting projects, the considerable differences between them do pose a number of challenges around issues of comparability and analysis. Unsurprisingly, these differences mean that each case produces not only distinct kinds of empirical materials (e.g. differences between documents, numbers of respondents, users and producers, etc.), but also produce distinct kinds of technologically specific behaviours (e.g. campaigning on the BBC web site versus posting location based stories).

Despite such differences, many methodological experts support collecting different kinds of data and relying on multiple sources of evidence because this range of data strengthens both the research and the findings. For example, Gross et al. argue that “the more that … case study research relies on different types of evidence that triangulate or converge on the same findings, the stronger it will be” (Gross, Giacquinta et al. 2004 [1971]: 100). In this sense, rather than a wide range of evidence becoming a methodological liability, such a range necessarily leads to more robust findings and conclusions because findings are applicable beyond one particular context.

Finally, in addition to the fact that both cases are subject to continuous and constant technological change, it is also important to emphasize that both projects are highly complex and “messy” objects. Both cases have several spheres of action in and outside of the site (web or mobile platform). Both iCan and UT were, at the time of this research, very young projects employing relatively unstable technologies and experimental ideas with unfamiliar groups. As an illustration of this, iCan was re-launched as the “Action Network” (July 1<sup>st</sup>,

2006) and UT became “Social Tapestries” in 2005.<sup>53</sup> Absences and imbalances inevitably appear. However, it is unrealistic and arguably impossible to create a totally comprehensive, perfectly balanced research project. Instead, I argue that the differences between cases provide rich empirical material and this richness is one of the strengths of the research presented here. The tiered case study is a flexible data-gathering heuristic capable of adapting to the “messiness” of each case, while also providing a foundation for assessing their commonalities and differences.

## **Ethical guidelines and informed consent**

Drawing from the ethical guidelines for social scientists as outlined by the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR), the American Sociological Association (ASA), and the London School of Economics, it is important to maintain “respect for people’s rights, dignity, and diversity.” In social science, such “respect” is generally translated as the researcher’s moral responsibility to fully and clearly inform human subjects of the aims of their research, the informant’s role in that research and the intended use of that research (c.f. Mann and Stewart 2000; Ess and AoIR 2002; Hewson, Yule et al. 2003; Hine 2000; Sharf 1999). Like many other researchers, I followed these ethical guidelines by verbally explaining the aims of the research and the interview procedures upon first contact with respondents. In addition to this, I also provided respondents with an “informed consent” letter outlining: the purpose of the research, the procedures used, potential risks and benefits of participating in the research, the right to ask questions and to withdraw participation without explanation and finally, an area for respondents to indicate their consent to participate in the research (see appendix 3.3 for an example from the iCan case).

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<sup>53</sup> Similarly, UT is also undergoing rapid changes. For example, the first phase of the project, UT, was completed in 2004 and the team has not only shifted members, but it is also currently in the second phase of development and is now called ‘Social Tapestries.’ See the UT web site for more details: [www.proboscis.uk.org](http://www.proboscis.uk.org).

Additionally, where relevant, social scientists are obligated to protect the identities of their respondents often by anonymizing informants' personal details (e.g. names, locations, occupational titles). However, as many debates about the implications of online research suggest, the meaning of confidentiality in an online setting is up for contestation. For example, when members of an online community contribute to an online forum, are their actions similar to those taken in a public where anyone can equally observe or eavesdrop? Or are they making contributions based upon shared assumptions that others share respect for the privacy of any content users might contribute? My solution to this dilemma was to ask participants what their preference was. Overall respondents did not express any extreme inclinations. Respondents tended to want their real names and identities used particularly where doing so might provide some acknowledgement of their real life work (e.g. on political issues for iCan and on new media and location research or interests for UT). However, the issue of confidentiality is unresolved and, as such the names of all respondents have been changed. While it has been a priority to treat all of my respondents with the utmost respect, I felt uncomfortable using some respondents' (e.g. mostly for producers) real names and pseudonyms for others (e.g. mostly for users). As a result, the names of all respondents have been changed.

In closing, I have proposed tiered case studies as an innovative approach for studying "messy" objects and pervasive ideas of technologically specific citizenship in two case studies. This methodology facilitates exploration of abstract ideas and provides an empirical heuristic for mapping new media projects. Finally, these cases are intended to complement the wealth of research on new technologies and citizenship (see chapters 2 and 3). Inevitably, there have also been a number of challenges around far more practical issues. The methods presented here arguably make a methodological contribution to new media research. Having outlined my methodological techniques and strategies, I now turn to the interpretative frame used to analyze the data.

#### **4.4. Analysis and Interpretation: Discourse Analysis and Thematic Dimensions**

The most appropriate analytical methods include discourse and thematic analysis, not just of the interview transcripts but also for a number of materials related to each project. Of the many potential analytical methods, discourse analysis<sup>54</sup> proved the most relevant for two reasons. First, discourse analysis enabled an understanding of the specifics of each of my case studies. Second, discourse analysis shares core theoretical positions regarding social action with my own theoretical position (social constructionism).

Rosalind Gill situates discourse analyses as being theoretically influenced by social constructionist perspectives and emphasizes that discourses are also “social practices” (2000: 173, 175). This is a critical aspect of the theoretical grounding influencing my methods and for the analysis presented throughout. Further, discourse analysis is probably one of the few methods suited to examine emergent characteristics or even the potential for such emergent characteristics related to technological ideas of citizenship. While there are many techniques, theoretical positions and approaches not only to what discourse might be, but also what discourse analysis (henceforth DA) should entail, it is not the purpose of this section to assess the value or strengths associated with these different approaches, rather, I will outline the strategies, tactics and techniques informing my own analytic framework.

Although many DA experts emphasize the enormity of the discourse field, there are three somewhat overlapping techniques in what can loosely be called “traditions” worth pointing out. These include: 1) critical discourse analysis (e.g. Fairclough 1995; Billig 1997; 2001: 17; Potter 1996; Wetherell 2001a; Van

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<sup>54</sup> Discourse analysis covers a great number of approaches to understanding not only language but also the processes of making and communicating meaning. These approaches and techniques have been categorized in an assortment of different ways (e.g. by type of discourse – conversation, narrative, semiotic and textual analysis; or by focus – social interaction, construction of culture and identity, c.f. Fairclough 1995: chapter 2; Wetherell 2001b: introduction). See Norman Fairclough's *Media Discourse* (1995: Chapter 2) or Margaret Wetherell et al.'s *Discourse Theory and Practice* (2001: Introduction) for two comprehensive overviews of the literature. Many authors have written further explorations of the roots, applications of and variations within discourse analysis (see for example, Martin 2003; Stokes 2003; Macdonald 2003; Boden 1994; Billig 1999; Mills 1997).

Dijk 1985 [1993]); 2) Foucauldian discourse analysis or regimes of knowledge / power (Hall 2001 [1997]; Foucault 1984 [1972]; Rabinow 1984; and 3) what can broadly be categorized as micro approaches such as ethnomethodological approaches, conversation analysis and a wide range of sharply contrasting techniques drawing from psychology and critical linguistics.<sup>55</sup> Although these broad categories provide a rough sketch of a diverse territory, it is the first category that most informs my empirical approach. Critical discourse analysis primarily emphasizes the social dimensions and interactional nature of discourse, with an emphasis on power that generally tends to be absent from many other DA techniques and strategies. Although power is inseparable from citizenship, I employ DA more than CDA so that the analytics of power emerge from the research rather than being presupposed in ideological or hegemonic assumptions about, for example, class or individualism.

My aim in this section is to first briefly introduce the field of DA and develop an interpretative frame combining the best analytical tools from critical DA and a breakdown of the key themes intrinsic to technological citizenship. In the next section, I will examine a synopsis of the core theoretical foundations supporting critical discourse analysis.

## Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis is based upon two theoretical premises central to the relationship between technology and citizenship; specifically social constructionism and “discourse as social practice.” Both of these share foundations with the theoretical framework developed in chapter 2. As such, DA is a remarkably appropriate analytical strategy. Bundled up in DA and its theoretical premises are two additional features worthy of explanation. These include the “embedded” nature of truth and the emphasis on the analysts’

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<sup>55</sup> It is problematic to group these together because of the vast differences in and across disciplines, techniques and focus. However, I suggest that what does unite these approaches are an extremely detailed and precise analysis of text and talk. Although both CDA and Foucauldian traditions also employ detailed analytic techniques, they tend to avoid the meticulous deconstruction of language and grammar found in pragmatics and conversation analysis.

political responsibility. Although both are significant, I prioritize the embedded nature of truth over the researcher's political responsibility (not because I want to avoid such responsibilities, but because for critical discourse theorists, such responsibilities are often bound up in ideological assumptions that are unhelpful here). I return to these premises subsequently.

The first of these shared premises is a social constructionist understanding. This is a vital position not only for making sense of the ways in which "new technologies" are framed as increasing participation, democratizing culture and for the emergence of "technological" discourses of citizenship; but also for understanding the ways in which such cultural shifts are framed in both iCan and UT. In this sense, discourse analysis supports an important assumption about the relationship between new technologies and society, social practices and how such practices inform (and are informed by) social understandings of them (c.f. Flick 2002: 201; Atton 2004: 66; Gill 2000: 173, 175). In other words, it would be grossly mistaken to take technology as a determining factor of or within social action. Instead, DA practitioners would pose a number of other intricate and interwoven factors like the confluence of social, political and economic contexts enabling a select range of potential social action – all of which could only come to be in terms of an equally complex range of structural factors.

This leads to the second premise, which posits that discourse is social action. For example, those who analyse discourse generally agree that discourse is not only text, talk or "language in use," but as Margaret Wetherell claims, discourse analysis is also the study of "meaning-making" and the "production of meaning in social life" (2001b: 3). The key here is that discourse, in any of its various forms or stages, is also a form of social action. Jonathon Potter defines discourse (particularly when compared to conversation and some kinds of textual analyses) as focused on "talk and texts as parts of social practices" (Potter 1996: 105; c.f. Couldry 2000a: 24). However, a number of discourse analysts go further situating discourse as constitutive not only of meaning but also of social relations and social practices (Wetherell 2001c; Billig 2001; Atton 2004; Fairclough 2001; Gill 2000; in terms of utterances see Billig 1997; Martin

and Rose 2003). In this sense, broad definitions of text and talk are both constituted by and constitutive of social practices. J. R. Martin and David Rose make this relationship clear when they state that discursive phenomena such as:

a *clause*, a *text*, or a *culture* are not 'things', but social processes that unfold at different time scales. Culture unfolds through uncountable series of situations, as our lives unfold through such situations as learners, speakers and actors, producing texts that unfold as sequences of meanings (2003: 1).

Michael Billig accentuates the blurred relationship between words and action when he states:

It might be thought that the discursive approach represents a turn from the study of behaviour to the study of talk. Discursive psychologists might be suspected of only taking words into account and not actions. However, that is not so, for the criticism assumes that in social behaviour there is a clear distinction between words and action . [...] It is easy to exaggerate the difference between words and actions, as if the latter were more 'real' than the former. In social life words are rarely 'mere words'. Many important social actions are performed through utterances.... If acts of discrimination are examined in detail, one can see that the distinction between words and actions soon collapses (2001: 215-216).<sup>56</sup>

Although I will soon consider the critiques and weaknesses associated with DA generally, it is important to note that discourse analysis critically challenges processes of "social construction" and meaning making, and as such, provide the most appropriate analytical frame for my empirical work.

Related to both of the above points is a third characteristic of CDA that many practitioners claim differentiates it from DA. This third characteristic is bundled up with the role of "truth" not only in research but as an "observable" phenomenon and is also about the political role of the discourse analyst. Both the social constructionist and "discourse as social action" perspectives provide a way of overcoming a fundamental problematic within social science

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<sup>56</sup> Nira Yuval-Davis offers an excellent example of this collapsed distinction in terms of gender, when she states: "Gender should be understood not as a 'real' social difference between men and women, but as a mode of discourse which relates to groups of subjects whose social roles are defined by their sexual/biological difference as opposed to their economic positions or their membership in ethnic and racial collectivities. Sexual differences should also be understood as a mode of discourse, one in which groups of social subjects are defined as having different sexual/biological constitutions. In other words, both 'gender' and 'sex' can be analysed as modes of discourse, but with different agendas" (Yuval-Davis 1997: 9).

concerning the nature of “objectivity,” “truth” and “reality.”<sup>57</sup> DA achieves this by concentrating on how respondents frame, represent and understand “truth” (or at least their own experiences of truth), rather than on essential notions of “truth” or “reality.” As Wetherell explains:

In discourse research, decisions about the truth and falsity of descriptions are typically suspended. Discourse analysts are much more interested in studying the process of construction itself, how ‘truths’ emerged, how social relations and identities are built and the consequences of these, than working out what ‘really happened’ (2001c: 16; c.f. Fairclough 1995).

For example, in his latest book on alternative media Chris Atton (2004) examines the discourses of the British National Party (BNP) beginning with the Party’s UK based web site. From this narrow and localized starting point, Atton focuses on an indicative rather than representative analysis of far-right discourses. Although Atton is interested in the ideological content and political claims employed by the BNP, it is actually the ways in which such ideologies are discursively constructed, represented and mobilized in support of the BNP’s political agenda that captures Atton’s full attention (2004: 73).<sup>58</sup> Ulrich Beck’s concept of “liquid ideologies” frames Atton’s many examples of how the BNP discursively constructs ideology. For example, the BNP’s use of terms like “equality,” ‘fairness’ and ‘rights’ demonstrate how “multiculturalist” discourses are co-opted and adopted in order to support ideological assumptions that “whites are now the victims” (Beck 2002 as cited in Atton 2004: 63).

In this sense, empirical qualities like “truth” and “reality” are embedded within social, cultural and political practices. For Atton, the accuracy of the BNP’s “truth” is less important than how the BNP positions its truth, makes claims and justifies its beliefs. The emphasis for discourse analysts is on “the process of construction itself” and the ways in which such empirical phenomena are

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<sup>57</sup> This highlights a central problematic within social science around objectivity, epistemology and generalizability. Potter cogently describes this dilemma in terms of the ‘mirror’ versus the ‘construction yard’ metaphor for the role of language. The mirror smoothly reflects the image of the world as it is, whereas in the construction yard, “descriptions construct the world or at least versions of the world” (Potter 1996: 97).

<sup>58</sup> Although Atton makes this clear throughout his discussion of discourse analysis in all of chapter 3, he makes it explicit when he states “Our interest is less in these policies and ... more in how these explicitly racist policies (which is what they are, despite the party’s denials) are being presented on the BNP’s site and how the party actively constructs its cultural identity” (2004: 73).

socially and discursively embedded. However, although this perspective arguably provides a viable alternative to the limitations of positivism and empiricism, it also opens up a tension between “truth” and the political, moral and ethical responsibilities of the researcher.

Fairclough rightly reminds us that the legitimacy and validity of ideological assumptions cannot be avoided. Fairclough highlights assumptions supporting discrimination (i.e. men are more intelligent than women, Caucasians are more intelligent than other ethnicities etc.) both as an example of “false ideological presuppositions” and in order to highlight the role of researchers in challenging systems of power and ideology (1995). Teun Van Dijk (2001 [1993]: 300) fully supports this and also positions the discourse analysts’ responsibility to “challenge dominance” and the reproduction of power, hierarchies and unequal access to resources. This is indeed a fundamental and central aspect differentiating CDA from DA generally.<sup>59</sup>

It is these qualities – the social constructionist foundation, acceptance of discourse as social action, the embeddedness of “truth” and the focus on power – that render discourse analysis a highly relevant interpretive frame for making sense of the messy, overlapping, emergent and at times normalized relationship between new technologies and citizenship, a relationship that has considerable implications for the exercise of democracy, power and politics.

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<sup>59</sup> However, Foucault would argue that ‘ideological assumptions’ are historically and culturally rooted and it is wildly inaccurate to transpose such categories across temporal periods (e.g. homosexuality and madness as historically and culturally constructed subject positions, deeply embedded within institutional structures and the exercise of power) (Foucault 1984 [1972], 1979, 1986). Although I argue that Fairclough and Van Dijk’s call to challenge power and dominance is worthy and important, it does raise some methodological issues. First, how can a researcher looking for access to a closed case study or group, where such political honesty may risk not only access but also important respondent relationships, position themselv/es in terms of these challenges? Second, although challenging dominant ideologies is certainly important and arguably valuable work, are such challenges enough? What about being accountable to implementing such challenges? Lastly, what about one’s own ideological position(s)? How is it possible to bracket your own beliefs so that the relationships between researcher and researched, between methods and findings are also not blindingly eclipsed by the search for (or exercise of) ideology? For some, this question undeniably compromises the researchers capacity to conduct research as their own values, beliefs and aims interfere with the research tasks at hand (c.f. Schegloff 1997 as cited in Wetherell 2001: 385). I will not purport to resolve this issue here, but this is an important issue worth returning to in a following chapter.

Although DA is by far the most important methodological base for my interpretative frame, there are a number of techniques for deconstructing discourse that must be juxtaposed and integrated as discussed below.

### ***Composing the interpretive frame***

It is important to unpack the themes emerging from technological citizenship discourses not only in terms of how these themes are conceptualized, but also based on what kinds of practices emerge and are valued by those involved. Thus, the aim of this section is to introduce a robust interpretative frame that can be applied across very different kinds of discourses within very different cases.<sup>60</sup>

The discursive frame has been primarily inspired by Norman Fairclough, Jonathon Potter and Teun Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis. This frame consists of what may be considered a kind of critical coding frame outlining essential interpretive techniques and analytic tactics. In contrast, the thematic dimensions presented shortly in figure 3.1 are largely inspired from the literature and emerge from what technologically mediated citizenship discourses position as key citizenship components.<sup>61</sup>

### ***Discursive dimensions***

Fairclough (1995) has done a great deal of work establishing a comprehensive frame for understanding discourse. He argues that there are two parallel and mutually constitutive concepts vital for implementing this frame: namely, the

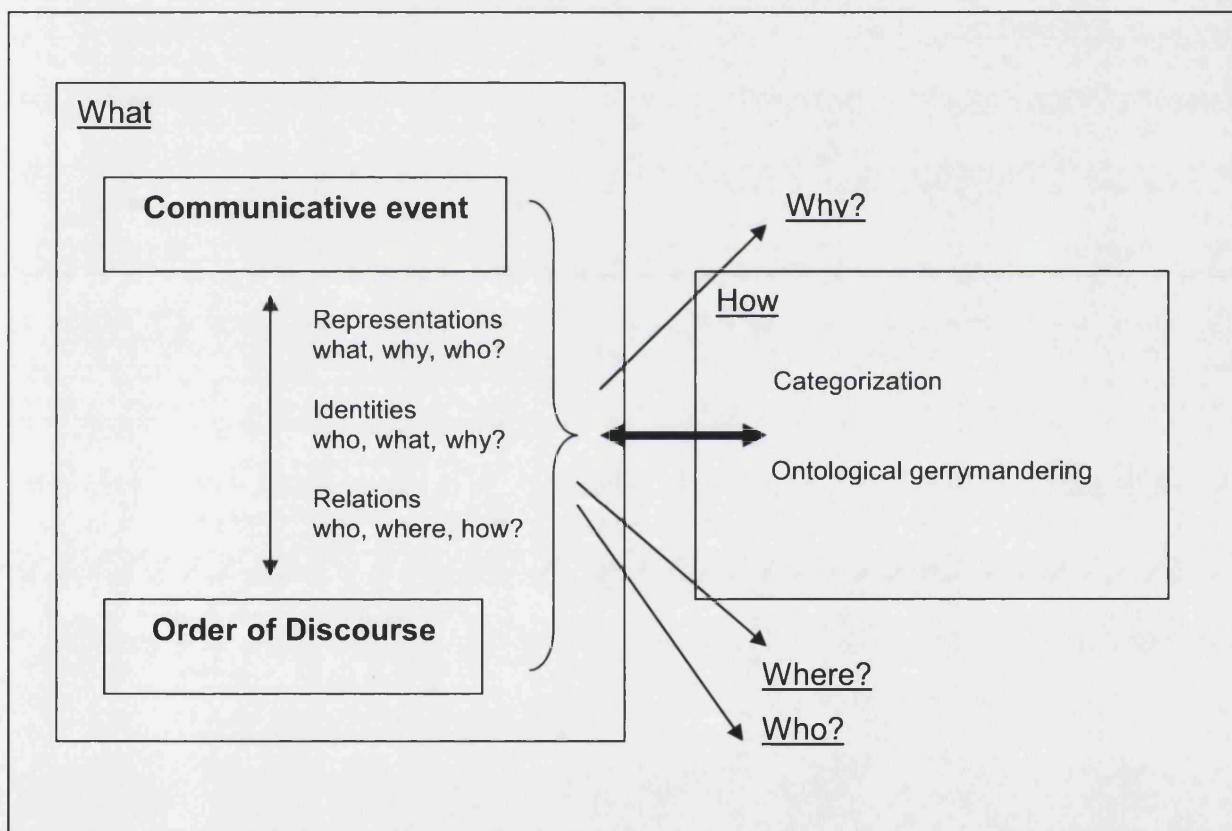
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<sup>60</sup> However, it is important to clarify that 'robust' does not mean a closed frame. The first reading of the interviews and discursive materials is indicative, facilitating 'open coding' or an inductive level, where the data suggests codes and/or themes. In support of this kind of approach, Rosalind Gill argues "in the initial stages it [coding] should be done as inclusively as possible, so that all borderline instances can be counted in rather than out" (2000: 199).

<sup>61</sup> Thus, the thematic dimensions provide a common frame for mapping not only what the empirical data contains, but also the connections (or conflicts) between the content across and within case studies, and my theoretical frame. The discursive frame compliments the thematic frame and although there may be some overlap, is intended to take the analysis further, identifying concealed issues or phenomena and systematically applying accepted analytic techniques to the data. Although these are presented as distinct in the following section, it is important to note this is primarily an analytical separation. For my analysis, I have embedded the discursive frame within the thematic dimensions.

tension between “communicative events” and “the order of discourse” within which are a triad of categories including 1) representation; 2) identities; and 3) relationships. In order to address how such discourses instantiate these dimensions, I turn to Jonathan Potter’s concepts of categorization and ontological gerrymandering. Figure 4.1 (below) illustrates a very simple schema for understanding these dimensions. Although I explain what each of these dimensions mean in the remainder of this section, it is important to note that this scheme has been simplified for clarity.

**Figure 4.1: Discursive Framework**



Fairclough’s frame maps discourses, identifying what is happening and the kinds of action performed and/or represented by the relevant discourse. The three categories (representations, identities and relations) are very useful for bridging what discursive action is occurring with the how, why and where questions. Further, Potter’s two discursive strategies, “categorization” and “ontological gerrymandering” are particularly useful for addressing how discourse and social action are or can be connected. Thus, in combination,

these parallel and interstitial concepts provide the basis for the organization of the interpretive frame and facilitate the application of critical discourse analysis.

For Fairclough, the “order of discourse” refers primarily to the “general, the overall structure... and the way it is evolving in the context of social and cultural changes” (1995: 56). In contrast, the “communicative event” is the analysis of the particular, specific discursive instance (e.g. an interview transcript or a web site page) and the particularities of the categorical triad (specific representations, specific identities, and specific relationships). Although this is a broad distinction, it is an important one.

Although primarily interested in what Fairclough calls “the order of discourse” Billig offers an insightful way of bridging the specificities of the discursive instant with the broader ideological connotations:

Individuals, when they speak, do not create their own language, but they use terms which are culturally, historically and ideologically available. Each act of utterance, although in itself novel, carries an ideological history... social psychologists, by investigating acts of utterance, should be studying ideology. An ideology comprises the ways of thinking and behaving within a given society which make the ways of that society seem ‘natural’ or unquestioned to its members (Eagleton 1991). In this way, ideology is the common-sense of society (Billig 2001: 217).

Billig elaborates that attitudinal position is not the focus of this kind of analysis. Rather, it is important to identify “how the themes of ideology are instantiated in ordinary talk,” particularly in terms of “how speakers are part of, and are continuing the ideological history of the discursive themes which they are using” (2001: 218; c.f. Billig 1997; Fairclough 1995: 12; Couldry 2000b particularly section 3 of part 1).<sup>62</sup> In order to identify the juxtaposition of ideology and ordinary talk, Billig directs our attention to “small words which seem beyond rhetorical challenge and which are routinely and widely repeated” (2001: 225).<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Fairclough provides specific directions suggesting that discourse analysts must ask a series of question in order to show ideology in action. These include “(a) what are the social origins of this option? where and who does it come from (whose representation is it, for instance?) (b) what motivations are there for making this choice? (c) what is the effect of this choice, including its effects (positive or negative) upon the various interests of those involved” (1995: 15).

<sup>63</sup> In *The Place of Media Power*, Nick Couldry takes this technique further, arguing that respondents use of banal words like ‘just’ and ‘actually’ not only emphasize the distinction

As an example, Billig points to the banal cues, such as the flag, in discursively reproducing nationalism. Billig's work highlights the strong and overlapping connection between the overall discursive "order" and specific discursive instances.

Despite this overlap, Fairclough offers a number of distinctive interpretive tools for identifying "the order of discourse," namely focusing on tense (past, present, future); grammatical tone (declarative, interrogative, passive, active); and language and genre (e.g. dramatic fiction, realist documentary, popular science, conversationalization, marketization, nominalization, shifting grammatical tenses, factionalism etc., Fairclough 1995: 11-14). Although these features are rarely "pure" or employed singularly, the point is to unpack "cultural power and hegemony" (1995: 67). Recognizing how genre, for example, is discursively employed reveals processes of legitimation, dominant relationships and expectations about the audience / reader / subject. For example, conversationalization, commonly understood as "ordinary" discursive modes appealing to ordinary people (e.g. use of simple language, and casual words like "mate," "fancy" etc.), at least according to Fairclough indicates a number of social possibilities. Although sceptical, Fairclough suggests that conversationalization could "manifest a real shift in power relations in favour of ordinary people" or it could indicate an increasingly sophisticated marketing system, which successfully commodifies audiences and "ordinary" people (1995: 13).

Like the macro / micro distinction, "communicative events" and the "order of discourse" are critical for identifying not only the level of analysis, but also for situating discourse within its broader social and cultural contexts. However, Fairclough would argue that the next step involves systematically analysing the key features contained within both particular instances and general frames of discourse.

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between media and ordinary worlds, but also significantly contribute to the reproduction of boundaries around and between such worlds (Couldry 2000: Chapter 6, 180).

In order to make this next step, Fairclough has provided three sets of questions which are crucial for understanding the relationship between discourse and social action. Fairclough himself eloquently introduces this frame and the difficulty in keeping each separate:

Representations, relations and identities are *always simultaneously at work in a text*: the ideational functioning of language is its function in generating representations of the world; the interpersonal function includes the functioning of language in the constitution of relations, and of identities.... The value of such a view of texts is that it makes it easier to connect the analysis of language with fundamental concerns of social analysis: questions of knowledge, belief and ideology (representations – the ideational function), questions of social relationships and power, and questions of identity (emphasis added, 1995: 17).

Representations, identities and relations come with critical questions that are intended to dismantle not only discourse, but also the *workings* of that text. In other words, Fairclough provides a number of tools to analyse and begin understanding how representations, relations and identities constitute social action in and through discursive practices.

In order to even begin answering this question, Fairclough (1995: 5, 202-205) poses the following sets of questions:

- Representations (also corresponds to the ideological components associated with the “order of discourse”): “how is the world represented?”;
- Identities: “what identities are set up... ([e.g.] reporters, audiences, “third parties” referred to...)”? As a further example, Fairclough looks at the vocabulary choices used to represent people (e.g. women in terms of domestic role (women, wives) or in terms of “sexual interest to men” Fairclough 1995: 27); and
- Relationships: “what relationships are set up between those involved (e.g. reporter-audience, expert-audience,” peer-to-peer, etc.) and “how are they constructed”?

Based on the few examples I have provided, there is clearly overlap between categories. Nonetheless, these categories are important because they provide both a common frame for diverse data and also a way of uniformly applying that

frame. Ultimately, I used these three dimensions as a nested coding frame within the thematic dimensions I introduce in the section below. As such, these dimensions provide a basis for mapping key features of discourse. However, although these dimensions provide an organizational frame for this research, it is important to question *how* any of these key features connect to social action. In order to do answer this question, Potter introduces a paired set of concepts: categorization and “ontological gerrymandering.” These are helpful concepts for unpacking discursive practices and understanding how representations “perform social actions” (Potter 1996:199).<sup>64</sup>

Potter discusses the importance of “categorization” in discourse, particularly because “it is through categorization that the specific sense of something is *constituted*” (emphasis in original 1996: 177). Drawing from other scholars in the field, Potter notes some of the implications that can emerge from categorization, particularly what has been termed “ontological gerrymandering” (Potter 1996: 184). This rather awkward term specifically refers to the ways boundaries are constructed around what is important and what is not important, effectively highlighting specific elements and “backgrounding or minimising” others (1985: 216 as cited in Potter 1996: 184). For example, those responsible for coining this phrase, Woolgar and Pawluch, argue:

By means of ontological gerrymandering, proponents of definitional explanations place a boundary between assumptions which are to be understood as (ostensibly) problematic and those which are not (1985: 216 as cited in Potter 1996: 184).

Thus, the categorization process is an important addition that contributes to understanding discursive action within Fairclough’s frame and discourse analysis generally. Ultimately, Fairclough and Potter provide a basis for establishing an interrogative structure to identify and analyse respondents’ discursive practices, in addition to providing insight into ways in which TC is or can be constructed, experienced and/or practiced.

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<sup>64</sup> In addition to categorization, Potter also introduces two other paired discursive tactics used to strengthen arguments and emphasize what is important for discursive actors: extrematization and minimization; and normalization and abnormalization. Although these are relevant, they will be addressed if and when any specific instances arise (1996: 187-199).

The spectrum between communicative event and order of discourse grounds discourse in terms of function and analytical level. Again following Fairclough, I have suggested that interrogating discursive materials in terms of what is represented, what kinds of identities are constructed and what relationships emerge opens up the ways discourses *work* – meaning at both the performative and communicative levels. Finally, turning to Potter's concepts of categorization and ontological gerrymandering, it is possible to identify *how* discourse instantiates social action (and vice versa). In closing, I have mapped the key CDA concepts and analytical tools informing the interpretive frame for this research. In the next section, I outline the relevant thematic dimensions drawn from chapters 2 and 3.

## Thematic dimensions

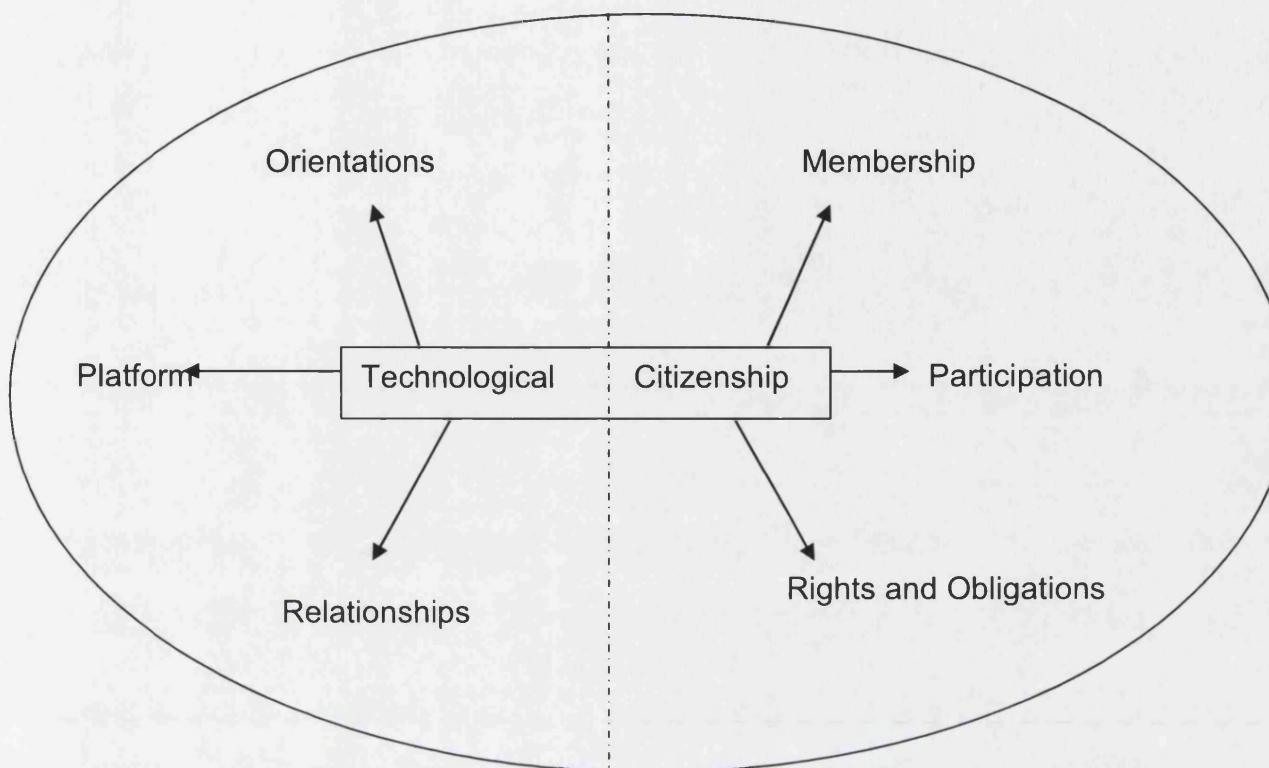
As explained in the conceptual framework, the preliminary literature review and theoretical framework generate a number of thematic categories comprising TC. Broadly, these include the dimensions associated with the “technological”: technical, social and potential; and those dimensions associated with citizenship: territory, membership (who are the citizens / subjects and how are they related to each other), and rights and obligations. These thematic dimensions provide a way of mapping the contours of discourses within each case study, while also offering a frame for vastly divergent discursive content, actors and actions.<sup>65</sup> Figure 3.2 provides a visual schema (see following page) of the thematic dimensions followed by brief descriptions below.<sup>66</sup> I explain the characteristics of these dimensions sequentially, beginning with the “technological” and followed by those relevant to “citizenship.”

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<sup>65</sup> For example, the discourses within the iCan case study include the developers (interviews, the online materials they have produced for the website, on the website); the participants / users (interviews, online campaigns, other website materials); the discourses on the website itself; and finally, the contextual discourses within the BBC's public and policy documents. Similarly, the UT case study includes developer's talk and text (within meetings, public events, e-mail lists, public documents and website materials); users' / participants' discourses (on UT itself, about UT in interviews, the public and field trial); and in publicly available materials about UT. The last area of research includes communication rights advocates public and private discourses.

<sup>66</sup> This diagram is intended to provide a schematic overview of the themes emerging from the literature review and theoretical framework. It is likely that as my research and analysis progress, this schema will also change and develop.

Figure 4.2: Thematic Dimensions of Technology and Citizenship



#### ***“Technological” dimensions***

Loosely corresponding with the “what” question, the “technological” part of the interpretive frame examines, in a very general way, the kinds of technologies used in each case. More specifically, the relevant issues here include what kinds of relationships respondents have with the technologies they use, the ways in which such technologies are framed, represented and the kinds of expectations and assumptions respondents attach to these technologies. In other words, both the framing and the social practices emanating from the use of new technologies are of particular interest.

As figure 4.2 depicts, there are three broad categories within the technological. The first of the three categories (and the one of least importance for this project) includes the “platform” or technical aspects of the technologies used for each case. The kinds of things relevant in this category are the technical

specifications, details of software programs, and hardware used.<sup>67</sup> This is not to say that these things are not important, rather, I am more interested by the ways in which respondents frame and respond to such technicalities. For example, the details and technical specifications of the Wi-Fi mesh networks used for the UT prototype and the technical architecture developed for the iCan web site are distracting from the real focus. As such, this aspect of the “technical” dimension is secondary for this research. However, I am interested in the kinds of content hosted by each platform, and the ways that respondents discursively position themselves in relationship to the platform within each case.

The second dimension within the “technological” dimension is the “relationships” (or social dimension) and this is absolutely central for addressing the connection between technologies and citizenship. As briefly addressed above, this dimension opens the “black box” frequently concealing “technology.” For example, Raymond Williams, among many others, argues that technology, specifically television, is composed of:

complex financial institutions, of cultural expectations and of specific technical developments, which though it can be seen, superficially, as the effect of a technology is in fact a social complex of a new and central kind (Williams 2003 [1974]: 25).

It is unpacking the coalescence of such complexes in, around or via technology that emphasize the importance of this dimension. The important questions here ask: What are the core assumptions and ideological underpinnings? What are the existing and emerging material practices? What role does technology play, either figuratively or practically, in each project and for participants? How are such assumptions, expectations and practices enacted or engaged through, around and within new technologies?

The “orientations” dimension invites respondents to speculate about their everyday technologies and as such, organizes the third dimension of the technological. In many ways, this dimension is an integral part of the above

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<sup>67</sup> Additionally, as I will discuss in a later section, the creative commons is an ‘open’ licensing agreement that some would argue is central not only within the proprietary vs. open source software debates; but also in terms of the social implications associated with contingent material practices.

dimension particularly as respondents' aims, hopes, objectives and expectations reveal quite a bit about this ideological position. Additionally, this is a critical dimension for identifying "emergent" or "new" technological mediated and discursive characteristics. In other words, by "orientations" I am referring to the expectations respondents hold about new media, particularly whether such expectations are personally, individually, collectively or more broadly oriented. For example, what kinds of things do respondents believe that new media can provide, facilitate or introduce? In terms of discourse analysis, how do they frame this potential in terms of citizenship, and in terms of their hopes and aims for each respective project?

Unpacking the "technological" in this way provides a robust frame for thinking through the interstices between multiple dimensions of technology, social systems and the exercise of power. These "socio-technical" interstices are important not only for understanding emerging materialities and discourses of specific technologies, but also situates such discourses in terms of existing and emerging cultural shifts (e.g. such as the "second modernity," Lash 2003; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2001).

### ***"Citizenship" dimensions***

Also corresponding generally with the "what" question posed by Fairclough above, the second series of dimensions question *who* members are (citizens / subjects), *what* socio-legal (rights and obligations) conditions exist within both cases and *how* these things come together in or through participation. Building upon the social constructionist perspective, the ways in which these dimensions are discursively constructed by and for participants is also opened up for questioning (see chapter 2 for an overview of these thematic dimensions).

These thematic dimensions are presented largely in an indicative sense, as a way of opening up a series of questions central to challenging the relationship and assumed connections between technology and citizenship. Although the discursive framework provides the first analytical layer of the interpretive frame, the thematic dimensions outlined here offer an additional interpretative frame

more readily allowing for emergent findings and looser, more open analytical tools. In combination with the discursive framework, which is nested within the thematic dimensions, I hope to have developed a rigorous analytical framework, applicable within and across divergent cases.

## 4.5. Conclusion

Drawing upon tiered case studies, multiple data-gathering methods and an interpretative frame incorporating discourse and thematic analysis, I believe I have developed the necessary tools to answer the questions presented here. Additionally, these methods also help determine important questions that need to be asked (see chapter 8). It is these kinds of questions that will help challenge what Anthony Wilhelm refers to as the powerful “totalizing discourses” associated with new technologies, discourses that unequivocally conflate the use and emergence of new media with the deepening of citizenship and democratization of culture (Wilhelm 2000: chapters 3 and 4).

In this chapter I have aimed to accomplish three things. These include presenting a critical understanding not only of empirical methods generally but also the capacity to design an effective research project I have outlined the tiered case study as both a data gathering heuristic and as an organizational model for framing two highly differentiated new media citizenship initiatives. Like many methodological conventions, the tiered case study relies on multiple methods, namely: participant observation, documentary analysis, interviews, discourse and thematic analysis of each case's interface content (the iCan site or UT platform). This kind of methodological triangulation contributes to the robustness both of the data and contingently, of my findings.

I have also outlined the central analytical techniques used to make sense of new media and ideas of citizenship. This has been a demanding task. As such, discourse and thematic analysis are particularly useful for analysis precisely because they take the messy concatenation of everyday life as a starting point. Rather than focusing on what the realities and conditions of

what technologically mediated citizenship; discourse analysis focuses on how respondents portray, conceptualize and ultimately construct *their understanding* of such ideas of citizenship. Similarly, DA builds upon a social constructionist foundation, a foundation that is central to the theoretical positioning of this research. Such a perspective necessarily posits that technologically specific ideas of citizenship are not fixed or finalized; rather such ideas are continually unfolding, “becoming” and emerging (see also chapter 2).

# Chapter 5. Dual Systems of Membership and Patterns of Participation

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## 5.1. Making Sense of Membership

... and I just think it's just really good because obviously it's an entirely public site, *anyone* can be there (Melissa, iCan editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).

Power is articulated through the dynamics of membership, not only in the formal expression of belonging but also in the sometimes indirect consequences of inclusion or exclusion. Melissa suggests above that “*anyone*” can participate in or become a member of iCan. This chapter questions membership processes in two new media projects, and as such, also questions the articulations of power in these cases. While respondents are clearly members of the new media platforms within each case, the relevance of this kind of membership to citizenship is unclear. I argue that as citizenship initiatives, each case offers insight into the membership dynamics taking place in emerging domains of cultural citizenship. These dynamics show marked differences in patterns of participation and power relations between project producers and users,

suggesting that there are limitations on *who* can really participate as full members.

In this chapter, I focus on understanding how respondents identify themselves in relation to each other and to each case. Both cases reveal numerous tensions around individualized and collective patterns of interaction; and, there are more commonalities between users or producers across cases than there are differences. The empirical analysis shows that dual systems of membership influence very different patterns of participation. One system is formal and the other is informal. Membership in *both* systems is critical for enabling deeper forms of participation and actualizing cultural rights. The dual system helps make sense of apparent cleavages between producers and users and helps explain differences between respondents. Producers are formally *and* informally members, and as such, their patterns of participation are citizenship oriented rather than the individualized patterns taken up by most users. I argue that this significant finding contradicts the user oriented structure of each case. Instead, producers are more likely to engage new technologies, like those within each case, to enable cultural rights and meaningful participation.

The empirical evidence supporting this argument is presented in 4 sections. Building upon the previous chapter (section 4.3), the first introduces the respondents: producers, iCan users and UT users. The second section analyzes how producers construct users, as “ordinary people,” as “targeted audiences” or as “imagined users.” The third compares producers and users based on three broad and overlapping themes: identifications, orientations, and cultural capital. The fourth section outlines how dual systems of membership help make sense of the differences between users and producers in both cases.

## 5.2. Introducing Respondents

... we were dealing with emerging things like hand-held computers and mobile phone technologies [for] which ... there's been a lot of hype for a number of years but the technology wasn't there, [and ideas] were often from science fiction ... but frankly it's not ... it's still not quite here now (Benjamin, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 08/03/2005).

I still think that it's not big enough yet, it's not good enough yet .... What I like about the way we've grown iCan is that we started, we've gradually emerged. We've not gone 'Boom! Here's iCan! Everyone start working with it,' because it would be a disaster then because you've got *teething problems*. You have to work through your teething troubles; gradually growing it, *it's a slow burn, long process thing* (Russell, iCan Editorial project leader, interview, 16/03/2004).

Benjamin and Russell emphasize that their projects focus on emerging technologies, both were innovative projects, and both changed dramatically during fieldwork. Although the focus on emergent technological practices was an important criterion in the selection of each case, these cases, more so than others, were not static or fixed. Unsurprisingly, both cases wrestled with substantial "teething problems" due to high levels of flux and experimentation. To answer questions of "who members include" and "how membership is constructed" in each case, I present thematic snapshots of the people involved in these projects. These questions help unpack some of the emergent properties bundled up in the technological intersections between membership, these case studies, and ideas of citizenship.

Respondents only rarely used the term "members" to describe themselves or others in relation to either case. When the term was used, it was often in a very general sense. For example, some common usages were as a "member of the public" or "member of a community," and on occasion as "team members" or as "members of the site" (sometimes applied to users by producers). Thus membership can mean a number of things. I argue the most meaningful explanation is that membership in both cases has become invisible or naturalized. The omission of "membership" is surprising, particularly as the use of new technologies is meant to open up membership doors to "anyone."

Like the variability of citizenship terms discussed in chapter 3, there were no fixed or consistent terms used for naming respondents. Respondents referred to themselves in multiple ways: as designers, as journalists, as artists, as

researchers, as users, as audiences and/or as participants. Although I mostly refer to respondents as producers or as users, I employ these terms loosely. This is not a study about the boundaries between producers and consumers, although such boundaries inevitably arise. This chapter is not about identities or systems of production and consumption, but it *is* about members, how they are positioned, how membership is constructed within each case and why this is significant.<sup>68</sup>

Although respondents are introduced more thoroughly in chapter 4, I begin the analysis of *who* members include by looking at case “teams” or “producers” before turning to “users.”<sup>69</sup> Evidence for the thematic analysis comes from interviews, promotional materials, participant observation and the content – generated by users and producers – of each project.

## **Producers, designers, mediators and “teams”**

Michael Billig emphasizes the importance of “small words” like *team*, “which seem beyond rhetorical challenge and which are routinely and widely repeated” (2001: 225). As Billig suggests, the use of the word *team*<sup>70</sup> is also significant because *team* represents a self assembled unit working together on common interests and goals rather than a hierarchical work unit where objectives and purposes are set from the top down. The word *team* thus obscures power relations while tying members – who are “all playing on the same side” – together *against* other teams. Despite the level playing field implied through organizational “teams,” both producer teams use job titles or suffixes (i.e.

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<sup>68</sup> This research also does not involve audience, evaluative or user research *per se*.

<sup>69</sup> Producers were sampled almost in entirety for both cases, excluding 2 members of the UT team and those in iCan’s Outreach team. Users were sampled differently for each case and this is discussed in the section on users and outlined in chapter 4. Although there are challenges with using the “producer/user” paradigm, one of the key advantages is that issues of power, ownership, class and control remain at the forefront. I do not use the terms “producer” and “user” in order to refer to the production and consumption model particularly because such relationships are rich and often contradictory, and participants interact with technologically mediated landscapes as co-producers, as consumers, as paid professionals and/or as dedicated volunteers.

<sup>70</sup> The dictionary definition of “team” is: 1. a number of persons forming one of the sides in a game or contest: a football team; 2. a number of persons associated in some joint action: a team of advisers (2007).

“leader” or “director”) that show the continued existence of hierarchical structures.

Producers tended to identify themselves as part of a mostly unified group, especially in contrast to users who did not identify with other users. Both iCan and UT producers made strong personal connections to goals promoting civic action or cultural engagement. As such, producers were “publicly-oriented” prioritizing shared “public interests” in political and community circles and in their projects. Producers also exhibited a high degree of cultural capital and expertise, and in many ways, were highly technologically literate and culturally elite. Despite such privileges, producers still had to negotiate complex territories often marked by instability, competition and, at times, conflict.

## **Users, participants, subjects and audiences**

As discussed in chapter 4, there are important qualitative differences between users in each case. In order to capture this diversity, I begin with an overview of users according to each case, followed by an analysis of how producers in each case construct and position users. After establishing core themes, I examine the similarities and differences within and across groups of producers and users based on the three themes identified in the introduction (identifications, orientations and cultural capital).

### ***iCan / Action Network***

During the 2004 pilot phase, iCan started with “4,615 registered users in January [and grew to] 9,847 in September” (Coleman and Marsh 2004: 4). According to iCan’s former project manager, iCan’s user base was still growing in 2007, getting “a million page impressions a month” (Bridget, formerly iCan and Action Network project manager, interview, 18/09/2007).

Surprisingly, and according to iCan’s project manager and the BBC Audience Council, there is very little specific data on the demographics of iCan users

(personal communication with Bridget and BBC Audience Council, 13/12/2007). Stephen Coleman and Helen Marsh conducted the first year evaluation of iCan at the end of 2004 and this research explores 43 iCan users' experiences with the site.<sup>71</sup> Coleman and Marsh conducted their research with "self-selected" respondents; although this means their research is not representative, it is informative. Similarly, my research involved in depth interviews with 3 of the 5 featured "mentors" on the iCan site, supplemented by analysis of the campaigns and articles these users produced online. As discussed in chapter 4, mentors were users selected by the iCan team (from November 2004). Mentors "help users make more progress addressing the issues they care about" and had agreed to "answer questions ... and share experience of their charity work, civil life and campaigning" (iCan site, November 25th, 2004, URL no longer active). Because mentors were selected by the iCan team, these respondents provide insights into what might be considered "ideal" user experiences.

In their evaluative research Coleman and Marsh claim that: "the socio-demographic profile of the [iCan] interviewees suggests that they are fairly typical BBC online users" (2004: 6). So who is the "typical BBC online user"? Ofcom offers the following description in the 2007 International Communications Market report:

Women aged 25-34 spend over 20% more time online than their male counterparts. 'Silver surfers' also account for an increasing amount of internet use with nearly 30% of total time spent on the internet accounted for by over-50s (Ofcom 2007: 8).

However, Ofcom also reports that over 65s and households from the lowest parts of the socio-economic strata still have the lowest personal computer ownership in the UK, as only 32% of over 65s and 47% of low income families own personal computers (Ofcom 2006b: 17). BBC Online's "overall audience

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<sup>71</sup> Based on conversations with Stephen Coleman about iCan, I was informed that he would likely continue to do yearly evaluative research on iCan, generating analysis of useful demographic data. Additionally, producers posed numerous questions about users, deferring any possibility of answering such questions until much later on in the project's development. I took both the conversations with Coleman and iCan producers to mean that such research was either in process or would be developed in the future. These assumptions greatly influenced my research design and empirical work with iCan users, and partially justify the very small sample of iCan mentors.

... [is] closely representative of the internet population as a whole in the UK" (KPMG research cited in BBC 2003 :17). In 2006, the BBC's audience included 16 million users and was the fifth largest unique audience in the UK (Ofcom 2006: 25), suggesting that if each of iCan's million page impressions a month is a unique user, iCan attracts at most 6.25% of the BBC's online audience.<sup>72</sup>

Coleman and Marsh report that of their 43 respondents, 67% were male, compared to 33% who were female, and the majority of these users were between the ages of 21 and 60 (79%), while 14% were over 61 and 7% were "under 21" (Coleman and Marsh 2004: 6). The demographic profile of the mentors I interviewed reflected this qualitative snapshot. Only one of the five mentors was female: Helen, 50 years old, post-graduate, single. The youngest mentor, Michael was a 49 year old, married coach driver and the oldest, Aaron, was a retired 72 year old with "GCSEs or below." While this age distribution fits Coleman and Marsh's finding that the majority of respondents are indeed between 21 and 60, the comparison also suggests that iCan attracts an older audience. The last project manager confirmed this by noting that "we have many pensioners on our site who are very active users" (project manager, personal communication, 13/12/2007). This brief profile shows that iCan users tend to be mostly male and mostly in an older age bracket (35+), a finding that contrasts with the BBC's goal to reach younger audiences.

### ***Urban Tapestries / Social Tapestries***

In contrast to the BBC, UT users were much fewer in number. For example, while there were 123 users (individuals and public trial participants), this number excludes some of the less easily identifiable users such as team members' informal acquaintances, colleagues, partners, bodystorming (explained further shortly) and creative lab participants. There are marked tensions particularly between users who were recruited by the UT team and those who were selected through snowball sampling for individual interviews. In order to introduce these users, I present four snapshots of UT user or

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<sup>72</sup> Ofcom also reports that in 2006, 64% of all UK households have internet access, up from 45% of all UK households in 2002 (Ofcom 2006:18).

“participant” groups: peers, individual users, public trial participants and bodystormers. These snapshots are important because each of these groups were significant for the UT team (although not all of these user groups are included in the analysis, see section 5.4).

### *Snapshot 1: Peers*

A significant part of Proboscis’ collaborative, multi-disciplinary and “people centred design” approach involved hosting public events often with professional and creative “peers.” These events offered a forum for the exchange of ideas and a chance to experiment with the team’s working concepts. Proboscis organized five UT public events ranging in focus, numbers of participants and in content.<sup>73</sup> In the first of these, called a “creative lab,” the aims of the event were defined as a:

... 2 day platform for creative innovation [which] seeks to bring together artists, social scientists, technologists, policy makers, the public sector and business to stimulate cross-sector partnerships and collaborations which innovate the development of public authoring in the emerging wireless landscape (UT Creative Lab overview and documentation, 21/04/2003).

Thus, the lab aimed to facilitate a “Peer2Peer” network in order to generate knowledge and exchange research. Although defined as “participants,” the Proboscis team framed the approximately 75 people who attended in significant ways as “users.” Along with other public event participants, creative lab participants contributed to important outcomes for the UT team (such as generating research ideas, providing test subjects and experimenting with concepts).

### *Snapshot 2: Individual users*

The first group of “users” (9) were recruited using snowball sampling from neighbourhood associations, team networks and local connections for experimental ethnographic research (conducted with Roger Silverstone).<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Although there were often mixed methods and topics, these events included two “Creative Labs” in May 2003 and September 2994 and three Bodystorming events in June and August 2003 and April 2004.

<sup>74</sup> While some of the empirical data has been shared between the research conducted with Roger Silverstone and this project, the focus of my analysis is different from our focus during the ethnographic research. As such, very little of the same empirical data appears in both

Respondents were selected based on a principle of difference. People were recruited from a wide range of socio-economic strata and with contrasting relationships to the host neighbourhood, Bloomsbury. For example, respondents were between the ages of 19 and 61, with annual incomes ranging between £0 - 9 999 to £50 - 70 000. Each had remarkably different relationships with media technologies. Four of these respondents were "neighbours" or Bloomsbury residents, 2 commuted to Bloomsbury for work from a London suburb, and 3 were "strangers" to the neighbourhood. As the UT prototype was a location based platform, the relationship to place was an important factor. The variation in socio-economic strata, cultural capital and contrasting relationships with technologies (e.g. from novice to advanced) provided an interesting qualitative picture of users.

### *Snapshot 3: Public trial participants*

The largest group of users included the public trial participants and was composed of two separate groups who used different iterations of the UT prototype in different ways and at different times. The first group (101) participated in a public trial held in December 2004. This group was asked to experiment with the prototype for a half day period, before returning to report back on their experiences in a blog and in a short video (filmed by Christina, Proboscis Co-director). Although no demographic data was collected for the first trial, at least 13 of these participants also attended the first UT Creative Lab, collaborated with or came to collaborate with the UT team. The second group (11) participated in a 4 week field trial in June 2004. The majority of trial respondents broadly shared interests with the UT team in or around issues relating to new technologies, location, mapping, space and/or place. Like Creative Lab and "peer" participants, public trial users came from mostly professional, academic, art or design backgrounds, and all had graduate or post-graduate levels of education and they ranged in age from 18-25 to 40-49. In these ways, creative lab and trial participants were "invited users." The grounds for invitation were based on an unarticulated principle of similarity (to

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research projects. The experimental ethnography has been published as a Media@lse electronic working paper:  
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/media@lse/mediaWorkingPapers/ewpNumber7.htm>  
(Silverstone and Sujon 2005).

and with producers). I held a focus group with three of these field trial participants (Jason, Stewart and Toby).

#### *Snapshot 4: Bodystorming*

Finally, the UT team also employed a promotional, research and design technique called bodystorming, which Christina describes as a method originally intended to “physically prototype” objects and design strategies (Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 08/03/2005). Proboscis and the UT team developed and implemented many variations of bodystorming techniques for different audiences.<sup>75</sup> Two bodystorming events with an intergenerational memories group at the Marchmont Community Centre were important and often cited during research and development. One of the reasons these events had such an impact was because they helped define possible users and uses:

... the first time we did it with people who had no involvement whatsoever in research, in technology, in the arts, these were *just very ordinary people* just doing something in a *really ordinary situation* (Christina, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 08/03/2005).

The Marchmont bodystorming events provide insights on users as very different from peers and the team. Users are positioned as *ordinary people* who have no involvement in *research, technology or the arts* (discussed further in the following section). Instead, ordinary people here are marked by their differences *from producers*. “Ordinary people” in the Marchmont bodystorming specifically refer to:

... a group of senior citizens (women from a mainly white working class background) and a group of teenagers (mainly from the local Bangladeshi immigrant community) [bringing] together the differing experiences of people from distinct linguistic, ethnic, cultural, religious, economic and even political backgrounds (Lane, Thelwall et al. 2006: 31).

These snapshots present very different selections of users and indicate the wide range of UT “users.” The UT team used the research process as a central part of the conceptual and technological development of the UT platform,

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<sup>75</sup> I was a participant observer in five of the six bodystorming events held in: team meetings (UT team meeting 4, 21/03/2003), in creative labs (02/05/2003) and in other public or UT partner events (Hewlett Packard Labs, 06/2003; LSE 08/2003 and 04/2004).

marking a very different approach characterized by “imagining” users rather than iCan’s approach of “targeting” audiences.

### 5.3. Positioning “Users” and Enrolling Members

The examination of how producers frame and envision users also shows who producers wanted to include, revealing some of their assumptions about the technology and how these assumptions are bundled up in each project. One of the themes both cases share is the orientation towards “ordinary” people on local levels. Each project defined ordinary people in different ways and employed very different strategies for engaging them as users. For example, iCan focused on a problem oriented (lack of political engagement) “target audience,” whereas UT was more positively oriented, focusing on creative and playful orientations with “imagined” users. Yet, as Benjamin reveals below, UT was also problem oriented. As such, both projects are positioned as solving the problems of cultural or political disengagement.

#### Ordinary people and local levels

And in some respects iCan is introducing the element of the *blog ethos and technology as well*, in the way that the campaign page is effectively brought by blog. But really what we’re saying is that, it’s starting to move outside of that blog universe, *we’re trying to move it outside of that for ordinary, everyday people* (Russell, iCan Editorial team manager, interview, 16/03/2004, emphasis added).

And Urban Tapestries seemed a perfect way to do that [flatten the media hierarchy] because it’s honouring the everyday and everyday life. It’s saying *normal people* have something to say. *Normal people* are in the city too. *Normal people* live here (Oliver, UT information architect, interview, 09/08/2004, emphasis added).

The above quotations feature a thematic prioritization and celebration of the “ordinary,” “normal” or “everyday” person, apparent in interviews and also in promotional materials.<sup>76</sup> On the surface, this is a “universal” ordinary,

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<sup>76</sup> There are numerous ways to make sense of “ordinary.” See for example, Couldry 2000; Thumim, 2007; Williams 2002 [1958]. Nick Couldry provides some interesting insights on how ordinary people position themselves within (and are positioned through) the media frame, particularly regarding the symbolic hierarchy of media producers (within media frame) and

applicable to *anyone from anywhere*, as Melissa infers in the opening quotation for this chapter. I argue that producers refer to “ordinary” with specific connotations and these connotations shape particular kinds of subjects as users.

Interviews suggest that “ordinary” people were positioned as *outside* of research, design, arts and/or blogging communities (e.g. Christina’s description above). As such, “ordinary” refers to those people who are *not* part of everyday technological practices, such as blogging, technological design or media production – user generated or otherwise. In the context of media producers, defining ordinary people as *non-media producers* is significant. Nick Couldry has written about this distinction in terms of proximity to *and* the reproduction of symbolic power (Couldry 2000, especially chapter 3).

By marking distinctions between “ordinary” users and producers, producers implicitly position themselves near the top of a media hierarchy, locating themselves outside of their respective projects and the frames of action within those projects. Building on Couldry’s argument, producers’ absence from the frame of action signifies a naturalization of symbolic power, actively constructing and maintaining the boundaries between “media” and “ordinary” spheres of action. This also points to something of a paradox. For example, Oliver (above) best articulates one of the meaningful implications when he refers to UT as “honouring the everyday” in part because “*people have something to say.*” In this sense, producers are actively working towards destabilizing such hierarchies while opening up access to media resources for “ordinary” people. Yet in the celebration of “ordinary” people, the hierarchy is in some ways rearticulated and reconstructed. Despite this, both teams position themselves as working against such political hierarchies and mediated boundaries.

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ordinary people (outside of the media frame). However, my interest here is to unpack the ways in which respondents frame “ordinary,” so I concentrate on the themes presented in the fieldwork. Nancy Thumim offers a different view when she builds upon Raymond Williams’ (1983) discussion of ordinary, arguing that there are four discursive frames for “ordinary” people including: denigration, celebration, everyday, and citizenry (Thumim 2007: 45-48).

Finally, there are spatial implications associated with the framing of ordinary users. For example, both projects focus on the local, and the local is often used as a synonym or euphemism for the “everyday,” the “ordinary” and the “normal”:

I think it [UT] can have a really major impact because it will enable people in very proximate situations, you know in *small* communities, *in small localities*, to be able to, kind of annotate the things that are important to them and communicate them *but without communicating all of the problems of such a hierarchy, or [of] different religions or different colours, all that kind of stuff* (Benjamin, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 17/04/2004).

... they [users] didn't know how to engage and they didn't understand the terms of which they needed to engage.... A lot of Putnam studies in the US are relevant in the UK setting and the main thing about social capital, being that people are *less likely to know their neighbours* or talk to people or engage in various activities on a *local level*.... people feel less connected to their immediate community and so are more likely to be less motivated around the issues that they care about (Ryan, iCan Technical manager, interview, 26/03/2004).

What is interesting about these quotations is that both Benjamin and Ryan identify problems (social hierarchies and the lack of social capital) that manifest themselves in local environments. Of course, each offers different solutions. For example, Benjamin points to the issue of hierarchy. UT does not subvert, challenge or even change those hierarchies, but instead offers pathways around them, while also reaffirming *their* positions within the hierarchy. UT thus enables people from “small localities” to identify and articulate what is important to them and contingently avoid problems of difference and inequalities. The other connotation is that by juxtaposing broader social problems, such problems become personalized rather than identifiable as structural or systemic.

Ryan also identifies the issue of social capital.<sup>77</sup> For Ryan, iCan addresses fundamental disconnections between neighbours and between ordinary people and, as such, contributes to the development of interpersonal connections within neighbourhoods. Ryan is specifically referring to a particular kind of

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<sup>77</sup> iCan team members explicitly draw from a lot of work on social capital, particularly its decline and the rise of political apathy (Putnam 2000; Boggs 2002; Aldridge, Halpern et al. 2002; and especially the “Beyond the Soundbite” mentioned earlier and another BBC commissioned research, Brookes 2004). In this sense, the iCan team is optimistic (although far more understated than the UT team) about new media’s potential for building social capital and contingently, the quality and depth of the civic realm. However, it is important to re-emphasize (as noted earlier) that this optimism is not utopic or without restraints.

bottom-up filtering process. In this process, users build social capital by becoming more connected to and within their local communities, simultaneously and implicitly making the transition from “ordinary” to “engaged.”

In a practical sense, both producer teams are tackling very difficult problems with very small steps. Although the sample of users is very small, it is interesting to note that only 3 out of 15 individual respondents identify in any way as an “ordinary” or “average” person during interviews. Although both cases share a similar positioning of users as ordinary people, they diverge in the reasons why such terms are employed.

Cases also differ when it comes to the kinds of strategies used to define potential and ideal users. For example, the iCan team aimed to target specific kinds of ordinary people with particular experiences of political engagement; whereas the UT team engaged a far more open conceptualization of users, hoping that users themselves would define the uses of and applications for the UT platform. Despite these differences, both cases focus (in contrasting ways) on ordinary people and I turn to this contrast in the following sections on “target audiences” and “imagined users.”

## Target audiences

Before iCan’s beta phase (2004), Simon identified “first timers”<sup>78</sup> and single political issue “sympathizers”<sup>79</sup> as iCan’s target audience (former iCan web designer in a presentation on iCan and “Social Software” at an iSociety seminar, 08/11/2002; c.f. other interviews and BBC documents, e.g. BBC 2004c: 63). Original team members all referred to particular BBC commissioned research on political disillusionment and apathy as a significant inspiration for and justification of iCan’s development (BBC 2002). This was an important contextual document as it was repeatedly used to legitimate the

<sup>78</sup> By this term, Simon was referring to those people who had either never been previously politically active or had never used new media to pursue their offline goals.

<sup>79</sup> Here, Simon was talking about those who may have had political leanings or concerns but for whatever reasons (likely to include things like lack of confidence, lack of knowledge, confusion and unfamiliarity with formal political systems) had yet to act upon these leanings.

target audience Simon referred to above. This audience was positioned as politically disillusioned which contingently implied that iCan attempted to provide a technological solution to the larger social problem of political disengagement, apathy and disinterest. In this sense, iCan was negatively oriented, aiming to protect vulnerable or disinterested people from the alienating forces of formal or "Westminster" politics. "First timers" and "sympathizers" are positioned as especially vulnerable to political apathy and thus are strong candidates for participating in a site that focuses on facilitating re-engagement with politics, especially if the terms of engagement reflect *their* lives and interests (as long as they adhered to the BBC's objectives and rules).<sup>80</sup>

Simon later identified iCan's target audience slightly differently, suggesting that iCan provided a "good way of connecting *mumblers*" (former iCan web designer and one of the original founders, interview, 06/06/2004). Although Simon described political "mumblers" with some humour, he was also referring to a consistent framing of users as occupying a particular subjective position defined by inherent personal characteristics and incoherent (literally) political perspectives. In this way, "mumblers," first-timers and sympathizers are situated as vulnerable audiences.

Contributing to their subjective positioning of users, producers often referred to users as requiring "help" (Cara, iCan Development producer / Product manager, interview, 17/03/2004) or as producers "just giving" users the tools they need to become active, politically engaged citizens (Melissa, iCan editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004). The implications here are multiple. I focus on how the use of this language highlights tensions between persuasive participatory strategies and the (re)distribution of symbolic power.

The first implication is that ordinary people or "mumblers" are not necessarily incapable of "doing things" (as Russell describes below), but they are

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<sup>80</sup> For example, the report suggests that "salient topics abound many of which are inextricably linked to local and central government. Yet they [respondents] perceived a lack of 'channels' through which to express their views. There was no means of formalising or institutionalising their displeasure and concerns, and therefore no means of connecting to the lexicon of politics" (BBC 2002: 16).

positioned as requiring support, persuasion and even cajoling; this theme is also prevalent in the interviews with UT producers. Such persuasive strategies stand out as manipulative and contrast both teams' attempts to validate local knowledge and everyday experiences.<sup>81</sup> Further, as the metaphor of "mumbler" illustrates, users have been positioned as inarticulate, requiring professional or technological intervention to become coherent.

However, targeting "inferior" or "vulnerable" audiences is not the only explanation. The second implication or reading here draws from Couldry's discussion of the contrast between media and ordinary worlds which more accurately reflects the producers' aims and project objectives. Here, providing "help" or "just giving" refers to a redistribution of symbolic resources where producers are "giving" users access to symbolic power.

Yet tensions also exist as the re-distribution of symbolic power is not only oriented towards users; it is also aimed towards organizations and producers. For example, when asked about what she defines as "success" in her work, Theresa articulates that the other rationale for developing iCan is about generating content and news for the BBC:

I guess, in terms of my daily work, your success is in *getting... [in] making as many connections between iCan and BBC News online*, for example, as possible.... So I guess that's one way, how much you manage to represent iCan [in news] (Theresa, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 31/03/2004).

This tension between re-distributing symbolic power not only to users, but also to producers, as Russell illustrates below, is discursively reconstructed in the contrast between "getting" people and "connecting" people.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> For example, Oliver, like other UT producer informants, says "what can we (UT team) do to give them [users] tools to annotate their lives? (Information architect, Urban Tapestries, interview, 09/08/2004).

<sup>82</sup> Russell also notes that the internet is a "youthful medium," in line with current BBC development strategies and suggesting that the BBC had a young audience in mind when developing the iCan project. However, although this has not been reflected in other interviews, it is clearly stated in an often cited BBC commissioned research paper by TRBI, who focused their research on political disillusionment in the 16-44 age bracket (BBC 2002: 3). Additionally, the BBC has claimed that it is developing future strategies for building younger audiences (BBC 2004a: 16).

... because it's a new medium - a more youthful medium - it might actually, as Derek said, *get people who aren't currently doing things, to do things*. There might actually be a small amount of evidence on iCan that that is happening, but we have a lot of people on iCan who are currently already doing other things anyhow and it seems like it's just another medium for them. And what we're going to need to do is really look at *whether we connect people who have never done this sort of thing before* (Russell, iCan Editorial project leader, interview, 16/03/2004).

The tension here is twofold, in that the word "get" refers to "2. *tr.* fetch, obtain, procure, purchase" and "5. *intr. & tr.* reach or cause to reach a certain state or condition; become or cause to become" (1998: 340).<sup>83</sup> It is in both of these senses that Russell, like other producers, refer to target audiences.

In the first instance, where "get" means to "fetch" or "obtain," the circulation of symbolic power is not merely from producers to users. Producers are also *getting* content, stories, information and data about users in exchange for access to media tools; a theme that is also reflected in the UT fieldwork:

... it's about *getting their stories* and trying to get at the relationships they have to ideas of community and ideas of place (Benjamin, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 17/04/2004).

Although not mentioned here or in other UT interviews, the importance of generating interesting content (largely for enriching the platform and enrolling other users) has often been referred to by team members in team meetings and other public events. This use of "getting their stories" points to some of the difficulties producers face in securing users and the increasing competition over audiences and for consumers' attention. The importance of "getting audiences" is especially powerful for iCan. Indeed iCan is also meant to generate "radio, television and online news" from audience members or from the "bottom-up" (a term that also reinforces the media hierarchy Couldry identifies; Bridget, iCan Project manager, interview, 18/09/2007).<sup>84</sup> In this sense, both cases publicly

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<sup>83</sup> The meanings of "get" occupy almost a full page of the Oxford Dictionary and covers 19 separate entries for the word alone, ranging from "1. come into possession of" to "19. *tr.* establish (an idea etc.) in one's mind" and also includes another half page of conjunctions between "get" and other words such as "get along" or "get away" (1998: 340-341).

<sup>84</sup> This point is emphasized further when both members of the editorial team mention that they "get a cut from a [news] link to their stories." In other words, they are more likely to get promoted and be viewed as successful by the BBC when they filter iCan campaigns through to

claim to open up the distribution of symbolic power, but they also maintain producers' role as gate keepers, reaffirming control of such power. The other explanation is that producers are acting as gate keepers who protect valuable public and "ordinary" resources from commercial exploitation and obscurity.

However, the second sense of "get" refers to instilling a transformative process for users or "causing [users] to become" active, engaged or political. While discussing some of the constraints within the BBC and alternative site names, Bridget clearly articulates these aims:

I guess, there was always, again, the BBC was always so careful about things – 'yes we want people to get engaged but we don't want to be telling them to get campaigning'! So we always had 'iCan' and 'Action Network' and all these rather soft names. It would've been great to just have like 'Get Campaigning' or 'Get Political' or 'Get Involved' in a really strong way, but that was never going to happen (Bridget, iCan Project leader, interview, 18/09/2007).

Here, Bridget has invoked the target audience identified by Ryan in the beginning of this section, and she subjectively positions users as those who are not campaigning, political or involved. In some ways, this contrasts with what Russell refers to as "connecting people" (above). "Getting" people to engage or become political refers to a process of transformation, not only of people's behaviours but also of the people themselves; from "ordinary" to "extraordinary" in a sense.

"Connecting" people, on the other hand, is in many ways a more democratic, less hierarchical framing, through which users determine what they might want to transform and producers are positioned as facilitators rather than as manipulators. However, there are tensions around the connotations of "connecting," particularly when the issue of connecting *to what* is raised. For example, iCan's aim to generate news or UT's goal of "getting stories" suggest that "connecting" is not just about facilitating the growth of social capital for users. Instead, "connecting" is also largely about establishing audiences and connecting audiences to each media organization. In this sense, "connections"

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news (Theresa and Melissa, editorial team members, interviews, 31/03/2004 and 30/03/2004, respectively).

are made through mediated pathways that are guarded and controlled by producers, a point I reflect upon further in chapters 7 and 8.

Yet, there is another interpretation of “connecting” people, and that concerns the ways in which iCan producers connect with iCan users. Bridget marks the evolution of user strategies from “target audiences” to “user engagement”, highlighting the importance user / producer relationships:

And I would say that's very true [that team members are passionate and committed to political empowerment]. I think it will be very different with the new site because it won't have that engagement that we had with people. *We are engaged with the users of our site. We talk to the people on our site. We help the people on our site. So we are engaged in that* (Bridget, iCan project manager, interview, 18/09/2007).

Keeping in mind that the interview with Bridget took place three years after the other iCan team interviews, this is a very plausible development. In this way, iCan also employed a kind of “people” centred design strategy, similar to that of UT producers which is discussed below.

## Imagined users

Although there are commonalities between iCan and UT producers, the UT team was far more open in terms of positioning users. The team spent considerable thought, time and creativity “imagining” multiple variations of *who* potential users might include.<sup>85</sup> UT producers thought of users as important parts of the research and development process, often deferring to “imagined” users. The team referred to this approach as “people centred design.” Users were often discussed, debated and conceptualized in multiple ways during team meetings, repeatedly raising tensions between individual users and user groups. For example, even at the very first meeting, UT team members imagined users would be part of the general public, with special emphases on

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<sup>85</sup> This openness was partially due to the fact that the UT team was designing the UT platform during my fieldwork and thus was initially unsure of how the platform could be used, never mind who exactly might use it. This uncertainty has changed with current iteration of UT, Social Tapestries, where numerous ongoing projects with specific groups (e.g. schools, housing estates, civil society, gaming etc.) are currently in process.

youth clubs, kids, existing PDA or mobile users, blind or deaf people, tourists and role-playing gamers (UT team meeting 1, Proboscis studio, 07/02/2003).

During that same initial project meeting, Benjamin and Oliver suggested that museums, conference or festival organizers might also be interested in using UT to communicate between groups. Three months later, Brian introduced the notion of “gestural interfaces” leading to discussions of UT as “groupware” facilitating the exchange of public knowledge in “meta-communities” (UT team meeting 6, Proboscis studio, 11/04/2003). Stemming from this discussion, Benjamin proposed that UT could serve as “two way billboards” to be used primarily by work oriented groups like the police or neighbourhood developers wishing to communicate with residents (or vice versa). This is also an interesting framing of users, as most of the groups the team was conceptualizing were professionally oriented; whereas individual users tended to be grouped around common interests (i.e. gaming) or loose connections to others in similar socio-demographic groups. In this sense, *groupware* and *collective* uses of UT largely follow the former positioning as they tend to focus on work cultures – a theme I return to in chapters 7 and 8.

There is a clear tension around individually or collectively oriented users; and there are also contradictory articulations of how users might engage these frames. For example, one of the most influential research experiences for the UT team’s conception of users involved bodystorming (introduced in section 5.2). This event was conducted by Christina and Rachel and was intended to generate content with a new group. Christina and Rachel provided a “low-tech mock-up” consisting of a large table map, post-it notes, guided storytelling and hands on interaction. The UT team members described the UT platform and asked the group to create and share stories of their experiences of the Bloomsbury area. Christina later describes this experience as:

We made a map from tables and it was fantastic because everybody sat round the table so [unclear] the way it worked, a lot of them didn’t have their reading glasses with them so people had to write each other’s stories for them, so *it was much more interactive* [than other bodystorming events]... because they [worked together] to create [their own urban tapestry of

Bloomsbury]... (Christina, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 08/03/2005).

Thus, as the UT project and team developed, conceptions of users as only engaging in individualized patterns of behaviour continued to trouble the team, as it had since 2002. The Marchmont bodystorming event in 2005 radically shifted this frame to include conceptualizations of more social and group kinds of interactions. This transition is significant for several reasons. First, it illustrates that conceptualizations of users were neither static nor straightforward. Despite thoughtful consideration, conceptualizations of users were often much more difficult to implement than to discuss or plan. Second, this event, above all other public events, demonstrated a very successful application of “people centred design.” And finally, this event clearly shows one of the major commonalities between iCan and UT, while also pointing to yet another distinction.

iCan is clearly positioned as a solution oriented site in both public documents and in interviews with producers, and although this may appear to be a point of difference (as the UT case does not employ this kind of discourse); it turns out to be an interesting point of commonality. During an interview, Benjamin described UT as providing very different solutions to a similar kind of social problem:

... I don't think most people like to be bored and I think it's one of the big problems of our society in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was that the majority of people were bored. *And I think boredom leads to horrendous things, people, people's, you know, they're not inspired in their daily life and they start subscribing to banal political movements* and other such things that, you know, push envelopes that aren't necessarily very nice.... So, for instance, I think it [UT] will ... encourage people's curiosity and the more that people are curious I think the better. The more that we are curious to engage with the unknown, even if we are a little bit apprehensive or a little bit fearful that, the more that we are prepared to be curious and engage with diversity and difference, I think that is socially beneficial (Benjamin, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 17/04/2004).

This is a significant commonality with the iCan case. Benjamin describes UT as developing a technological platform to mediate connectivity and engagement, like iCan. Yet, team members in each case conceptualize the “problem” and

the “solution” in remarkably different ways. Both teams are in some ways concerned with political or cultural *disengagement* albeit in different forms and with different consequences. iCan is largely implementing a negatively oriented solution (protection from) whereas UT is using a positive one (encouraging curiosity); and this is one of the ways these projects are distinct.

Related to this, UT producers employ “curiosity,” “imagination,” “fun,” and “creativity” as the primary means for reinvigorating social and cultural spheres and for connecting citizens. Although some of these themes are only inferred in the above quotation, they are prevalent throughout interviews (and are discussed further in section 5.4). This is significant because it demonstrates very different practices and strategies for enrolling members within each media project. In the next section, I build upon this comparison and, beginning with analysis of producers, identify commonalities and contrasts between team producers and users.

#### **5.4. Comparing Members and Case Contexts**

In the beginning of this chapter, I asked *who* members are and *who* is or is most likely to become new media citizens; a complex set of questions. In order to begin answering this question, I assess key similarities and differences between and across producers and users within each case. As identified in the introduction, I focus on three themes: 1) respondent identifications and associations; 2) their orientations towards each case, towards each other and, to some degree, towards technologies generally; and 3) respondents’ levels of cultural capital. Interviews, participant observation and documentary analysis show that there are persistent and consistent tensions between respondents. I summarize the key distinctions and commonalities in table 5.1; and proceed to explain these findings for the remainder of this section.

**Table 5.1: Respondent identifications, orientations and cultural capital**

	<b>Identifications</b>	<b>Orientations</b>	<b>Cultural capital</b>
iCan Producers	Targeted audiences	Problem oriented - political disengagement	High
	Engagement with users	Through: news, civic, campaigns and information	Large BBC national and regional audiences
Producers  <b>Commonalities</b>	Identify as team members	Passionate orientation towards greater democratic goals and public life	High levels of cultural capital
	Do not identify as part of citizenship frame	Public / civic / cultural sphere	Experts - high levels of knowledge
	Identify with peers, colleagues, and professional groups	Flattened media hierarchies / bottom up approaches	Technological and cultural elites
	Construct / maintain boundaries	Focused towards ordinary people / localities	
	Personal identifications with projects	Technologically sceptical and utopic	
UT Producers	People centred design	Positively oriented - cultural engagement	High
	Imagined users	Through: culture, art, design and public authoring as well as curiosity, fun and playfulness	Small and mostly elite networks
iCan Users	With members of site	Public orientations	Mostly low (x1 high)
	Do not identify with other members of 'user' group	Individual campaigns with community focus	Mostly low levels of education (x1 post-graduate)
	Largely male and older mentors	Specified local or neighbourhood orientations	
	Strong identifications to and with family, neighbourhood and community	Utilitarian or pragmatic views on technology	
Users	Do not identify with members of 'user' group	Personally or individually oriented	Mixed - low, medium and high (same with education)
UT Users (Individual Interviews)	Principle of difference	Tensions around technological orientation: social / experimental / oppressive or invasive	
	Immediate 'we' (not community identified)		
UT Users  <b>(Trial participants)</b>	EMERGENT members	Oriented towards public and broader good	High
	Principle of similarity (based on shared interests with producers / 'peers')	Based on communication	High levels of education
		Experimental, exploratory, playful	
		Oriented towards peers	

## Identifications

Producers make continual and banal distinctions between themselves and users by using “we” and “us” to describe producers and by using “you,” “they” and “them” to describe users. In this sense, producers are marking out territorial and associational claims, identifying who is “one of *theirs*” and who is not, where one person is affiliated and where others are not. For example, the following quotations illustrate some of the ways that team members construct affinities with each other.

...given that we were all, come together in all those design meetings, I kind of feel like we were *the design team*, and so it kind of, when I describe it to people I say well [my role] it's Information Architect and *member of the core design team* (Oliver, UT Information architect, interview, 09-08/2004)

And so from that point of view, the [design of] technology, it's about *us* playing, experimenting, testing it, saying would this be useful in this situation, in this community, would it be useful in that situation in that community, what would *they* do with it and why would *they* do it? (Benjamin, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, interview, 17/04/2004).

Personally, yes ...it's very important that we teach thinking outside of our little box so that *we can remember that our users aren't us*, so we've done a lot of outreach sessions to explain some of the ideas that we thought would be particularly useful (Ryan, iCan Technical manager, interview, 26/03/2004).

These identifications are significant because they established certain relationships between team members (discursively constructed as a stable unit) and users – for whom both projects were organized. Oliver demonstrates that being part of the “core design team” is indeed something distinct from and additional to his task-specific role in the team; like other team members, Oliver demonstrates an affinity with the team. Benjamin points to a similar affinity when he contrasts between *us* (the team) and *them* (potential users). Producers consistently refer to the divisions between producers and users in interviews and other empirical materials. These kinds of references suggest that producers engage in boundary making, ensuring that the distance between themselves and users can be maintained.

Producers also establish boundaries between themselves and the objects (each case) and subjects (users). Throughout promotional and documentary materials, producers have been absent as citizens, as members and even as participants. Users are the “citizens” each case tries to include and they are clearly situated as the subjects in both cases. For example, in *Building Public Value*, the BBC states:

*We will create opportunities, especially at the local and regional levels, for people to become more active citizens.* The BBC will aim to give people more opportunities to engage with political and civic life. Research shows that one of the reasons for falling democratic participation is that people feel they cannot make a difference. To help to address this, the BBC is piloting a new web-based service, called iCan (see box below). iCan equips people with tools to influence the world around them and encourages *users* to join up with others seeking a common civic goal (BBC 2004b: 58-59).

As reflected throughout iCan fieldwork, producers are not referred to directly or indirectly when identifying citizenship processes like “joining up” and “seeking common civic goals.” In addition, BBC employees had signed contracts specifying that they were not contractually allowed to use iCan in case one of their campaigns might compromise the BBC’s impartiality (Russell, iCan Editorial project leader, interview, 16/03/2004). In these ways, divisions between iCan producers and users were clearly demarcated. Similarly, an excerpt from one of the original UT documents describes UT as unique because:

*... it is dynamically interactive rather than merely responsive. It enables a community’s collective memory to grow organically, allowing ordinary citizens to embed social knowledge in the new wireless landscape of the city.... They can either follow it as a trail, or set the system to give a proximity alert when they pass a location (Lane 17/03/2003: np.).*

Although such boundaries shifted throughout UT’s development, producers were not included within user groups or as ordinary citizens (as discussed above). Yet, again, this is likely another articulation of the negotiations around symbolic power, and these demarcations also articulate claims over and to the resources mediating symbolic power.

In contrast to team members, iCan and UT users do not generally identify themselves as part of a “user” community. Only three users used the words “we” or “us” in relation to other users or to the iCan site or UT mobile network. The lack of this kind of identification is significant and I argue suggests that users did not experience either project as members or in membership oriented ways. The absence of an “us” in this sense is also indicative of a short term engagement with technical platforms that were not fully realized, particularly for those individual UT users.

Users from both cases do make multiple identifications with a range of formal and informal groups or collectives, but notably, not with other users. For iCan, these are primarily based in or through family, neighbourhood and offline environments. For example, one of the iCan mentors describes some of his current activities:

... we [family and community] have run into an extremely busy time of year. We [community association] have just had our AGM and the community have been horrible enough to put me back in as chair for the 4th time! We [community] also have our annual fete coming up on the 20th August, at the same time we are trying to complete our new office by then so we can have an official opening at the same time. So along with my full time job, council work, and nonexistent private life I ... am [also] doing the paperwork for the AGM (Michael, iCan mentor, 49, coach driver, interview, 15/08/2005).

Like other iCan users, Michael identified with numerous and overlapping communities. For example, “we” refers to distinct parts of Michael’s community (such as family, community association and neighbourhood). Yet in his interview and in his campaign materials, Michael was able to seamlessly shift from one community to another, suggesting that these communities were strongly intertwined and mutually associated (discussed further in chapter 7).

Michael downplayed his re-appointment as chair of his community association, joking that “the community have been *horrible* enough to put me back *in* as chair.” I think these words (in italics) suggest that first, Michael was proud of both this appointment and the kind of responsibility that comes with it; otherwise, the reference to his own highly valued community as “horrible” would contradict his campaigns and other commitments. Michael was sure to mention

that this would be his fourth time acting as chair, indicating to me that he has the support of his community and that he is highly skilled in this position. Additionally, the reference to being “put back *in*” conveys an inside and an outside to the community, boundaries that for Michael are clearly articulated and help make his position on the inside clear. All of these framings demonstrate that Michael, with an air of urgency, was communicating his symbolic capital, his authority and the high demands on his time, which contrasts how producers position users as vulnerable.

The case is different for UT users, and different themes surface in the ways UT users make identifications depending on which group of respondents they come from (e.g. the four snapshots of users described in section 5.2: peers, individuals, public trial participants and bodystormers). For individual users, there are few references to community identifications and very sparse use of the terms “we” or “us.” Nonetheless, this lack of identifications was striking, particularly when compared to iCan users. For example, Mandy and Stanley, like other UT respondents, both used “we” in a very literal sense, meaning themselves or those in the room with one exception:

Especially people like us who didn’t know anything about it [UT] at all, we needed time to have a chat about it as well as having more time for making pockets (Mandy, UT user, 30, journalist, musician, single mother, interview, 24/07/2003).

Here, Mandy identifies “people like us” to refer to those who are unfamiliar with location based technologies, and in all likelihood, those who share a lower socio-economic status. However, there is a contradiction here, as both Mandy and Stanley are technologically literate: they run and maintain web sites, have advanced knowledge of recording and sound equipment and have produced a great deal of audio material. Other individual UT users made identifications with “humans” (Justin), with neighbourhoods and with families (Maria, Betty, Armand and Joe).

The other surprise when analyzing the interviews came from the public trial focus group. Some of these respondents prospectively (rather than reflectively)

identify themselves as part of a broader group of users, mostly other field trial participants. For example, Toby states:

... coming back to the social thing ... who else was involved in the project? If it was all your friends involved and similarly you could see someone online right now. And I don't know if we [field trial participants] had that [technical] capability or not (Toby, UT field trial user, 30-39, researcher, focus group, 08/03/2005).

Here, Toby identifies the importance of UT in connecting with existing communities and networks, while also identifying as part of a group of other field trial participants albeit in a technical sense. It is worth mentioning that Toby had also attended and participated in numerous UT public events; perhaps explaining why he identifies with other users. I suggest that those who have continued connections with the UT platform were more able to make group identifications. These respondents are *emergent members*. But this is tentative as Toby also indicates a lack of knowledge about who other participants were, despite the small size of the field trial (11); which doesn't reflect positively on the potential for UT to build or contribute to collective frames of action. Instead, this points to a lack of collective awareness of either individual or collective action.

## Orientations

As Norman Fairclough notes, it is important to identify "what relationships are set up between those involved" particularly in communicating relevant texts, discourses and practices (Fairclough 1995: 27, as discussed in chapter 4). Drawing from this, I assess not only what kinds of relationships are invoked by producers and users in each case, but pay special attention to the focus of these relationships. I argue that respondents are oriented towards three different points: the public, the personal, and/or the individual.

Despite numerous tensions, producers shared a mostly public orientation. Producers were consistently passionate and sincerely expressed ideas about the role of each case in enabling greater democratic potential and citizenship

oriented goals. For example, Bridget and Brian talk about group “commitment,” “passion” and “emotional investment”:

I think that as a *group* we were *very committed*, and we were probably the kind of people who would blog [laughs]. For most people, or being engaged in our communities, and that's without a doubt, I would say. And we really really are committed. Personally, I think I'm committed - I'm the chair of my resident's association for example.... I think there's no doubt about it that we're *very passionate about it* (Bridget, iCan project manager, interview, 18/09/2007).

Bridget highlights commitment and passion, explaining that the iCan team is personally invested in civic and political activities, as well as in the potential for iCan to extend democratic activity. This point is further supported by the fact that many iCan producers described their personal involvement in civic or political volunteer projects (e.g. Bridget, Theresa, Melissa, Ryan). In this sense, teams are strongly marked by “emotional” as well as ideational investment and solidarity (also components of tacit or informal systems of membership as discussed in section 5.5). Building upon these personally oriented associations, iCan team members are explicitly publicly oriented, often making connections between “communities,” democracy, civic activities and their own local, political associations.

John furthers this notion of “commitment” when he identifies the “emotional investment” involved in his work on UT:

... and I mean, it's like, when, when you get, when you put so much, um, of this *emotional investment* into something, is, you do feel as though there's quite a full, an, an ownership, and I think that's one of the things which kind of happened with Urban Tapestries (Brian, UT Interface designer, interview, 16/07/2004).<sup>86</sup>

This is important because as a participant observer it became apparent that although UT team members were contracted employees, as were the iCan team, they were also heavily invested in the project. UT team members worked additional unpaid hours because they liked the technology, believed in the potential of the platform and were dedicated to the broader democratic and

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<sup>86</sup> Brian identifies a very interesting and important theme when he mentions “ownership,” as this is a significant aspect not only of membership, but also in the ways people negotiate media landscapes and exercise control over those landscapes. However, this is not a theme I address in this chapter.

participatory objectives. Notions of “emotional” and ideational investment capture one of the points of connection between producers, their projects and ideas of citizenship.

Ryan and Oliver further support this connection by personalizing their own interests in relation to the aims of each project:

... there was a previous hypothesis surrounding political apathy that actually there had been a generational change and people were in some way just not interested in public spaces or structure and that the stronger version was that people were lazy or apathetic. *And we, in our gut, didn't believe that* and so went outside and to try and prove that hypothesis (Ryan, iCan Technical manager, interview, 26/03/2004).

*I was looking for ways to flatten the media hierarchy to give people a voice in media that don't have a voice, to find a way to bring the everyday to the fore where it's been elite, before that. And Urban Tapestries seemed a perfect way to do that* (Oliver, UT Information architect, interview, 09/08/2004).

Ryan identifies a powerful response to existing theories explaining political disillusionment. Here, he locates his political beliefs in his “*gut*,” illustrating that enabling political engagement is personal and, indeed, visceral. Oliver doesn’t personalize the UT goals in the same way, but he does connect his goals to those of the UT project (e.g. “flattening the media hierarchy” and “bringing the everyday to the fore”). Ryan and Oliver offer only two examples of how politics for producers in these projects were deeply personal. This is an important point because regardless of the tensions and “teething problems,” producers are genuine about their projects and about the potential of new technologies within those projects.

Producers show a commitment to using new technologies to enable political or cultural forms of engagement and they do so with an awareness of some of the caveats associated with these technologies. In terms of users, there are again marked differences between cases. iCan users, like producers are very clearly committed to their campaigns and to their offline associations. iCan users demonstrate something like “emotional solidarity” (Nash 2008) with others in their neighbourhoods of “interest” rather than of “geography.” Yet, this solidarity does not extend to others using iCan.

Helen, an iCan user and dedicated animal rights activist, led a sophisticated campaign rallying for RSPCA support. Much like other iCan users' campaigns, her campaign included: localized issues of interest and numerous connections to democracy, to local community, to individuals (e.g. pet-owners, "yobs," salary-earners, current and potential volunteers etc.), and sometimes to government. Helen's campaign was largely focused on translating the complex infrastructural processes of volunteer based charities and organizations. Thus, in addition to the numerous highly individualized and personalized references, Helen's campaign was also very clearly publicly oriented.

For example, Helen articulates the tensions between "disaffected" RSPCA members and the democratic bureaucracy of the RSPCA:

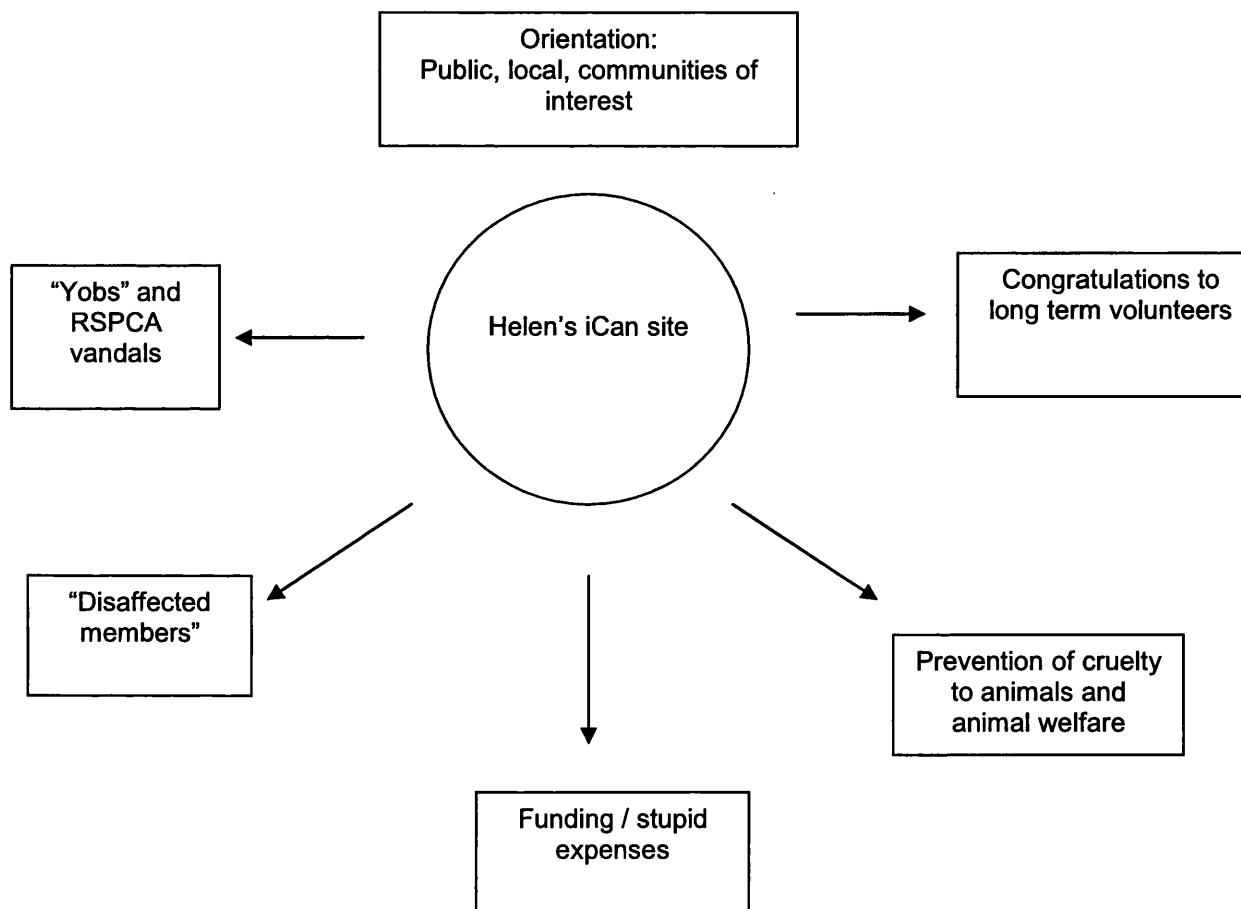
I believe that there are a collection of vicious circles in action which are driving civil society towards what might be termed a "post-democratic" state .... [For charities] donors and members are simultaneously more impatient of bureaucratic rules, for example the number of members which constitutes a quorum for meetings, and more suspicious of the motives of trustees and staff. On the one hand they are demanding more controls and documentation to prove how money was spent and why decisions were taken and on the other they see rules and procedures as barriers to free expression of the will of the membership. Where decisions are taken by majority vote there is less willingness for the losers to accept it and move on and they may either leave or remain as a disaffected faction within the group (Helen, iCan mentor, 50, PhD, IT Support worker, interview, 17/07/2005).

Helen frames her perspective on tensions within the RSPCA in direct relation to the "post-democratic" state. During her interview, Helen also conveyed a strong sense of responsibility for explaining these processes to others, and for furthering the aims of and gathering resources for the RSPCA. Helen thus orients herself, her actions and her charitable work towards multiple public agencies. Akin to the objectives advocated by iCan producers, Helen engages, discursively at least, a bottom-up, participatory strategy where she appeals to local individuals in order to enrich the public. Appeals included attempts to build connections to and with pet owners, charities, potential donors and volunteers. Public activities are described as helping low-income households

care for pets, through the active and “democratic” organization of her local RSPCA branch and its activities.

One of the surprises contained in the analysis of the iCan interviews and in iCan mentors’ online campaign material is that iCan users are not only focused on political, civil or social issues, but that these campaigns appear to largely revolve around conflict with others.<sup>87</sup> For example, see figure 5.1 for a representation of these campaign articles by topic:

**Figure 5.1: Helen's iCan site and campaign articles**



With few exceptions, such as the “congratulations” and part of the “prevention of cruelty to animals” articles, iCan users develop conflict oriented, defensive campaigns (see also Aaron’s “Save Our Schools” and Michael’s “Stop ASBOs”

<sup>87</sup> However, this refers to the campaigns developed by the mentors as there are numerous exceptions and contradictions. For example, several iCan team members referred to a group of people on the “Buffy campaign,” who were campaigning the BBC to reinstate the television programme “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” at 9:00 pm.

campaigns). Again, this orientation illustrates reactive patterns of interaction rather than constructive forms of participation.

However, the emotional and political solidarity iCan users direct towards their campaigns, their neighbourhoods, their families and other offline networks, may have nothing to with iCan. For example, Russell suggested that iCan tends to attract “people who are already *doing things*”; an argument echoed and cited by Peter Dahlgren:

‘There is an extensive political life on the Net, but it is mostly an extension of political life off the Net’.... The argument is that the Internet has not made much of a difference in the ideological political landscape, it has not helped mobilise more citizens to participate, nor has it altered the ways that politics gets done (Margolis and Resnick 2000: 14 as cited in Dahlgren 2003: 164).

Although Helen speaks about her “accidental” enrolment in the RSPCA, she had been an active volunteer and treasurer for many years. In this sense, Helen, similar to Michael but unlike Aaron, was already “doing things.” This variation in political and volunteer experience highlights contradictions between reaching vulnerable others, targeting audiences or merely “providing another medium” for those who are already politically active.

Comparatively, UT users express very different kinds of orientations and find that UT facilitates the mediation of very different kinds of engagement. On one hand, focus group participants (and perhaps most creative lab and some bodystorming participants) are generally not emotionally connected to other participants. As discussed earlier, users tend not to identify with other users. However, the UT trial participants *did* make a few identifications with other users. In my view, a significant aspect influencing this subtle contradiction is that UT trial participants *are*, as Russell suggested, well primed for enculturation in technologically mediated groups. In other words, UT trial participants *are also already doing things*.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> With the exception of UT field trial participants, iCan and UT users on the whole exercise pragmatic and instrumental or “wait and see” attitudes toward new technologies; yet, there are numerous contradictions and moments of hidden resonance – in terms of technical literacy and general media preferences (e.g. Betty expressed serious disdain for computers and televisions, but connected with the radio). iCan and UT users reveal rich and layered (dis)engagements with communicative technologies, and that provokes multiple and important interpretations

Almost all of the UT individual users expressed support and real enthusiasm for the UT platform, even those who did not really understand the experience (e.g. Maria) or anticipate using it in the future (Armand, Joe, Mark, Mandy, Stanley and Maria). For example, after using the UT platform for an afternoon, Jill enthuses:

I just think the idea is so fantastic, I mean it comes along and you just don't know why it hasn't been invented yet. And it was understandable, I mean, it just made sense.... It is such a *personal way of getting to know the city* (Jill, UT user, 28, graduate, musician and teacher, interview, 25/07/2003).

Jill also expresses a common theme: that UT facilitated a *personal* way of interacting with the city. It is important to distinguish that although "personal" does convey an individual frame of action and interaction, it decidedly connotes a deeper and internal kind of connection. Stewart, a trial participant echoes a similar sentiment:

I think perhaps where I was coming from was that I was curious as to how I would interact with it, you know because I quite like technology, I quite like getting into the internet and making that part of life but this is something that you used not in the application sense, it was something that you engaged with on quite a *personal level*. In a nutshell really that was what I thought about it I was curious to how it would change me, if it would (Stewart, UT field trial user, 30-39, post-graduate, scientist, focus group, 08/03/2005).

Thus, like others, Jill and Stewart illustrate that users do connect not only with the platform, but also with the *personal* negotiation strategies it invokes. This likely indicates that users although also individual, are more primarily internally and personally oriented.

In some ways, these users highlight tensions between individual and collective orientations, or perhaps more aptly, between the personal and the public. Nonetheless, although UT individual users are often excited about the ways in which UT fosters cultural engagement, there is no indication that this enthusiasm is similar to the emotional investment or solidarity found in iCan.

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about the role of technologies in the navigation of self and other. The point here, however, is that those users have a whole range of relationships to and with technologies. In fact, there are as many differences between users, even within one case, as there are between cases (with the exception of the UT field trial participants who all identified as technological enthusiasts); illustrating a richness and diversity in terms of technological orientation.

Instead, this enthusiasm appears to be about pleasure, creativity, imagination, personal exploration and, ultimately, about cultural engagement.

Drawing from one of the Marchmont bodystorming events, UT producers appear to have rather accidentally shifted from a singular, highly individualized model of user interaction to a more interactive and collectively oriented model. This shift illustrates that the open and fluid model of “imagined” users is much more constrained and specific in practice than it was in discussion.

There are further tensions around not only individual or collective orientations, but also around connectivity or engagement with place. Silverstone and I argued that UT did facilitate “a stronger connection to local places” for all individual users, regardless of whether they would actually be *interested* in using the UT platform in their everyday lives (Silverstone and Sujon 2005: 47). Additional feedback from field trial participants supports this finding, as do the following excerpts from two of the most sceptical and technologically pragmatic UT users.

Yeah, I enjoyed it because it gave me some kind of reflection on the places I normally move around. And it was interesting because I started taking photos and I just sort of naturally just go almost without thinking really towards familiar places. All these places that I visit regularly. Yeah, so it was interesting (Mandy, UT user, 30, university graduate, journalist, single mother, interview, 27/04/200)

It's just a very interesting exercise and it did remind me how much Bloomsbury means to me and just sort of picking up this few little things that I did brings out what makes it so special (Maria, UT user, 61, some college, public relations consultant, interview, 31/07/2003)

Mandy and Maria both identify their experience with UT as “interesting” and in some ways as reflective. UT does facilitate relationships to and interactions with place and with neighbourhoods, but the question of time remains. For example will this deepened engagement continue after longer term participation? Do respondents find their experiences exciting and interesting because of the novelty? Or is it because they are given a task that demands they really look at the places they pass through, that users engage strategies of active participation?

My research cannot answer such longitudinal questions. However, my findings suggest that UT does facilitate meaningful strategies of participation which foster a deeper sense of membership. Thus, despite pre-existing strategies of participation, UT invites culturally engaged social relations:

...it was an interesting way to see the city and to experience the city and those things that you wouldn't normally notice.... Sort of floating around in the city. So for me that was very interesting and it opened up learning possibilities, as that's my area of research, and to what it means to use learning and technology, to access something invisible (Jason, UT field trial user, 30-39, post-grad, software interface designer, focus group, 08/03/2005).

Bearing in mind that the individual interviews were completed using a very early, low tech iteration of the UT platform, it seems to me that the absence of collective identifications suggests that UT is both individual and personal. By this, I mean that although spatial and perhaps even technological capital play a role in how people experience UT, the dominant orientation is internal, self-oriented and supports member-to-member kinds of engagement.

## **Cultural capital: “ordinary” and elite**

Although I have not collected demographic data about producer teams, it is worth noting that overall team members tended to possess high levels of cultural capital, were highly educated and were culturally engaged. The sophistication of producers' expertise and wide ranging interests struck me repeatedly throughout my fieldwork, suggesting that although not all respondents were wealthy, they were certainly elites. For example, upon my first participant observation conducted during the initial project meeting with 7 members of the UT team, I noted the character of the Proboscis studio:

... a large 2 or 3 bedroom apartment with hardwood floors, large bay windows and high ceilings conveniently located in the middle of [a busy neighbourhood in central London]. The studio is an amazing work space with two large desks or work tables and expensive looking computer and video conferencing equipment and large flat screened monitors. The room is packed with shelves containing books, files and project resources. The walls are white and posted on them are Hubble pictures of outer space, photo collages, colourful maps and drawings, some done by hand and

others printed from the computer. All of the walls in one of their bathrooms are wall papered from floor to ceiling in maps of different countries and cities from all over the world (field notes from the UT initial project meeting, 07/02/2003).

In addition to the diversity of interests and broad knowledge bases illustrated in the above field note, I was also impressed with the creative and cultural capital of the team as a whole. For example, see Table 5.2 which summarizes the backgrounds self-identified by respondents when asked to "tell me a little bit about themselves and how they came to work for iCan / UT":

**Table 5.2: Producer backgrounds**

<b>Self identified expert backgrounds</b>	
<b>Respondents</b>	<b>iCan</b>
Bridget	Senior journalist, news
Derek	Editorial background, new media strategy
Cara	Academic (media, participation and community media)
Russell	BBC Kids news site, journalism, web specialty
Ryan	Technological strategy and structure, BBCi consultant, charity organizer
Theresa	Journalism, publishing, research, museums, Today programme, Green party member
Melissa	Political research (temp), journalism, Youth Fact
Anon	Politics, BBC employee, MSc
Simon	Web design, politics, Nokia, research
<b>Urban Tapestries</b>	
Benjamin	Experimental film maker, theoretical architecture, publishing, founded proboscis, Associate research fellow
Christina	Research fellow, IDEO collaborator, visual and interactive design, experimental film maker and director, MA
John	Artist, mobile consultant, video games, forensic spaces, graphic design
Oliver	New media research, Apple computers, Paramount, NYU's interactive telecommunications programme (Neighbourhood Web), PhD researcher
Denise	Cultural researcher, art, design, ethnography, architecture, went on to become a PhD researcher

Although much more could be said about each of the individual interests and previous backgrounds identified by producers, this table demonstrates that they possess high levels of cultural capital and actively pursue a wide range of interests that compliment and help shape the focus of their professional objectives and areas of expertise. However, these high levels of cultural capital did not necessarily offer security, and instead, producers often negotiated highly competitive environments with numerous conflicts.

Similar to the other themes, UT and iCan users provide numerous contrasts between varying levels of cultural capital. Despite this, there are some very clear and easy distinctions to make. For example, those participating in the field trials, creative labs and most of the bodystorming events (excluding Marchmont as there is no real way to assess the kinds of cultural capital those participants could or would circulate) clearly have higher levels of cultural capital than most of the UT individual users and than most of the iCan mentors.

For instance, two of the iCan mentors, Aaron and Michael, have very low levels of education (“further vocational college” and “GCSE’s or below,” respectively), and both have exhausting demands on their personal resources resulting in a shortage of time. In relation to this, a tension emerges. Cultural capital, in some ways for these two respondents is low; however, in others, both Aaron and Michael have negotiated difficult environments and transcended many layers of adversity in order to better themselves. For example, Michael hints at the contrast between his “unstimulating” past and the fullness and quality of his life now:

I was never much good at studying. Think I have learnt more in the last seven years [as chair of his community association among many other things] than in the last – no, I don’t want to think about that... It could be too many (Michael, iCan mentor, 49, further vocational education, coach driver, interview, 15/08/2005).

As such, Michael’s experience suggests that community activities and local politics are an alternative source for developing cultural knowledge and an informal kind of cultural capital.

Further, Helen, Aaron and Michael live in different cities throughout England. As a result, they do not have access to the cultural resources which are readily available to UT users, by virtue of their location in a global city. UT users also exhibited a wide range of cultural capital in different avenues. For example, Joe (a student and part-time stock-boy at Tesco), Jill (a teacher and musician), Mandy (a journalist and musician), Stanley (a labourer and musician), and Armand (a security guard) described themselves as part of the lower socio-economic strata, with Stanley and Joe claiming to receive annual incomes of £0 – 9 999. In contrast, Betty (a freelance writer) and Justin (an executive), showed very high levels of cultural capital and fluency in multiple kinds of creative and cultural contexts.

Finally, the UT field trial participants stood out most clearly as possessing the highest levels of cultural capital. Jason, Stewart and Toby have graduate or post-graduate degrees and worked in science or academic environments; they were easily on par with the technical and geographic complexities of UT.

## **5.5. Dual Systems of Membership**

This chapter highlights some of the tensions around ways people negotiate membership and engage different strategies of participation as demonstrated in two case studies. Differential patterns of participation suggest that membership is enabled more for some than for others. The empirical data suggests that there is more going on in terms of membership than first meets the eye. I argue that there are dual systems of membership at play in the cases: one involves the formal allocation of roles and membership statuses while the other is informal and involves identifications, orientations and cultural capital.

The first system of membership is formal and explicit and is useful for conceptualizing membership processes for both producers and users. For example, iCan and UT team members have to sign contracts stating their professional obligations and in acceptance of the rules of conduct within their host organizations. For users, the explicit or formal system is often composed

of web site or network registration, passwords and generally agreeing to a list of “terms and conditions,” which is basically a contract between the users and producers. Formal systems of membership regulate access, assign roles, establish codes of conduct and codify members’ rights and obligations.<sup>89</sup> While these formal regulations are specifically addressed in the next chapter, it is important to note that these regulations do not necessarily translate easily into practice. For instance, all respondents are formal members in both cases; however this formal membership does not guarantee or explain affinity, belonging or membership orientations.

In contrast, informal and tacit systems of membership are established through cultural practices and tend to be uncodified, unregulated and organic. The informal system is especially apparent not only in users’ and producers’ identifications and orientations, but also through the ways in which they negotiate and interact with each other and with each case. Thus, the dual system of membership highlights the importance of tacit systems of membership and association, of familiarity and of unarticulated principles of acceptance or similarity. Informal membership constitutes a whole other set of criteria for thinking about citizenship and participation (some of which have been addressed in this chapter). This dual system of membership contributes to understanding the marked differences between the case participants who easily connect with either site and those who do not, between those who are engaged and those who are not.

There is a split between cases, between producers and producers, between producers and users, and between users and users. Respondents make different kinds of identifications with other members; they have different dominant orientations towards technologies and towards either the personal or the public; and they pursue different strategies of participation in line with the aims of each case. For most users, partially excluding some of the UT field trial and focus group participants, iCan and UT facilitate member-centred

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<sup>89</sup> For iCan, anyone wishing to join must go through a double online registration process, one with the BBC and then one with iCan (or any BBC community). The latter part of this registration involves 4 steps: 1) identity and security, 2) rights and responsibilities, 3) more about you, 4) Confirm and reply to our e-mail (iCan site 2004-5).

orientations. For most producers, iCan and UT instil membership-centred identifications and orientations. These differences are in part explained by informal systems of membership, which are arguably as important in mediated membership as formal systems. Furthermore, the points where formal and informal systems of membership overlap are also the places where things like unarticulated principles of similarity, of “target” audiences, and of public or personally oriented frameworks become naturalized, taken for granted and rendered invisible. These are the points where symbolic power becomes embedded within the materialities of practice.

Such participatory strategies are necessarily socially and culturally contextualized; and they are indeed dependent upon those contexts. For example, different levels of cultural capital are utilized in different ways, and in some ways enable some producers and some respondents to pursue these strategies with varying degrees of success. What my research suggests is that careful thought must be given to technologically mediated membership and belonging. In contrast to universalizing the technological capacity for open membership systems, at least three factors must be considered when reaching out to vulnerable people or communities. As argued in this chapter, these include: *specific* social and cultural contexts (offline as well as online), relevant individual orientations, and material environments.

Additionally, this research also shows that conflict, competition and power imbalances exist even for new media elites, as illustrated in the discussion of producers’ material environments. Contingently, there are conditions on the extent, power and legitimacy of technological mediations of citizenship as maintaining, actualizing and mediating membership takes work and often comes under threat.

## 5.6. Conclusion

...[UT is] groundbreaking and offers the potential to really democratise things, with a big ‘if’ on the structure of the industry ... the other point is that the techniques we’re imagining with Urban Tapestries, if you’re thinking explicitly of it being training wheels [for democratization], not only for people

using it but *for us as researchers ... [then]* encourage people to do that (Oliver, UT Information architect, interview 09/08/2004).

At the start of this chapter I question the membership dynamics in two citizenship initiatives. Drawing from the evidence presented in this chapter, I argue that dual systems of membership help explain different patterns of participation between users and producers. Although this chapter identifies constructions of users as “ordinary,” “targeted” and “imagined” members, numerous tensions emerge from dual systems of membership in UT and iCan. These tensions suggest that instead of online or mobile registration providing any user, or indeed *anyone*, with a passport to enriched social and technological capital, such passports are often validated offline in informal systems of membership. As analysis of producers shows, collective and membership-oriented patterns of interaction (rather than member-centred) are more apparent when there is an alignment between the offline and online, between the informal and formal, between shared identifications as members within common membership communities. As such and more often than not, it is the producers who engage in more collectively oriented membership patterns rather than the users. Users, also more often than not, remain oriented towards individualized member-to-member orientations. Certainly, the “anyone, anywhere” paradigm does not apply to either case.

But there are many more questions: questions about the legitimacy and stability of technologically mediated memberships; questions about transformation (how and what do technologies transform?); and questions about vulnerable others and the ways in which technologically specific ideas of citizenship can be extended to be more inclusive, more enabling and more protective. Further complicating these questions, there is an overall tension between individualized and collective models of membership in the cultural domain.

It is clear that respondents are differently positioned, make different kinds of identifications with or to others, and construct different patterns of interaction. Although unsurprising, I argue this is important. It is important because in the mediation of citizenship practices, new technologies obscure the role of cultural capital and informal systems of membership in fostering participation. Levels of

cultural capital *cannot* be separated from membership, technologically mediated or otherwise. The kinds of identifications respondents make act as a kind of defining logic for influencing participatory strategies in political and cultural spheres. Such identifications also act as a navigational tool – a social compass if you will – pointing towards well worn pathways carved out by the circulation of existing forms of shared capital. It is these underlying economic and material foundations that shape and often guide the directions people choose to pursue and in determining their priorities. Respondents' orientations towards public or private, towards immediate or long-term, and towards either the greater good or individual interest are important articulations of the ways material environments, cultural capital and identifications overlap and come together.

The key in these relationships between informal systems of membership, between highly individualized identifications and more collective orientations, is familiarity; what I suggest is akin to the gradual processes of becoming acculturated and naturalized within foreign environments. As Russell suggested earlier in this chapter, "*it's a slow burn, long process thing.*" By this, I am not referring to just information or literacy (although both are important), but also to familiarity with access and proximity to symbolic power, with the ebb and flow of capital, with the accumulation and negotiation of networks, and with the ways in which new technologies introduce and help navigate such things. Familiarity is what producers and UT trial participants have – not only with the technology, but with particular strategies of action for relating to others, to the self and to the world; and this helps align these strategies of action with and through technological cultures. Familiarity, as Walzer argues, is what comes bundled up with residence and naturalization (1983: 52). Familiarity then, is the key because it binds or breaks formal and informal systems of membership.

Of course, there are tensions and disjunctures, absences and losses, failures and successes. There are clear tensions between the role iCan and UT play in fostering "interest" or "engagement" and in fostering individualized patterns of behaviour which, from a cynical view, can be more about the race to secure audiences or consumers or participants – *anyone* – to legitimize and promote self interests through a utopic discourse of empowerment. In conclusion, I

argue that when comparing producers and users, producers from both cases establish collective frames of action and rich avenues of exchange. As Oliver proposes above, these collective frames are often “for us as researchers, if not always for others.”

# Chapter 6. Conditions of Use: Exploring Cultural Rights and Technological Freedoms

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## 6.1. Introduction

I suppose iCan is about *freedom*, the *freedom to be able to act* (Melissa, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).

... electronic technology is conducive to freedom. The degree of diversity and plenitude of access that mature electronic technology allows far exceeds what is enjoyed today. Computerized networks of the twenty-first century need not be any less free for all to use without let or hindrance than was the printing press. Only political errors might make them so (de Sola Pool 1983: 231).

As Melissa and de Sola Pool illustrate, new technologies are often associated, conflated even, with “new-found” freedoms, with empowerment and new kinds of human potential. This chapter explores the conditions of use in two case studies in order to understand cultural and technologically specific rights in practice. The terms and conditions of use are important because they regulate cultural sites and formally allocate specific rights and obligations. Contingently, the distribution, form and content of these rights and obligations reveal practices that often contradict each case’s public objectives. The most significant finding is that cultural rights are unevenly distributed. There were significant differences in the rights allocated to producers when compared to those allocated to users. Producers were granted rights formalizing control and ownership of content as well as multiple freedoms and few obligations. In

contrast, very few rights and many obligations were allocated to users. Most of the formal obligations ensure that users shoulder considerable responsibilities and granted producers exclusive control and copyright of content. In terms of “citizenship,” the differential allocation of rights demonstrates meaningful gaps between collectively oriented objectives and manipulative or bureaucratic practices within each case. The unevenness of rights and obligations undermine citizenship claims, suggesting that technologically specific ideas of citizenship were used in these cases for self serving organizational purposes rather than for the public.

Even though this finding is pessimistic, as are many of the findings in this chapter, there is more to tell. Even with just two cases, it is complicated. It is complicated because there are tensions between what is merely procedural and what is substantive; between what is *universal* and what is *particularistic*; what is collective and what is individual; what is about control and what is about freedom.<sup>90</sup> It is complicated because there are multiple points of blurring between genres of rights and the ways in which such genres overlap and mutually constitute particular frames of action, rights and freedoms. It is complicated because there are numerous tensions between what is formally identified as a right or as an obligation and the informal articulations of those rights and obligations. Although the empirical evidence presented here is not at all definitive, it does capture tensions around the technological mediation of cultural rights in two new media cases.

As discussed in chapters 2 and 3, cultural and technologically specific rights rearticulate rights to (or of): equality; access; participation; education; mobility; privacy; freedom of (collective) association; and “the right of innovators to innovate” or rights to “the conditions enabling creativity.” This research provides some insight on how the rights involving access are bundled up in representation, content, and the regulation of participation in two case studies.

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<sup>90</sup> This tension between individualisation and collective or individual and group articulations of rights appears in the cases discussed here, and is also common more broadly across “generations” of rights generally. For example, Karl Vasak, among others, argues: “They [cultural rights] are always defined juridically as individual rights, whereas culture is essentially collective in nature, since it should be available to the whole community” (Vasak 1977: 32).

The most “technologically” distinct rights include: freedom from commercial manipulation; the right of innovators to innovate; interactivity; and orientation towards the “technological commonwealth” (or as suggested in chapter 3, technological cultures similar to the “blogosphere”).

The first two (“freedom from commercial manipulation” and “right to innovate”) are more specifically technological. These specific rights fit within broader categories of action, broader articulations of membership and as such, I frame this chapter around the tensions emerging not only around specific rights, but particularly the ways such rights emerge through the instantiation of formal and informal rights and obligations. As such, I focus on three key areas. First, I look at the general characteristics of the contractual relationship between users, producers, the sites of action and the organizations hosting each site. Here, I consider the significance of the differential distribution of rights and obligations to respondents in both cases. Following this overview, I examine the content of cultural rights in thematic clusters, beginning with identity and followed by content and participation. Second, in the section called *passports and participation*, I look at the ways in which the representation of identities intersect with rights to access, to participate, to control or regulate, of ownership and not only the conduct of conduct, but most significantly the content of content. Part of this content involves often implied and mostly informal “freedoms.” Although these freedoms were often presented as powerful mobilizers inspiring the creation of both cases, they were also completely absent in each case’s formal “conditions of use.” I discuss the tensions between freedoms to create, to play and to lie as well as freedoms from commercial manipulation and the gift economy.

## 6.2. Formal Conditions: Terms, Rules and Rights

Similar to the dual systems of membership discussed in chapter 5, rights and obligations are also both formal and informal. Unsurprisingly, there are many contrasts between formal rights and obligations and practices.

### *Formal Rights: Procedural, Substantive, Negative, Positive*

One of the commonalities between the “terms of use” and the “contract” in both cases was that both regulatory frames consistently referred to existing laws and conventions regarding illegal content, abusive behaviour and misuse of either project. In this sense, teams opted for deferring to existing regulatory systems rather than trying to figure out the complex legal implications of unlawful user behaviour. As such, the terms of both cases are nested within national legal systems.

Benhabib argues that “rights and obligations are correlated: rights discourse takes place among the consociates of a community,” invoking a *dialectics of action* between freedoms and responsibilities (2004: 57). Such dialectics also apply to other common distinctions between genres of rights as procedural or substantive and negative or positive. As discussed in chapter 2 and as the labels suggest, procedural rights are about access to fair procedures enabling participation; such as the way equal rights to vote allow anyone over 18 to vote. In contrast, substantive rights are broader and often concern the outcomes of such rights, similar to ensuring that equal rights to vote enable equal voting *practices* (Prior, Stewart et al. 1995: 11-12). Negative rights are generally protective rights for individuals and can be understood as ensuring “freedoms from.” In contrast, positive rights are constructive and ensure “rights to” things like freedom of expression. While the finer points of these distinctions may be debatable, these are useful for thinking about the form and content of cultural and technologically specific rights in practice.

Following these broad distinctions between procedural and substantive rights and obligations, *all* the rights and obligations in both case’s terms and conditions tended to be procedural, with one exception. The majority of rights and obligations in each case specify how, when and what users were formally entitled to do or not to do. The one exception was encapsulated by iCan’s tagline: “Change the World Around You.” The iCan rules only imply that users have this right, which although it might be a positive and substantive right, was

also not formally codified as a *right*.<sup>91</sup> Regardless, this was the only right from either case which invoked broader, civic and *citizenship* oriented objectives. There are also contingent difficulties concerning how to formalize and/or actualize such rights (and obligations). Without due process, without fair *procedures*, such substantive rights may not necessarily contain any depth or legitimacy (c.f. O'Neill 1990; 2002) . As such, it is important to keep the dialectical relationship between substance and procedure, between formal and informal, between freedoms and responsibilities foremost throughout the following analysis, beginning with an overview of the formal “contracts” employed by iCan and UT.

Yet, the formalities do not tell the whole story. Notions of the public, of the collective or other associations were not included in formal “terms of use.” And this highlights some of the difficulty in understanding informal rights and obligations: they must be picked out of densely woven interactions and sometimes fleeting implications. While I address some of the contrasts between formal rights and informal practices as they come up, informal rights are addressed most fully in the section on freedoms and control.

## Overview: iCan and UT

Each case formalized its relationship with users in different ways. The cases used different kinds of formal terms, although procedures were in place ensuring that users must agree to these terms if they wanted to participate. The BBC calls their formal conditions “Terms of Use;” while Proboscis and the UT team refer to theirs as conditions of “Acceptable Use.” Both of these, albeit in different ways, outline a contract between users, producers and their host organizations.<sup>92</sup> UT’s terms of “acceptable use” were generated by the UT team

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<sup>91</sup> This is implied because although it is not formally included in the rights and obligations, “change the world around you” was the site’s motto and appeared under the logo and on every page.

<sup>92</sup> These rights and obligations come from 4 different time specific documents. It is important to note that both cases have made significant developments and although I have not analyzed existing contractual agreements, they are likely to have changed. The BBC’s privacy policy and policy on cookies have been excluded from this analysis.

for public and field trial participants and were captured from the UT web site on 04/06/2004. At that time, these terms had last been updated on 27/05/2004. The iCan and BBC “terms and conditions” were captured during web based registration for BBCi and iCan membership on 24/03/2004. The “iCan rules” were taken from the iCan site on 04/06/2004, and had last been updated on 19/02/2004. The “conditions of use” discussed in this chapter refer to the ones in use at these times.

Once again, the iCan site was more complex because there were four different sites where the BBC and iCan producers outline “terms” or “rules” users must adhere to, including: 1) the BBC “terms and conditions;” 2) the iCan / BBC membership process; 3) “your [iCan] rights and responsibilities in full” and 4) the “iCan rules.”<sup>93</sup> Rather confusingly, the first set, the BBC “terms and conditions,” were identical to the third, “your [iCan] rights and responsibilities in full.” Yet despite this repetition, users must agree to both the iCan and the BBC terms and conditions in order to become first a BBCi member, and then an iCan member. It is worth pointing out that it was necessary for users to agree to the former three sets of “terms and obligations” only when becoming a member. However, links to both the “iCan rules” and the “terms and conditions” were provided on every iCan page. See the red circles in figures 6.1 and 6.2 for an example:

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<sup>93</sup> Of course, the iCan and BBC terms and conditions are the basis for the iCan rules, so the iCan rules act as a further articulation of both user and producer rights and obligations; as such, the iCan rules must be understood in the context of the iCan terms and conditions.

Figure 6.1: Links to the “iCan rules” and “terms and conditions”

(iCan site, “Public Inquiries” page, April 2004).

As illustrated above and below, links to the “iCan rules” are provided on the iCan home page and on the bottom of every page featuring both user and producer generated content in the comments section (e.g. on any page featuring guides, campaigns and “about me” information).

Figure 6.2: Link to iCan rules in the comments section

Thus, the “iCan rules” and “Terms and Conditions” were consistent features of every page on the iCan site and stand out from UT’s comparatively unobtrusive “acceptable use” contract. UT users only had to agree to the terms of “acceptable use” once, as a preliminary step before gaining access to the

prototype. Similar to UT's terms of "acceptable use," the iCan and BBC "terms and conditions" required each user's consent as preliminary condition of membership. If users did not agree to these terms, they were informed that they should "not submit [their] contribution" to the site (BBCi "Terms and Conditions," 24/03/2004).

Of all the "conditions of use" in UT and the BBC, the "iCan rules" were unique in part because of their exaggerated conversational tone which starkly contrasted the more formal language used for the UT "terms of acceptable use" and in the BBC's "terms and conditions." The iCan rules must also be understood in relation to the BBC's terms and conditions because acceptance of one was conditional for participation in the other.

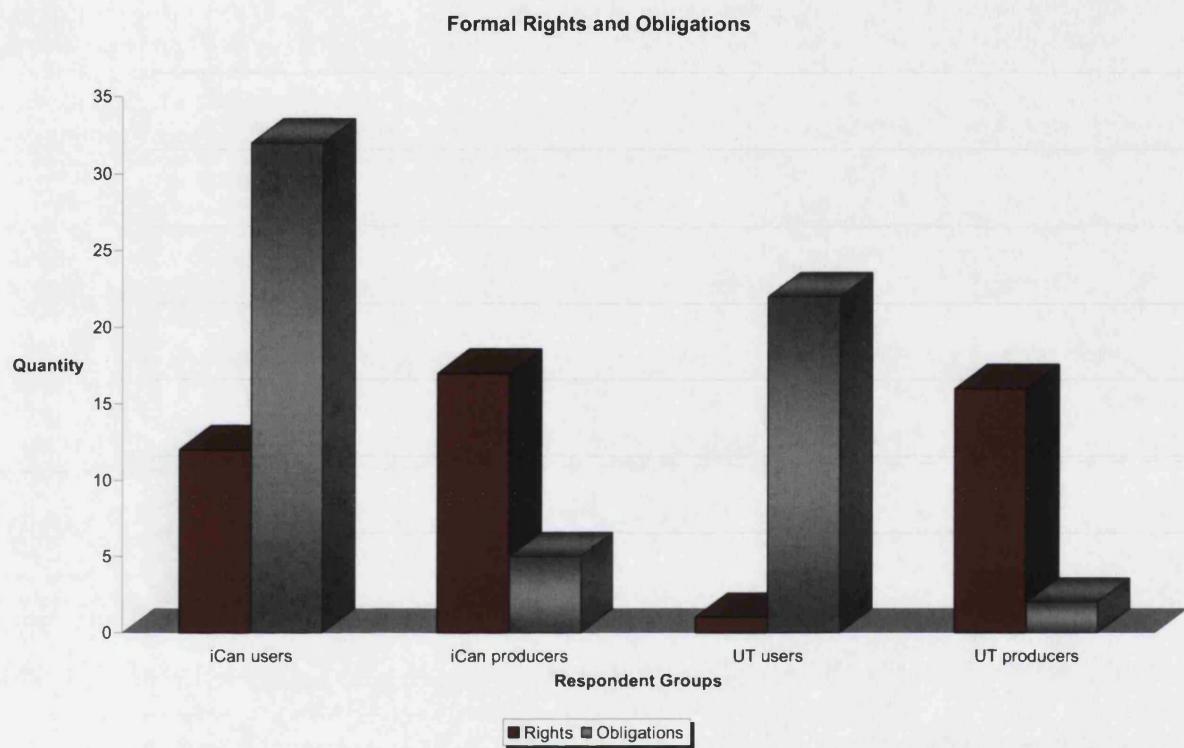
## **Distribution of Rights and Obligations**

Invariably, and as established in the last chapter, citizenship orientations are publicly oriented towards users, not producers. The focus on "ordinary people" and "everyday life" means that it is reasonable to expect formal rights in the conditions of use to favour users rather than producers. However, the analysis shows the opposite; that it is producers who were allocated cultural rights, often at the expense of users. For example, the UT case most dramatically demonstrated this finding by formally allocating many rights to producers, 16 in total, contrasted with the allocation of only one implied right to users (see appendices 6.1 and 6.2 for a full overview of what these rights and obligations include). And the reverse is true for obligations as UT users were allocated 22 obligations (excluding 5 sub clauses also stipulating user responsibilities), whereas UT producers were only allocated 2 obligations.

The "iCan terms of use" and "iCan rules" establish a similar pattern. For example, iCan producers were allocated 17 rights in contrast to the 12 (excluding one sub clause) rights assigned to users. Similarly, the formal terms and conditions designate users as having 32 separate obligations, not including 10 sub clauses, while iCan producers were only assigned 5 formal obligations

(excluding one sub clause). Thus both formal terms proportionally allocate far more rights to producers than to users, and contingently assign many more obligations to users than to producers. Figure 6.3, below, shows the differential allocation of rights and obligations between users and producers clearly.

**Figure 6.3: Distribution of formal rights and obligations in terms and conditions**



This is a significant finding, one that lends strong support to my argument that although technologically specific ideas of citizenship articulate users as *citizens*, it is actually producers who have the cultural rights and can participate in public networks as full citizens.

Thus, an overwhelming number of obligations were assigned to users contrasted by the allocation of significantly fewer rights; a ratio that is reversed for producers. Many of these terms and conditions authorized producers to control content and to enforce rules or terms and conditions at their discretion. These terms also stipulated that although users were responsible for their behaviour and content, they were also obliged to produce legally and socially acceptable content.

Following many of the claims about emerging cultural or technologically specific rights, this is surprising. Ruth Lister offers insight on the implications of this uneven ratio of rights to obligations, suggesting that citizenship is deeper for those more heavily invested. Lister refers to “habits of the heart,” suggesting that “the more demanding the conception of citizenship, the more likely it is that those willing and able to meet its stringent tests will represent a minority” (Lister 2003: 33). Lister’s insightful observation applies to some users (e.g. UT field trial participants discussed in chapter 5) and most producers. Producers are the minority in each case, but they are also the most invested.

Next, I analyze the meaning of these terms and conditions by looking at formal and informal rights to participation, access, identities, copyright and regulation.

### **6.3. Passports and Participation: Identity, Access and Control**

This section looks at how identity representations were formally regulated, suggesting that creating an avatar or on-site identity was akin to having a passport allowing “free” access to the informational resources and networks within each case. Similar to distinctions between “user generated” and “user modified” content, the representation of one’s identity on public sites blurs the boundaries between what is merely a single representation, what is content, what is access to a public site and what is participation. In this sense, the rules around the self representation of user’s identities were also about access to public sites. Contingently, rules about self identification also determined how users participated within those sites. Following this analysis of access and identities as participatory modes, I concentrate on the issues raised by copyrights and the formal regulation of participation.

#### **Access and the representation of identities**

... so it's welcoming and mutual [iCan in relation to public space] but also has got a diverse amount of people, like Trafalgar Square, people don't feel like you're totally compromised by going there but *you know it's yours, you know you've got a right* and people need to know ... (Melissa, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).

Specific rights and obligations often overlap with others, making it a challenge to draw neat lines between different rights. For example, as Melissa suggests in the above quotation, iCan established user rights to access, to participate in and to make public contributions to the site as if users were in any other public space. As such, issues concerning access and participation overlap. In this section, I consider how the formal regulation of identity representations – both of users and producers – are rather like passports not only to each project but also to cultural and public spheres. It is notable that given the differential allocation of rights to producers, user generated content belongs to iCan and the BBC, *not to users*.

Unexpectedly, “access” was only explicitly referred to once as the first introductory point in the BBC terms and conditions: “access to and use of this site (‘BBCi’) is provided by the BBC and is subject to the following [11] terms.” Significantly, none of the 11 other stipulations refer to access as a *right* for users or encourage user access to technologies, to information or to the greater good. However, there are obvious implications relating to the issues of “access” and “information” attached to such rights and obligations. In order to illustrate these implicit and explicit connections, I turn to an examination of the ways in which identity representations are formally and informally framed.

### ***Identities***

At the time of this research, there was a major difference between cases regarding how users were expected, both formally and informally, to represent their identities. These differences are perhaps best marked by contrasting a principle of “anonymity” with one of “actuality.” For example, those in Urban Tapestries were formally encouraged to engage anonymously by using random user names, whereas those in iCan were formally obliged to make their “actual” identities known. Although not formally obliged to do so, producers from both cases also publicly identified themselves (which began in 2005 for the iCan team). In these public identifications, team members described their professional role and summarized their individual backgrounds. UT producers

tended to frame this information in a highly professional manner, whereas iCan team members tended to use “conversational” tones and personal reflections. This contrast illustrates very different strategies for enrolling and engaging users. iCan producers emphasized approachability using friendly conversational tones directed towards “ordinary” users. In contrast, UT producers emphasized formal associations in their professionally oriented public pages, suggesting that these self-representations were directed towards peers, colleagues and other professionals. The differences between principles of anonymity or actuality point to case differences in context, tone and audience.

There were only few formal rights and obligations concerning the representation of identity in the UT and iCan contractual agreements. In addition to these formal terms (as outlined in table 6.1), I address some of the informal tensions around the regulation of identity below.

**Table 6.1: Formal rights and obligations related to “access” and “identities”**

	<b>Users</b>	<b>Producers</b>
Rights	UT	UT
	-	-
	iCan (Terms) (1) Users have the right to retrieve, change or delete details placed with us	iCan (Terms) -
Obligations	iCan (Rules) (1) Elected representatives have the right to participate	iCan (Rules) -
	UT (2) Users must <i>not</i> impersonate or misrepresent... any person Users must be at least the age of thirteen (13) or older	UT -
	iCan (Terms) (1) Users must be of 'legal age' (16)	iCan (Terms) (1) The BBC must 'protect personal details' with limitations
	iCan (Rules) (4) Users must 'be yourself'	iCan (Rules) -

Users	Producers
Users must <i>not</i> impersonate other people	
Elected representatives such as MPs and councillors are not allowed to become organisers of iCan campaigns	
Users must be UK residents only	

As outlined above, each case stipulates that users must be a minimum age (13 for UT and 16 for iCan). For iCan there were further basic limitations because “elected representatives” were allowed to participate but were “not allowed to become organisers of iCan campaigns.” Both cases formally outline obligations for users to provide “truthful” and accurate representations of themselves. These include the obligations for users *not* to misrepresent or impersonate others.

There are a few interesting implications emerging from this overview. First, both producer and user “identities” (names, interests, campaigns / job title, responsibilities and role) provide one kind of site content. As such, regulations around identifications directly relate to issues of access, participation and copyright. The same blurring was observed in the UT case, albeit in a remarkably different way and certainly more for users than for producers. For example, those producing content for the UT mobile platform (users and producers) did not tend to identify themselves with recognizable markers (such as names, job titles, post codes). Instead, most of the UT site content involved personalized narratives that could be either fictional or non-fictional. This kind of content conveyed a great deal of information about UT users but did not reveal any personally identifiable details. Thus, UT team identities were represented as *information* oriented, whereas iCan team member information is *personally* and *experientially* oriented. Users and “everyday” kinds of experiences were presented as sources of legitimization.

Second, producers also provided information about themselves. This readily available information opened up access to public actors *for* the public, highlighting the promotion of organizational visibility. However, there were also other tensions around ownership of content, particularly regarding content

attributions. For instance, Action Network team members were presented as a *part* of the site. However, their “About Me” pages and site content (e.g. guides, campaigns and other information) were always accompanied by the BBC’s following disclaimer:

The BBC runs Action Network as an open forum for people to influence issues they care about. Most of the content is written by the public and reflects their views. Content provided by the BBC is clearly marked. If you read something which you think breaks the Action Network rules, please use the ‘complain’ link nearest to the content. The BBC is not responsible for any external sites to which there are links on Action Network (Bridget ‘About Me’ page, Action Network site, June 2005).

Producers were subject to similar kinds of regulations as were the public and this has two implications. First, iCan producers were subject to obligations that were not codified in the formal terms and conditions. Second, such disclaimers highlight clear boundaries that were set and maintained between what was defined as BBC content, what was defined as user generated content and what was defined as external content. Indeed, by March 2005, the addition of disclaimers became common practice and they were included on the bottom of every Action Network page.<sup>94</sup>

Additionally, the differences in *how* producers provided information and fulfilled obligations suggest that their obligations and even other terms and conditions were subject to change (particularly as seen in the iCan case). Shifts in the iCan site’s formal conditions suggest that obligations to users/ordinary people/the public are difficult to formalize. These relationships are complex and iCan producers were *learning* how to uphold such obligations, often through trial and error. As a result, iCan producers exercised strategic flexibility, albeit informally. Ryan emphasizes this when he states:

And initially, we’re at a stage now where we have something. And for a little while, we can combine two sets of learning: one where people are hopeful about or what they think of it [the iCan site], and then also mesh back in all

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<sup>94</sup> Notably, this disclaimer even appeared on the home or front page of the Action Network site. In the 2004 iCan site, disclaimers were only visible at the bottom of *some* publicly generated campaign sites (and based on the web site archive, seem to somewhat arbitrarily appear). This disclaimer read: “The views expressed in this campaign are those of its members and not the BBC. If you think the iCan rules have been broken, please tell us” (iCan site, home page, March 2005).

the aspirations of why they [unclear] narrow it down altogether to the opposition. So putting those two together will give us a good idea of what version to develop (Ryan, iCan Technical Manager, interview, 26/03/2004).

Finally, including the BBC disclaimer on *all* Action Network pages suggests that as producers learned to negotiate user generated content, BBC regulations became increasingly formal. One of the few formal obligations allocated to iCan team members was to “protect personal details.” While this may have appeared to favour users, it was an obligation that also preserved BBC interests. For example, the iCan terms and conditions state that “your personal details will only be used by the BBC and *its service providers*” (iCan membership registration, step 2, 04/04/2004). While issues of privacy seem overlooked and the uses of personal information appear to be relatively unprotected, iCan producers engaged different informal practices. These issues relate to the ways in which users were allocated rights and obligations, as I discuss in terms of user identities and self representations next.

### ***Users***

As mentioned above, both cases formally outlined positive obligations to “provide truthful information when requested” and negative obligations where users “must not impersonate or misrepresent any person” (iCan and UT). In this sense, both cases set up formal obligations for users to ensure the veracity of not only user generated information, but also of user identities. However, there are numerous tensions not only around such formalities but also in the kinds of identities that are informally encouraged or discouraged. In terms of user identities, each case employed either a principle of “actuality” versus one of “anonymity,” and I address these according to each case below.

### **iCan**

The iCan site strongly encouraged users to use their “real” names on the site and in the registration process. This practice, as somewhat proudly emphasized by producers in interviews, was intended to promote user

accountability and help establish trust between users (and between users and producers).<sup>95</sup> Ryan illustrates this practice when Ryan says:

... we ask that people use their real name because its important to be responsible, if you're expecting your representative to be accountable, then you know ... (Ryan, iCan technical manager, interview, 26/03/2004).

Ryan also placed users on the same level of accountability as representatives, which arguably set a very high standard for "ordinary" people, particularly those framed as vulnerable to political apathy and disengagement. Additionally, after registering for the iCan site, the BBC automatically generated the following message:

Some services may collect first [or last] names to enable personalisation or for display within community areas. If a service displays your name, it is because we believe your message is more powerful when you are clearly identified with it (iCan site, "Why do we need your first name?", 23/06/2005).<sup>96</sup>

While it may seem reasonable to ask for this kind of personal information, some users objected. For example, two iCan users posted the following comments:

Why should posts display one's full name? Why not sign off with one's User Name? What therefore is the point of having a user/sign-in name? Could we have some answers to posts please webmaster? (comment from CH on "What is iCan?" page, April 2004).

"Why does the iCan registration process always require you to display your full name to other users? This would be fine in the vast majority of cases, but not all. Why not make this information optional, and what would happen if I gave a pseudonym for this purpose? (comment from LJ on "What is iCan?" page, January 2004).

Thus although the majority of users appeared to comply with the obligations to reveal personal information, some users did not. Some, such as "SpagBob" use obvious aliases that provided no personally identifiable markers. In

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<sup>95</sup> For example, in step 3 of the membership process, the iCan site stated "... we recommend that you use your real name. This will encourage the community to take your contributions seriously and will also tie your contributions to the actions you take off the site" (iCan site, 2005).

<sup>96</sup> However, later this became incorporated into the web page that opened during step 3 of the registration process and generated this message, "On Action Network we recommend that you use your real name. This will encourage your community to take your contributions seriously and will also tie your contributions more to the actions you take off site" (18/01/2007). This difference points to a transition from an emphasis on a *personal* locus of legitimization to a one that is more community based.

practice, failing to honour this obligation was hardly noticed by team members and users who objected to this condition appear to have continued using the site without trouble. Although even if rarely exercised, producers had the right to remove any users, especially those in breach of the terms and condition, like SpagBob. This highlights not only the iCan producers' editorial control over users and user generated content, but also a conflict of an organizational logic defined by editorial control with the logic of user generated content defined by an open and participatory logic. If the production of user generated content does instantiate new collectivities or "public spheres," these cases instantiated very *clean* public spheres.

The prioritization of "actual" identities shows that the iCan site functioned using principles of *authenticity* – particularly in order to exercise constraints on who could participate, how they participated and what that participation produced. For example, although not directly stated in the formal obligations, iCan vetoed participation from established charities and political organizations:

The only thing that we really didn't think our aim was - there is some huge types of campaigning organizations - for instance, I don't know - would it be right for the BBC to be spending public money on supporting a Greenpeace campaign or something like that? No, probably not. They've got money already ... [and we want to] spend it on the people who don't (Ryan, iCan Technical manager, interview, 26/03/2004).

In this sense, and as discussed further in the section on regulation, the use of actual names also provided recourse for producers to take action. Producers could track users when they abused / misused iCan. And similarly, producers were also able to track ideal users, as producers did with the iCan users who, upon invitation, became volunteer mentors. As such, the principle of authenticity made users "accessible" to producers. This kind of access is significantly different from articulations of access as a cultural or even technologically specific right. In many ways, these formal rights and obligations are directly related to both the BBC's accountability to and relationship with audiences. Thus, even though such formal obligations are about regulating *user* behaviour, they connect producers to audiences in multiple ways (discussed in terms of "BBC accountability" in chapter 7). In some senses, this

highlights a strong degree of reciprocity between users and producers, albeit a kind of reciprocity that was pursued through largely informal terms and was not guaranteed to be in users' best interests.

The issue of BBC accountability to audiences is complex and there were many contradictions between formal BBC documents, interviews with respondents and online material from the iCan site. While many BBC new media sites are useful in helping make the BBC more *accountable* to its audiences and licence fee payers,<sup>97</sup> not all producers agreed that this had anything to do with iCan. For example, when asked about the role of iCan in promoting BBC accountability, Derek replied:

No it wasn't that. It was a portal for politics. It was about rethinking the BBC role in engaging public interest in politics. There were a number of initiatives across the BBC ... and the new media [division] ... and it came out after that. So it wasn't so much about BBC accountability, as it's role as engaging the nation in the political sphere (Derek, iCan Project manager, interview, 02/03/2004).

Derek's statement, echoed in other interviews with iCan team members, highlights an important contrast between what iCan team producers and what BBC officials understood as iCan's key purpose. This is important because this contradiction shows differences in the ways producers frame *their* obligations; formally and in practice. Some iCan team members frame their obligations in terms of "engaging the nation in the political sphere" rather than through connecting audiences to the BBC. However, Melissa insinuates that these two are connected when she describes her job responsibilities as:

... making people feel that we're responsive, that we are looking for them, that we are responding quickly to their enquiries that we are enthusiastic about their enthusiasm and that we're human... I try to write very friendly and engaging e-mails or little private messages to people and quite often they'll write back saying, great, thanks, looking forward to it, and I think in our communication with people we all try as hard as we can [to] spread that

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<sup>97</sup> Although not clarified in the 1996-2006 BBC Royal Charter, "licence fee payer" in the current the current BBC Charter is described as: "In this Charter, a reference to a "licence fee payer" is not to be taken literally but includes, not only a person to whom a TV licence is issued under section 364 of the Communications Act 2003, but also (so far as is sensible in the context) any other person in the UK who watches, listens to or uses any BBC service, or may do so or wish to do so in the future" (Item 57, BBC Royal Charter, July 2006-2016: 18).

feeling. I think there's a feeling of community that, of accessibility [at] a human level (Melissa, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).

Melissa partially contradicts Derek implying that she agrees that iCan might be about “engaging the nation,” but the difference for Melissa is that iCan intends to “engage the nation *with the BBC*,” similar to Poppy Hughes’ point about BBC accountability. Thus, the principle of using “actual” user identities contributes to fostering a strong connection between producers and users. In a very practical sense, and as emphasized by iCan’s technical manager, the use of “real” names and “truthful information” helps ensure some user responsibility.

Additionally, providing accurate personal information created avenues for others (both users and producers) to “access” content, technologies and people. I refer to this as the tripling of access. However, it is important to note that while iCan team members may have had good intentions; there were no guarantees that these practices were not used in manipulative ways.

### **Urban Tapestries**

UT, in contrast, exercised a principle of anonymity. Users were assigned pseudonyms rather than allowed to use their real names; these aliases were automatically used for labelling pockets, threads or other content generated for the mobile platform. For example, users were automatically assigned a user name which combined the UT acronym and randomly designated numbers (e.g. “utlt\_175”). Of course, there were no formal conditions limiting how users could represent their identities *within* pockets or through any other user generated content. In some ways this contradicts the formal obligation to provide “truthful” information, but in practice, “truthful” information only refers to private data shared between UT producers rather than presented on or through the platform. Thus, although this principle was exercised informally, UT producers speak of anonymity as strengthening both individual and community connectivity by avoiding prejudice and identity politics. For instance, Benjamin suggested that:

... where Urban Tapestries could be very interesting is that if the shift is *anonymous* and it's, if it was that, let's say for instance, everyone has a mobile phone now, let's say it can run Urban Tapestries. And people use it to share information all over the place, you know, do it in an *anonymous* way so I don't know who you are and I don't put a value judgement on your information based on what I can perceive of your class, your race, your colour, your religion, the kind of accent you have. The great thing about the

data in Urban Tapestries is that it will be relatively free of nearly all of those things (Benjamin, Proboscis director and UT co-founder, UT interview, 17/04/2004).

According to Benjamin, anonymity involves protecting personal identities from stereotyping and bias. Brian elaborates on this notion, introducing what anonymity means for those who are familiar and for those who are strangers:

And with that thing of, you know, because if a total stranger, that you wouldn't necessarily go up and start nattering to. You know, they can leave a slight, a kind of semi anonymous ... trace of themselves, and then you can pick up on that, and play around with it, you know. And that's why I say I'm not sure how it would then work in a rural community, because ... most rural communities have got those very strong ... social connections. And so, pretty much everybody knows what's going on, and I do wonder how enveloping that would then be, you know. But it would be very good, [to] just leave an anonymous like thing (Brian, UT Interface designer, UT interview, 26/07/2004).

Thus, for UT producers, the principle of anonymity helped construct users' social connectivity not only to each other, but also to the places they occupy. When contrasted with iCan, the different emphases on rights and obligations become clear. For example, for iCan, the principle of "actual" identities prioritizes the relationship between producers and users. This means that iCan producers make use of the kinds of links their users provided in order to develop responsiveness to users and (implicitly at least) accountability to audiences. In contrast, the "anonymity" principle exercised in UT placed the focus more on the relationships between users, rather than on producers and their interactions with users.

### **Implications**

The issue here is not only about anonymity or authenticity; nor is it only about the various ways identities are formally regulated to make links between users and producers. I argue, instead, that there are three important implications, two of which directly correspond to the technological mediation of cultural rights in two public sites.

First, the formal and informal rights and obligations are about the pathways each case takes in mediating publics – to each other, to each case, and between producers and publics. In iCan, producers represented themselves

not only as public gatekeepers, but also, implicitly, as the public. This point is illustrated by the contrast between iCan's primary obligation to "engage the nation in the public sphere" and iCan's role in enabling the BBC accountability to audiences. For UT, this is in some ways reversed. UT users are the centre point of publics and UT producers are positioned as mediating such publics to more "elite" communities such as artists, researchers and designers. In both cases, these contrasts indicate that producers are attempting to establish lines of communication between users and with public agents (producers). Implicitly, the prerequisites for identity making in each case indicates that identities are indeed a form of user generated content; and that digital fluency in creating case specific self representations function as a kind of digital passport, regulated by rules that can be used to invoke or revoke privileges.

Second, the formal regulations around identities also point to the ways in which the representation of identities for both producers and users *became* content. This does not point to blurry divisions between audiences and users, but to audiences as commodities. Audiences, users, producers and publics are positioned as content. Representations of users' identities (and to some degree, this is also applicable to producers) were *the* substantive material on and within each site.

Finally, there are tensions between formal and informal rights and obligations. Informally, the ways in which both user and producer identities were presented ultimately involve issues of access. These processes indicate not only a doubling of access for users (access to information and access to technology) but also a reverse flow where producers gain access to the public. In this sense, access rights were tripled because producers used their projects to access *users* for their own means (e.g. in terms of regulating content, in terms of reaching audiences to strengthen users' relationship to the BBC and to "get" audiences to participate more fully in the iCan site). As mentioned in chapter 5, iCan mentors were repeatedly contacted by the iCan team, including when they were invited by the team to *become* mentors. Thus, iCan's principle of authenticity ensures producers' rights to access users, their identities (as content), and to any content users provide while also holding users accountable

for all of these things.

Building upon this tripling of access, users' rights and obligations were also highly individualized, and tended to specify what users could and could not do. In contrast, producers' rights and obligations were more collective, referring to both organizational and team actions. Again, this highlights not only significant tensions between individualization and collectivization but also strengthens the argument that it is *producers* whose citizenship and cultural rights are bolstered by new media, and indeed, through each case. Although this section has pointed to some of the overlaps between the representations of identities and the representations of content, I now turn to some of the ways that content and participation are blurred in each case through copyright and some regulations on participation.

## **Copyright, content and the regulation of participation**

There are five commonalities across both cases regarding the regulation of content. For producers these include the following:

1. producers retain "FULL" copyright of any and all content;
2. the right to provide content, services, products "AS IS;"
3. the right to make errors, interruptions, delays, insecurities, inaccuracies, to be unreliable, to transmit bugs or viruses and generally assert the right to *not* guarantee quality (please note that I am paraphrasing here and these "rights" are framed negatively); and
4. producers have *no* obligations concerning the distribution, publication, use or quality of content.

The fifth commonality, as addressed in section 6.2, is that users have very few rights. Those that they do have are varied and summarized in table 6.2. Users have also been designated numerous obligations; many of which personalized user responsibilities for the provision and quality of content. Users had to grant permissions to producers, in addition to granting total exemptions to producers from any liability, warranty or potential legal proceedings. Despite these commonalities, there were also interesting differences, highlighted in table 6.2 below (see appendices 6.1 and 6.2 for further details):

**Table 6.2: Contrasting rights and obligations between cases concerning “content”**

	<b>Users</b>	<b>Producers</b>
<b>Rights</b>	UT (Total: 1) Right to pursue copyright infringement – (and as a sub clause UT provides contact details for UT 'copyright agent')	UT (Total: 9 and 2 sub clauses)
	iCan (Terms) (Total: 1) Freedom from unnecessary e-mails	iCan (Terms) (Total: 5)
	iCan (Rules) (Total: 3) Right of iCan users to make contributions or run campaigns; to add comments; or to write something longer or on a different subject, such as an article, case study, or guide	iCan (Rules) (Total: 2) Right to not endorse or support any public content or campaigns
<b>Obligations</b>	UT (Total: 7)	UT (Total: 0)
	iCan (Terms) (Total: 5 and 2 sub clauses) Users must use an appropriate and inoffensive user name	iCan (Terms) (Total: 0)
	iCan (Rules) (Total: 4 and 7 sub clauses) Users must 'stick to the truth' (use fact and not assumptions that supported with sources or links) Users must contribute in English or Welsh	iCan (Rules) (Total: 0)

Unpacking the rights and obligations associated with content is complex, not only because the line between content and identifications was partially blurred, but also because the provision of content (by users or producers) was bound up in participation. As such, I concentrate on only one formal aspect of content: copyright. There are also tensions emerging around access to content (as information) and access to the public (through other users and through producers). In this sense, some rights and obligations were organized around each site as strategies of engagement in somewhat contradictory ways. For example, framing content as information poses questions of technological, media, political and cultural literacy (addressed in chapter 2 and 7). Ultimately, content covers many things.

## **Copyright**

...but copyrights ... and civic rights are sort of human rights almost. So, we started campaigns around that that we knew would be based around educating [illegible] get to educate our kids through that. So, I've done at least 5 or 6 of these type of programs because they've been successful (Ryan, iCan Technical manager, interview, 26/03/2004).

In my view, copyright and intellectual property rights are one of the most important concerns for “technologically” distinct rights and obligations, particularly in an era marked by simultaneous forces of open democratization and private commodification.<sup>98</sup> As such, *who* owns user generated content, *how* it is used and *where* it is distributed raises contentious and controversial debates. Some producers (Ryan and most of the UT team) advocated the use of creative commons licences in iCan, which would have offered users control over the distribution and use of their content. However, creative commons licensing was not formally endorsed and producers were allocated all copyrights for user generated content in both cases, as a basic condition of use. This is important. Karel Vasak, the French Jurist and the first Secretary-General for the International Institute of Human Rights, argues:

The protection of copyright and the preservation of the cultural heritage are indispensable if people are to participate fully in cultural life. The moral and material interests of all forms of intellectual output are protected by a number of international agreements, including the Universal Copyright Convention of 1952 (Vasak 1977: 33).

Both cases come from public organizations. In many ways, the formal ownership of all copyrights and intellectual property rights is surprising and undermines the extension of cultural forms of participation fostered by each case. In this sense, both cases are not about citizenship. The absence of the “public” in formal rights and obligations suggests that rather than “preserving” user generated “cultural heritage,” iCan was focused on preserving BBC audiences. This is significant because although both cases are publicly funded, there are no safeguards for ensuring that any content remains accessible to the

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<sup>98</sup> These twin forces are particularly visible in participatory and social networking platforms characteristic of web 2.0, like targeted advertising on Facebook or Metallica’s supposed loss of profits due to file sharing. For an interesting interpretation of these tensions in Flickr and other social networking sites, see this article: “Loser Generated Content”(Petersen 2008).

public, especially regarding user generated content. Excluding the “public” from formal rights and obligations contributes to the uneven distribution of power, ownership and control of public information, in favour of the organizations and potentially at the user’s expense.

There are several further tensions emerging around copyright and ownership, the first of which is that users must *grant* complete permissions to producers. For example, the following sections of iCan and UT’s (respectively) formal contracts show the extent to which users are obliged to give away copyrights to *the content they provide*:

... to grant the BBC a 'perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive, sub-licensable right and license to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, create derivative works from, distribute, perform, play and exercise all copyright and publicity rights with respect to your contribution worldwide and/or to incorporate your contribution in other works *in any media now known or later developed* for the full term of any rights that may exist in your contribution, and in accordance with privacy restrictions set out in the BBC's privacy policy. If you do not want to grant to the BBC the rights set out above, please do not submit your contribution to BBCi (iCan 'Terms and Conditions,' 24/03/2004; c.f. iCan 'Terms and Conditions' 23/06/2005).<sup>99</sup>

... to grant to us a worldwide, royalty-free, perpetual, non-exclusive right and license (including any moral rights or other necessary rights) to use, display, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, distribute, perform, promote, archive, translate, and to create derivative works and compilations, in whole or in part. Such license will *apply with respect to any form, media, technology known or later developed* (UT, Terms of 'Acceptable Use,' 04/06/2004).

In addition to the insistence that users *must* grant full permissions to producers, these permissions are future resistant. Copyright extends to “any media now known or later developed.” In this sense, the organization of copyright has great implications for the “generations of tomorrow,” particularly as the BBC and Proboscis made permanent claims to user generated content, public information and other site materials.

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<sup>99</sup> The only significant change from February 2004 to June 2005 is that in that time, BBCi (BBC Innovation) removed the “i” in its name. Other than this nominal change, largely due to organizational restructuring, the “terms and conditions” have remained identical for both the BBC and iCan.

However, and particularly for iCan, numerous copyright contradictions were informally exercised in everyday producer / user interactions. First and foremost, one iCan team member insisted that iCan used a Creative Commons licence and that the formal terms and conditions specifying otherwise must be out of date.<sup>100</sup> Despite the inaccuracy of this claim, Ryan explains why copyright was so important to the iCan team:

... we want the right to be able to share that [user content] with other people, otherwise there's no point in giving it to us and [they may as well] put it somewhere else, so that's the only right we want. We don't want to sell it to anyone we don't want [to take] that attribution and we value it particularly because we don't [want] people to think that we wrote it (Ryan, iCan Technical manager, iCan interview, 26/03/2004).

Ryan highlights the principal justification for the allocation of some copyrights to iCan and the BBC, but does not justify or explain why full copyrights were allocated to producers and the BBC. Other iCan team members emphasized that even though they formally had the rights to use any user generated content in any way, different strategies for "sharing" and promoting users' content were used in practice:

I think that we are going more towards that model where you [as in users] own the copyright, and that we have the right, the licence to use it, but I think that that's one thing we want to move towards. But anyway, in terms of our fair dealing with the public, we would actually, if we wanted to use stuff from our out-box, we *would contact the person to discuss that with them*. We're not in the business of ripping people off or using stuff without their knowing about it (Russell, iCan Editorial team leader, iCan interview, 16/03/2004).

I just think that that was normal practice [contacting users in order to ask permission to use their campaigns for other BBC news stories] for us anyway. I mean purely out of manners and respect for our users. It would have been very callous to have just taken people's stories. At the end of the day, we were not acting as news journalists. We were providing this platform to allow *people to own content*. *It's their content, and we clearly say on the site that it's their content. And we'll contact them, certainly, if we were going to use their content [elsewhere]* (Bridget, iCan Project manager, iCan interview, 18/09/2007).

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<sup>100</sup> Despite numerous double checks of the terms and conditions, this does not seem to be the case. The BBC did implement a Creative Commons licence for its Creative Archive, but even in 2007, the BBC and Action Network "terms and conditions" still allocate full copyright to the BBC. When asked about this contradiction in the follow-up interview, Bridget emphasized that "copyright was never an issue because as you say in the BBC rules it says that, but I never think about it" (iCan Project manager, iCan interview, 18/09/2007).

Russell and Bridget point out that many team members take informal user rights into account. Additionally, both Russell and Bridget claim users *own* their contributions. While this seems to be the guiding principle in practice, it absolutely contradicts the formal allocation of all copyrights to producers and their organizations. Again, this points in some ways to a blurring of the boundaries between representations of identities and content. However, and this is extremely important in terms of the legitimacy of “ownership” and user “empowerment,” *the BBC and Proboscis maintain formal ownership of all copyrights for anything ever hosted on either platform*. In this sense, the rights highlighted by Russell and Bridget above are courtesies rather than binding legal rights. Formally, the BBC is *not* required to contact contributors regarding the distribution, use or dissemination of *their* content. However, it is relevant and appropriate that iCan team members sought consent, making it a priority to inform users of the teams’ immediate intentions.

Related to the tripling of access, Russell and Bridget also made implicit references to one of the few rights allocated to users; that of “freedom from unnecessary BBC e-mails.” While the BBC did not appear to abuse this freedom during my fieldwork, Aaron did make three separate references to refusing “invitations” from the Action Network, as illustrated in the excerpt below:

The day before yesterday I had turned down an offer from BBC Action Network (iCan) to go to London to do an interview, I declined! (Aaron, iCan user, 72, GCSEs or below, retired, e-mail communication, 08/07/2005).

Aaron explained that the iCan team had approached him to become a mentor and had encouraged his participation in the site *as a mentor* by making comments on his campaign page. This partially illustrates the work producers did to develop relationships with users and emphasizes the importance of the informal systems of membership raised in chapter 5.

In contrast, UT team members engaged very different kinds of strategies around user generated content. For example, the UT team employed strategies for sharing user generated content across internal and external events in part to provide examples, and in part to inspire other potential users to see the UT

platform creatively. Oliver briefly highlights three user generated stories that were widely discussed by producers in creative labs and bodystorming events:

So when people took off their shoes for that body storming and started to go at it, and it was pretty varied crowd even though it was all, you know granted it was elites, but it was a varied group of elites. I was so surprised by \_\_\_\_\_. I mean you know where, one person did that fake U-boat coming up the Thames and selling fake [unclear] and the woman that did the map of all the arguments with her boyfriend or [even the thread with all] the party announcements. They're you know, I was agog that even having thought about this, so intensively over a model period, hadn't even dreamed of those ideas (Oliver, UT Information architect, UT interview, 09/08/2004).

Oliver also highlights one of the reasons such user experiences were widely shared; namely because such threads were surprisingly atypical (meaning not oriented towards tourists or towards providing a tour guide of a particular neighbourhood).

Copyright did not come up in UT participant observation or interviews, in part because the terms of "acceptable use" were developed at a later stage of this research. However, issues of content ownership did arise during interviews, indicating that copyright and intellectual property rights caused some friction among UT team members:

Because who does own the IP at Urban Tapestries? ... Because, yes ... in some ways it's like it's all owned by Proboscis first. You know, there are very distinct areas that have kind of been done by different specialists, you know. And that's not about a kind of commercial thing, it's more, as I say, it's, it's an emotional thing, and I do think that, with projects like that, maybe a smart thing to do would be to actually just have some kind of agreement between everybody that, this is, you know.... the contracts were signed, and the contracts were fine for Urban Tapestries, but Urban Tapestries has now, of course, has come to an end, and there is not going to be any development of Urban Tapestries. So now it's, it'll be Social Tapestries. And there was never a kind of a severing, saying how IP from Urban Tapestries, would be taken over into Social Tapestries... (Brian, UT Interface designer, interview, 26/07/2004).

Brian signed a contract with Proboscis which proves that he agreed to particular terms at the beginning of his work with UT. However, he highlights a fundamental tension between what he feels was an appropriate versus what he feels was an inappropriately extended use of those ideas in further iterations of UT and other Proboscis projects. Brian highlighted the negative implications of

Proboscis' peer-to-peer network model and their perpetual licence over UT intellectual property and user generated content. Team members did not equally share in the outcome, distribution or dissemination of their work. Thus while collaborative models of knowledge generation exercise important cultural rights; the uneven distribution of ownership raises important ethical and intellectual property issues.

In contrast to the BBC and the iCan team, Proboscis did not exercise principles of accountability. Largely, permissions were granted formally at the beginning of UT's interactions with either users or producers through formal contracts.

Issues of copyright and intellectual property appeared to fade into the background until the occasional point of conflict emerged (such conflict appeared to be rare and only ever took place internally). Brian emphasizes that, for him, issues of copyright and intellectual property are important, largely because he was emotionally attached to his ideas; rather than because of any profit driven concerns. Again, copyright had very different resonances for participants on informal levels than it did formally. Yet, Brian suggests that true to the terms of "acceptable use," UT did not have to get consent in order to use content generated by users or other team members in any context or at any time.

Regardless of the disjunctures between the formal allocation of rights and obligations and the informal articulations of those rights and obligations, producers exercised control over content in line with formal copyrights. Yet, Ithiel de Sola Pool offers an alternative interpretation on the importance of copyright:

Both copyrights and patents, for example, are for finite terms, require disclosure, and may not be used to keep a product off the market. *They are monopolies intended in the end to promote rather than restrict access* (1983: 241).

When de Sola Pool made this argument, most copyrights were limited to a 50 year period, after which, content became part of the public domain. While many of the producers in both cases would agree with de Sola Pool's point, the perpetual copyright licensing threatens the public domain even if it was

intended “to promote rather than restrict access.” Thus although case producers claim to value the greater good and the public domain, these claims were threatened because of petty and strict intellectual property limitations.

Given the power differentials between producers and users (and also between producers and producers), the allocation of full copyright to organizations is deeply problematic. While iCan producers claim that users “own *their* content,” team members are separate from their organizations. This separation holds great potential for misuse, exploitation and commodification of user generated content because informal practices were conducted in different ways by different producers. Thus, in many ways, the regulation of relationships through content was very much linked to different modes and forms of participation. Based on these cases, informal practices tended to illustrate a deepening of cultural rights and citizenship oriented practices for producers. Yet formal copyrights indicate that much of this “deepening” may be rhetorical and superficial, because both cases continued to allocate power to those with more control. In order to build on this argument, I next turn to “reactive moderation,” one of the most interesting rights and obligations associated with the regulation of participation.

### ***Regulation and participation***

Many formal rights and obligations targeted users’ “conduct of conduct,” meaning that users were required to adhere to formal national legalities but were also expected to respect principles of respect and equality. Although much can be said of such rights and obligations, these are fairly standard conventions. As such, I concentrate on the regulations with the most interesting implications, such as the individualization of responsibility through “reactive moderation.”

Reactive moderation was a strategy for regulating content, which relied on users to notify producers as and when appropriate. Russell describes this process as involving:

... someone [primarily users] to make a judgement - a basic judgement - that it [the campaign, comment, article or guide] needs to be hidden or rejected. Even if they're not sure, if they make a judgement to hide it, that's great, and what that means is that we can catch it [and] then move quite quickly. In that last thing I just said, we've got *reactive moderation* (Russell, iCan Editorial project leader, interview, 16/03/2004).

While users in both cases were formally obliged to "immediately notify us [UT] of any unauthorized use" or to "tell us [the BBC]" if "you think the iCan rules have been broken" (UT, Terms of "Acceptable Use," 04/06/2004; and iCan site 24/03/2004). Although the UT team don't identify this obligation as relating to a regulatory strategy, it resonates with what iCan producers have called "reactive moderation." Russell goes on to say that users are "good at alerting" the iCan team to:

... offensive content, racism, swearing, that kind of thing, advertising and that kind of thing. But where the jury is still out is strictly on legal issues [such as libel] because that's something where users' aren't as aware of the ramifications of the issues around them (Russell, iCan Editorial project leader, interview, 16/03/2004).

Although the small number of users and the early stage of technical development meant that UT producers did not need to regulate content. Despite this, similar kinds of strategies were considered in team meetings in case the need were to ever arise. For the BBC, Russell highlights that iCan users were enrolled in the regulatory process, and that producers relied on them to fulfil their formal obligations by notifying the BBC of any misconduct. The implications of this are threefold. First, and as Melissa articulates below, this user obligation was also connected to what is formally described as the BBC's (and hence also iCan's) obligation to "impartiality." For example, when asked how iCan team members would respond to racist content posted by the British National Party, Melissa replies:

... we're not there to moralise or to judge and there are British laws and there are iCan rules and when people sign up they agree to those rules. So we've said no to racial hatred or other types of hatred, um, and in, and we've said no personal attacks and we've said no libel so... So people aren't doing that, not with us, we're a service for every UK licence payer. So if they want to do something to promote their own personal or community culture ... then that is entirely up to them because they are not breaking the law, and it's not for us to bring in any personal opinions that we might have to bear on that or ... there are some sites with a front page

where we *might choose to moderate something* and that is where we *exercise judgement*, but I mean we only take stuff down if it breaks the UK laws or if it breaks the iCan rules (Melissa, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).

In this sense, iCan producers are expected to refrain from moral and political judgement, providing an “equal platform” for any user to participate (although as argued in the preceding chapter, “any” has very specific applications). The second implication, which also applies to UT, refers to a larger tension between processes of democratization and the formal responsibilization of individuals for others within institutional processes. In this sense, individuals have been encouraged to be more active in generating content and/or by participating as they see fit in social kinds of media; yet they are also saddled with many responsibilities for others and for the quality of content that they otherwise have no control over. As such, the third implication is intimately bound up with these tensions and refers to both the dialectics of action *and* Nicholas Rose’s argument that freedoms are simultaneously a “formula of resistance” and a “formula of power” (as discussed in chapter 2).

Reactive moderation is very much about users regulating *other users*; a point which strongly resonates with Rose’s argument that freedom is not only “infused with power relations” but is also fundamentally about a process of governance exercised from the top-down. This kind of strategy resembles formulas for “self-improvement” and “becoming engaged.” In this instance, freedom is also about the internalization of governance. Here, reactive moderation is employed along a very similar logic of action; at once about engagement, empowerment and the enabling of positive action and at once about enculturation through internalization and self-improvement.

Nonetheless, to return to the tension between democratization and the responsibilization of users: if copyrights were distributed more equally, the connotations would be different. As a condition of their participation, users are formally obligated to notify UT or iCan of any infraction to the project rules or terms and conditions. Although some might argue that reactive moderation in fact opens the media or public sphere to a larger proportion of the public, there are troublesome components associated with this “widening of public

participation.” For example, Melissa says “there are some sites … where we *might choose to moderate something*,” which points to a contradiction between the exercise of moral judgement and the role of producers as public moderators. Access to and participation in each case are both still regulated and controlled by producers. While users may be enrolled in the process of “alerting” producers to what might potentially be infractions, the decision of how, when and what to “moderate,” still remains with the producers. Similar to issues of copyright, such obligations involve highly differentiated strategies of participation. Producers maintain control as “reactive moderation effectively only grants powers of notification to users.

On the other hand, and arising from the interviews with individual UT users, this responsibilization also has a positive outcome; particularly as even the illusion of control can instil a sense of ownership, and hence, also of belonging.<sup>101</sup> For instance, Jill describes the relationship between these elements when she states:

If I take my personality, I love stories, but I am totally averse to going on a big tour, I don't want to be a tourist. For me the main use of this would be as a tour guide … and I could use it *in my own way, on my own time* in a very discrete way. And it could be totally personalized, *you could totally shut it up and that would allow you to hide it if you wanted* (Jill, UT user, 28, university graduate, teacher / musician, interview, 25/07/2003).

For Jill, the ability to participate on her own terms was the most important feature of the UT prototype, regardless of responsibilization processes or copyright issues. The other implication here, one that was not formally recognized in either case and was prevalent in five other UT individual user interviews, was Jill's allusion to *not participating*, to “totally shutting it up” and “hiding” the UT device. Indeed, the right to *not* participate is a critical and rather underdeveloped technologically specific right.

While I can only speculate that those iCan users who participated in “reactive moderation” also experienced a sense of ownership, the power differential in

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<sup>101</sup> This is also a point Michael Bull makes regarding his research around Walkman users and how personal music devices and song choice are used to claim ownership over public spaces (Bull 2000).

the form and regulation of participation is still important. The implications attached to the regulation of participation indicate a dialectical relationship between freedom and responsibility, where procedural rights work in tandem with substantive rights and freedom is both about liberty and control – exercised from within and from without. Such dialectics are further accentuated by the varied ways that the digital representation of identities can (or cannot) provide a kind of “passport” enabling access, can (or cannot) contribute to the ways these sites are negotiated and can (or cannot) provoke negative and positive implications for both user and producer forms of engagement.

#### **6.4. Freedoms and control: Informal rights and obligations**

One of the contradictions emerging from this analysis is the absence of any mention of “freedom” within the formal terms and contracts. There is a strong often indirect emphasis on enabling *freedom* through political or cultural engagement, but little to no formal acknowledgement of this kind of positive right.<sup>102</sup> As identified in previous chapters, most respondents (certainly all producers) prioritize the greater good, individual liberties and aim to foster positive connections between the two. Yet, this altruism does not preclude the tensions between rights and obligations, between freedom and control, between technologies and ideologies and the bundling of such tensions within logics of action implicitly and explicitly enabled through and within each case. In this section, I examine how respondents articulate “freedom” in each case and reflect upon how these articulations contribute to a dialectics of action through formal and informal means.

##### **Freedoms to ...**

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<sup>102</sup> According to John Corner, similar conundrums are also present in larger debates over “media freedom” particularly as “*media freedom* is routinely invoked to indicate a desirable absence of constraint on the media industries themselves rather than to indicate the desirable conditions for members of a democratic public to access a range of information and to encounter and express a range of opinions. Thus a negative and essentially economicistic version of media freedom supplants a more positive and essentially civic version, if not always and not altogether (the idea of Public Service Broadcasting being an outstanding exception, although one often unclear in specific application and increasingly under threat)” (Corner 2004: 893).

And technology has given people the *freedom to create, to be, do whatever they wish*. That's what the web is about. That's what is so amazing about it (Bridget, iCan Project manager, interview, 18/09/2007).

... and if it's good, then we'll [UT team] carry on working with it, you know. And that was quite nice, because there was that *freedom*, then, *to start developing the ideas* (Brian, UT interface designer, interview, 26/07/2004).

Bridget and Brian both refer to the technological mediation of freedom as first a "freedom to create" and second as a freedom to "develop ideas." Notably, Bridget is referring to users and Brian is referring to his co-producers. In many ways, these freedoms are reminiscent of Frankenfeld's technologically specific right "of innovators to innovate" (discussed in chapter 3). However, Bridget is locating this freedom primarily in the domain of users ("to be, do whatever *they wish*"), a sentiment that is supported by other iCan informants:

... that *you can feel free to do what you want* and that's why in the beginning we were trying so hard not to make moral judgements about people but to give people a space where they feel comfortable, showing them a variety of things (Melissa, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).

The other connotation of Melissa's argument here is that when she speaks of the difficulty of refraining from "moral judgements about people" she is referring to an informal aspect of one of the formal principles articulated in the iCan rules:

Please note that the BBC is committed to impartiality. We provide a platform for iCan users to make contributions or run campaigns, but we do not endorse or support any of them (preamble, iCan rules, 05/06/2004).

Another tension between the iCan and UT informants here, is that Bridget and to some degree, Melissa, frame the "freedom" to "be" or to "do" in an infinite sense (e.g. "*whatever they wish*" and "*what you want*"). This is a classic technologically deterministic association, yet it is more carefully negotiated when Brian refers to the "freedom to *start developing ideas*" and, as such, recognizes specific limits on the freedom to create.

Yet, surprisingly, the freedom to "be" or to "do" whatever they wish is reflected in only one of the user interviews (and a UT user at that), albeit with rather less altruistic or "positive" aims and not directly in relation to either case. When

asked about her relationship with communication technologies, Betty replied:

B: ... Well, there's two things that happen really. One is the work coming in and I need to be available for contact all the time. And the other is that I quite often juggle several contracts at once. If I'm at the \_\_\_\_\_ and I need to talk to an agency, I can still play that game, whereas if you've got land lines, you can't really do that.

Z: You can't keep up.

B: Yeah. And the other thing is that you can give the impression that I'm in quite high demand, so if I'm in the library or the park, and I can say 'yeah, I'll get on that as soon as I can.'

Z: So it gives you...

B: The *freedom to lie*, yeah [both laugh].

(Emphasis added, excerpt of interview with Betty, UT user, 27, post-grad, freelance copywriter, 01/08/2003).

Thus, while Betty identifies mobile technologies as granting her the "freedom to lie," the real issue at stake here is that Betty can control *how* and *where* she represents herself. Similar to Jill (UT user, 28, university graduate, teacher / musician), Betty highlights the importance of the *freedom to control* personal information and representations (accurate or otherwise) of that information. Control of the representation of that information, personal or otherwise, is a contested issue, as for many users the threat of losing control of personal information or of the information they are exposed to is also an issue.<sup>103</sup>

There is another issue raised by user respondents, though like Betty's claim about mobile technologies and "the freedom to lie," it is not necessarily in relation to either case directly and does not necessarily refer to new technologies; this is the issue of *free access to free information*.<sup>104</sup> Although Helen (iCan user, 50, PhD, IT Support), Mark (UT user, 29, some college, staff nurse) and other users also raise the issue of free information, Aaron posts the following plea for information on a *free information seminar*:

I have been told that there is a *free seminar* on Thursday 29 April at Hill Street 6th Form College in Cambridge at 7.30 where people can hear all about this breakthrough, but I have not been able to find out anything about

<sup>103</sup> For example, the UT users Mandy, Stanley, Joe, Armand and Maria all raised this as an issue during interviews (see Silverstone and Sujon 2005: 42-49 for more details).

<sup>104</sup> Although many scholars, practitioners and advocates have debated this issue at length in terms of the free software movement, peer-to-peer information sharing (or what some call "piracy"), hacking, privacy, open source communities, among others, this is not an issue addressed directly in the new citizenship literatures I have addressed here (see Stallman 2006 [2002]).

it. I presume whoever is doing it has sent out information but I can't find it anywhere. If anyone knows any more about this, please let me know. I think it is such a waste when *understanding* of problems that can effect people's lives so crucially are ignored (Aaron, iCan campaign, "Help Children with Dyslexia and Dyspraxia," created 27/04/2004).

One of the things that is particularly interesting about this quotation is that, although Aaron has the basic details, he wants *more* information about the event. As such, access and information are not the only freedom at stake here. Instead, and as Aaron highlights, *understanding, further information* and by implication *knowledge* help make "free" events meaningful. In this sense, it is not only about free access to free information, but also freedom to exercise choice in the degree or quality of that information. Significantly, this also resonates with the rights to "be informed." However, in terms of the *in situ* rights within these cases, the formal and codified obligations present somewhat of a contradiction. For example, both cases stipulate that it is the user's responsibility "to review terms and conditions" and "keep informed" of any changes; two obligations that are buttressed by the right of producers to "amend the terms and conditions" at any time and without notice. In this sense, the "right be informed" is rearticulated by producers as the "right *not to inform*."<sup>105</sup>

Thus, the freedoms often informally identified by respondents include the freedom to creativity, control over the representation of personal information and free access not only to information and knowledge, but also in determining the quality of that information. Fundamentally, such freedoms are about *choice* and what respondents would like to (not) be informed of. While I have not fully unpacked the implications of what Melissa has termed the "freedom to act," Betty's "freedom to lie" implies that such freedoms are negative rather than ideal. Other similar freedoms could include rights to resist, to engage in trouble making and to behave in a manner that doesn't follow the rules. Nonetheless, I now turn to the ways in which respondents refer to "freedoms from."

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<sup>105</sup> Notably, however, the BBC does formally codify the user "right to know and be informed of how one has breached BBC [or iCan] rules," to be informed of any consequences of such violations and also, asserts that users have the "right to be warned of any actions the BBC" might take.

## Freedoms from ...

As alluded to above, “freedoms to” often come with some contestation and are also often accompanied by formal or informal responsibilities and obligations. “Freedoms from” are no different. However, they have been described as “negative” rights, ensuring protections from institutions, government or the state, for example. Very much in line with this tradition, one of the technologically distinct rights identified earlier *is* clearly articulated as both a formal right and an obligation in both cases: namely, “the freedom from commercial manipulation.” Both cases explicitly state that users will in *no way* have any:

...rights to make any commercial uses of our web site or service (UT Acceptable Use 04/06/2004); and

[and must comply to rules stating] ‘No advertising’ and ‘No money-making. We don’t want people to use iCan for advertising, commercial activities or fund-raising (BBCi Terms and Conditions, 24/03/2004 and iCan Rules, 04/06/2004).

As such, these obligations attempt to ensure that one of the strongest public cultural rights is adhered to: the freedom from commercial manipulation. On this note, both cases prioritize this right and in this way, exemplify one of the best qualities of both cases. One of the iCan team members justifies the importance of this “freedom from,” highlighting what they see as a key problem in many “excellent” public sites inviting user generated content:

... they are *crammed with advertising*. You can’t move on the site for advertising. You can’t see what’s going on, you can’t see [because] you’re assaulted (Melissa, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).

Both cases prioritize the public rather than commercial character of each project. Both sites are exempt from third party commercials, advertisements and endorsements. However, this “freedom from” is not absolute. For example, although users for both cases are restricted from advertising, Proboscis formally asserts its rights to host third parties and that:

Goods and services of third parties may be advertised and/or made available on or through this web site. Representations made regarding products and services provided by third parties are governed by the policies

and representations made by these third parties. We shall not be liable for or responsible in any manner for any of your dealings or interaction with third parties (UT, terms of Acceptable Use, 04/06/2004).

UT held formal partnerships with 6 private corporations (including France Telecom R&D, Orange, Ordnance Survey, Apple Computer UK, Garbe (UK) Ltd & Sony Europe), so while their assertion of third party advertising may not be surprising, it is problematic. However, third parties did not necessarily mean commercial or private interests. Instead third parties referred to others using collaborative forms of knowledge development or using the peer to peer network for whatever reasons. Oliver brings up the idea of the “potlatch” and the gift economy which, for him, are inherent within internet cultures:

The internet was a fabulous accident that dropped in our laps, and a perfect example of the gift economy [such as] the Potlatch<sup>106</sup> .... So suddenly, poof, we get this thing that's basically *free*.... because they [big ISP's] couldn't possibly keep track of all the packets in order to actually change my input. So it's *free*. So the Internet has always been that way. Mobile phones were set-up after that, and the operators guard every bit of traffic on their networks, you know, with all the weaponry that they can rustle, economically (Oliver, UT Information architect, interview, 09/08/2004).

Notably, the mobile industry is presented as a dangerous capital force, using “economic weapons” to guard their “traffic.” In this way, Oliver contrasts public and private organizations; where private stands for profit driven technological developments and public stands for more open, “free” engagement with participants. Oliver places *public* aims over commercial ones. Yet, Oliver is also romanticizing this contrast by implicitly referring to “altruistic” kinds of principles underpinning the gift economy. The gift economy may inform ideas of “free” participation in both cases, but participation in such new media networks is rarely understood as gift giving by producers or by users. Indeed, ownership and copyrights complicate the role of user generated content and public materials in cultural sites.

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<sup>106</sup> The “potlatch” is a well known concept in anthropology meant to refer to aboriginal social rituals based on a “gift economy.” A potlatch involved inviting community members to a decadent feast and in this way, was a kind of party. According to Marcel Mauss, “potlatch meant originally ‘to nourish’ or ‘to consume’” and as one of “the most important of these spiritual mechanisms [in the gift economy] is clearly the one which obliges us to make a return gift for a gift received” (Mauss 1967 [1923]: 4, 5, respectively).

The other implication of “freedoms from” commercial manipulation is that, despite efforts to create alternatives, users (and to some degree, producers) are discursively framed as *consumers*. Although the choice of *what* to consume is often discursively constructed as a “freedom of choice,” rather than as an inevitable consumer oriented outcome. Even the notion of a “free internet,” as identified by Oliver, is contrasted with the economically “unfree” mobile industry, and thus, ultimately constructs a framework of action based on predominantly economic forms of exchange. In contrast, the other issue raised by the “freedoms from” is that of access; particularly “free” access unfettered by economic constraints and costs.

In summary, users from both cases must not engage in commercial advertising. Yet, UT differs slightly from iCan here because although both informally and formally advocate “freedoms from commercial manipulation,” Proboscis reserves the right to host or represent third party goods or services. This tension highlights disjunctions between formal practices and what Oliver refers to as “the gift economy.” These strategies of exchange inform the relationship between users, user generated content and producers; although the grounds for this economy and legal control of the conditions of this exchange continue to be defined and controlled by producers.

## 6.5. Conclusions: Cultural Rights and Technological Freedoms

How could we create ideas, projects which would inspire people to take control of the technologies in more interesting and creative ways, to make them more socially responsible and responsive? (Benjamin, Proboscis co-founder and UT Co-director, interview, 17/04/2004).

Benjamin identifies some of the normative aims so often behind the technological mediation of citizenship and so often informing discussions and debates around what the technological intersections with citizen rights and obligations *should* entail. These are not issues I have addressed in this chapter. Although part of the reason I have written this chapter is because these normative aims contain logics of action that simultaneously enable and disable behaviours. The conditions of use discussed in this chapter invoke

differential strategies of participation and differential cultural rights. These rights convey a logics of action that functions dialectically, through and across many contrasting, shifting dimensions, especially across formal and informal systems, through the exercise of freedom and control, and within collective and individual frames of action.

My motivation in writing this chapter (and also partially inspiring my doctoral research) stems from deep concerns about how the intersections between citizenship and new technologies are carried out and bundled up together. My concern is that the use of new technologies obscures systems of inequity. My concern is that the often optimistic association between citizenship and new technologies may invisibly incite disabling processes, practices of exclusion and of quietly, even accidentally, silence conflict or dissent. While there will always be a gap between formal and informal rules, between the map and the territory it depicts, this chapter does illustrate some of tensions and even moments of success instantiated through the *in situ* rights and obligations of the two empirical case studies presented here. Even with iCan producers' informal pursuit of consent from users, the empirical evidence presented here is overwhelmingly negative. The emancipatory potential of technologically specific and cultural rights to enable deeper forms of belonging and to widen avenues of and for public participation is seriously limited by differences between the objectives of each case and the differential allocation of rights, in favour of producers. Additionally, the absence of the "public" in formal terms and conditions poses a significant threat to publicly generated information and public models of participation.

Users are allocated many more obligations than producers, while producers are allocated many more rights than users; a finding that contradicts the placement of users at the centre of each case. I argue, as in the previous chapter, that this imbalanced distribution of rights and obligations firmly places producers at a prime location to navigate cultural sites of participation and expanded forms of citizenship. This vantage point comes with privileges, with power, but also comes with competition, conflict and organizational restraints.

What is clear is that the tensions between the ways in which new technologies are employed formally and informally signify that rights of and to “access” have, at least in these cases, tripled. Most significantly, media producers are using new technologies to access users, audiences and (potential) participants.

Additionally, users implicitly call for different kinds of rights than those necessarily acknowledged in either case. For example, some iCan users call not only for the right to be informed, but also for the right to choose the quality and depth and *what* they would like to be informed about; a call that stands in contrast to the responsibilization of users to be and to *keep* informed. Some UT users also call for the right *not* to participate, the freedom *from* not only each case but from the constant invocation *to* participate, to be better, to self govern and to engage. Ultimately, both of these “emerging” rights are about control, not only of content but also about the logics of action users are encouraged to pursue. Producers, on the other hand, also call for “emerging rights” such as the right to create or what Philip Frankenfeld calls “the right of innovators to innovate.” For users from both cases, such a right comes with ethical consequences and necessarily invokes power relations, that likely lead to friction and conflict, as highlighted in the UT case. Users from both cases are enrolled in regulatory practices, illustrating a rather contradictory dialectics of action marked by twin tensions between belonging and ownership and between responsibilization and exploitation.

As outlined in the beginning of this chapter, rights and obligations are intimately connected to the framework of and for membership, and as such, there are many correlations with the previous chapter. Furthermore, as Prior et al. would likely argue, the rights and obligations presented in this chapter closely resemble property rights, indicating that both cases advance liberal individualism rather than communitarian or collectively oriented politics. It is arguable that each case, which in so many ways are both about *mediating* citizenship through new media platforms, may signify a shift towards cultural forms of citizen participation. And it is this shift, in tandem with familiarity, commonality and *collective* or team oriented frames of action that privileges the position of producers as citizens. Despite principles of liberation, this shift rearticulates organizational frameworks and promotes liberal individualism. The

“tripling” of access and the allocation of copyrights, tightly held in the fists of producers and their organizations, support this view, and indeed highlight that differential access is actively reified between members, and as such, the capacities for exercising power exist more for producers than for users.

# **Chapter 7. Patterns of Participation and Public Citizenship**

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## **7.1. Introduction: The Contingencies of Citizenship**

In the previous empirical chapters, I examined patterns of membership and the distribution of rights and obligations within two case studies of new media citizenship initiatives. The analysis thus far shows that a dual system of membership systems exists in both cases. The first system of membership is a formal one, involving “terms” and “conditions of use,” employment contracts, rules and regulations governing the behaviours, conduct and conditions of membership for all case participants. The second membership system is informal and while it is particularly apparent in the mediation of membership for producers, it also applies to users. This second informal system is based on things such as social and cultural capital, value systems and shared interests. Each case tends to facilitate “member-centred” individualistic orientations for users; and more collaborative “membership-orientated” patterns of interaction amongst producers (chapter 5).

The strengthening of membership for producers is bolstered by the allocation of a disproportionately high number of formal rights to team members compared to the disproportionately low number of rights allocated to users or “ordinary”

people. Conversely, producers have a very low number of responsibilities whereas “ordinary” users must agree to a high number of obligations and responsibilities as a condition of participation (chapter 6). Thus far, the empirical research shows that despite claims and promises otherwise, these cases privilege producers over users. With well articulated cultural rights in place, producers are able to better negotiate the cultural domain through citizenship oriented forms of participation. The meaningful articulation of technologically specific ideas of citizenship and cultural rights is contingent upon the conditions of membership and the distribution of cultural rights.<sup>107</sup>

In this chapter, I argue that the evidence shows three distinct patterns of public participation: limited participation, partial participation and networked participation. The first section brings together case study evidence demonstrating that technologically specific citizenship practices are not citizenship oriented. Instead, this evidence shows sharply limited patterns of public participation, suggesting that the language of citizenship is used as a legitimating discourse in the battle for public leverage. Second, schematic profiles of case users, producers and “prod-users” show that social capital and literacy are key factors in mediating the social and cultural networks present in each case. This evidence suggests that meaningful participation is partial and fractured, enabling many connections and many cultural rights for some respondents, while effectively disabling both for others. Finally, I argue that each case generates practices of networked modes of production, which translates into a networked pattern of participation

These patterns of public participation have marked consequences for the depth and efficacy of cultural rights and cultural forms of citizenship. Taken as a whole, the evidence gathered here has two important implications. First, this research supports well established claims that new technologies “connect the

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<sup>107</sup> As Ingin Isin suggests, citizenship is always dialogical, always involving the relationship between the self and “otherness” (Isin 2008: 19). And there are numerous other dialogical tensions spanning processes and places of connectivity, such as the tensions between the individual and the collective, between an act and an action, between “the network” and the process of networking and ultimately between structure and agency, to name a few. While citizenship has never been static, pinpointing the intersections between cultural rights, new media and citizenship practices, even in two cases, can be problematic.

connected" (Norris 2001; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Nie et al. 1978). As such, the use of new technologies in both cases "simultaneously reinforces relations of cultural capital, hierarchy and distinction" (Stevenson 2000: 207; c.f. van Dijk 2005). Second, each media organization has created institutional spaces for ordinary publics to publicly negotiate the cultural domain. While the cases were unsuccessful in guaranteeing cultural rights for ordinary people, the institutionalization of this association is meaningful. The introduction of cultural rights and ordinary citizenship claims in these media organizations have changed public organizational practices to accommodate media professionals and members of the public (c.f. Glasser 1999; Carey 1999). In closing, I argue that these differential patterns of participation and the emergence of "public citizenship" are characteristic of ideas cultural citizenship in the early 2000s. Technologically specific ideas of citizenship and the kinds of public cases in this research mark a distinct moment in the history of media and citizenship. This moment can be understood through the emergence of cultural strategies for engaging ordinary publics through citizenship claims. This is significant. Although this research supports the extension of citizenship through the widening of public organizational practices in citizenship terms, "public citizenship" is distinct from ideas of cultural citizenship yet they are also closely and, even contingently, related.

## 7.2. Limited Participation and Non-Citizenship

There are three contrasting empirical themes, one of which demonstrates that both case studies foster limited forms of public participation and are not at all about citizenship. The first of these focuses on the shifting discourses of citizenship in case materials. These differential uses of "citizenship" (circa 2002-2005) indicate that manipulative participatory strategies and citizenship discourses were used as legitimizing strategies: to secure funding, to gain project support and security, and to claim larger stakes in social, cultural and political territories. While respondents repeatedly implied that such discursive inconsistencies came from the many challenges of running experimental projects with unfamiliar technologies in unfamiliar ways. While these

challenges are certainly legitimate, the second theme collates evidence pointing to the construction of different kinds of citizenship for different actors. I argue that these differential citizenships demonstrate very limited patterns of participation. The data here suggests that the extension of “citizenship” through new technologies is, at best, weak. At its worst, this extension is employed to manipulate participation to better promote and serve each organization’s self interests.

## Shifting discourses of citizenship

[Urban Tapestries] will explore the interface between *technological change, knowledge, community and citizenship* (emphasis added, excerpt from original aims of the Urban Tapestries project, circulated 12/2002).

Both cases originally employed ideas of citizenship in different ways. For example, in one of the original UT project briefs (as highlighted in the quotation above); UT was focused on exploring the relational qualities between technological change and citizenship. In contrast, iCan was primarily described as a “new online local citizenship initiative” during its 2003 pilot phase (e.g. BBC 2003a; BBC 2003b), and as such, frames citizenship as a kind of project outcome.

While both cases are remarkably different, there are also striking commonalities between them.<sup>108</sup> First, and as highlighted above, in the early stages of project development, citizenship is clearly and directly linked to each project (2002/3).

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<sup>108</sup> For example, the new charter builds upon the BBCi’s remit in 2003/4; which outlined the BBC’s use of new technologies for creating “more accountable and responsive relationships with audiences” and also, to “support the development of a digital UK” (BBC 2004b: n.p.). Also, in Michael Grade’s opening statement in the BBC’s 2003-4 Annual Report, he claims that “The BBC delivers value well beyond its programmes and services. The case we are making in the Charter Review process is that the BBC is worth keeping because of the immense amount of public value it delivers. Public value means not just the BBC’s value to people as individuals, but also its value to people as citizens, and beyond that, its value to the broadcasting and creative industries as a whole” (BBC 2004a: 2). Conversely, Proboscis’ organizational objectives as a cultural think tank are found in a one page document and rather than making any connections to citizenship, they focus on art, technology and their social impact. For example: “1) investigate the impact of new technologies (and artists’ use of them) on society; 2) explore the importance of experimental creative arts for industry and innovation and champion artists as key links in the development chain of new technologies, services and practices; 3) rethink what public art can be and how it impacts on society through new approaches and technologies” (Proboscis objectives as stated on the organization’s home page, 2004).

However, as each project grew, there appears to be a softening (more so for iCan) or fading (more so for UT) of citizenship discourses within each case (2004-2005). For instance, out of 23 BBC, DCMS and Ofcom Charter Renewal documents (2003-2005), iCan was most often directly associated with “community” rather than citizenship. For example, in these documents, iCan was described as one of many BBC “community initiatives” (BBC 2004: 34); as a “community resource” (BBC 2004d: 67); as enabling digital literacy as do several other “community user-generated content sites” (DCMS 2004); and as evidence of the BBC’s contribution to “social and community value” (BBC 2005: 55-56), through the facilitation of “digital literacy” and “active participation in community [or civic] life” (BBC 2005: 16, 25, 31, 63, 70). It is significant to note that these descriptions were often accompanied by portrayals of iCan as a shining example of the BBC’s commitment to create “engaging and accessible output,” “understand audience needs,” “contribute to informed citizenship” and “to help people participate” among many other claims (e.g. BBC 2004c; e).

This discursive shift from citizenship to community is important for three reasons. Although I discuss each further below, I summarize these points here. First, re-framing iCan in terms of community and as community oriented conflicted with producers’ ideas of iCan in practice. Second, such disjunctions point to a crisis of legitimacy and call into question the efficacy of such ambitious and conceptual kinds of projects. Third, the softening and even fading of the citizenship language suggests that these terms are employed strategically rather than for better enabling citizenship oriented goals.

In terms of re-framing, a national charity promoting digital inclusion called “Citizens Online” argues that despite the “extensive references to web-based output and initiatives, such as iCan,” digital inclusion is absent from BBC charter renewal documents and that:

Digital Inclusion is a key issue for the changes the BBC wishes to see, such as greater participation, supporting community, using the new technologies etc. This issue is not referred to in the document as far as we can see (BBC and Various 2004: 12)

And they are right. Issues of inclusion and indeed exclusion are important, and they are not directly addressed in relation to iCan in the Charter Renewal documents or interviews. iCan was born out of a vision for developing a “people’s parliament” and engaging “those who are disaffected with mainstream Westminster politics.” Framing iCan in terms of communities ends up obscuring the very same exclusionary processes the project was meant to challenge. As discussed in chapter 5, iCan targeted young people who were not politically engaged but ended up attracting mostly older users (35+) who were “active campaigners [and] who, of course... obviously knew how to use the web” (Bridget, iCan / Action Network Project leader, interview 18/09/2007).

This brings me to my second point. The connections between citizenship and iCan became distanced over time and “community” was increasingly used as a replacement, this replacement is problematic. For example, Theresa claims that “iCan is not necessarily an online community” and that they “are related but separate” (iCan, Editorial team member, interview 31/04/2004). Thus, not only is the language framing iCan shifting in official documents, but the way iCan is represented in Charter Renewal documents does not match the ways team members see or set their project goals.

Secondly and on this point, such contradictions call into question the efficacy of the BBC’s more ambitious aims. For example, how can the BBC achieve ambitious and abstract goals such as fostering “informed citizenship,” “increase[ing] accountability” to the public and “connecting communities” when one small project becomes the subject of inconsistent aims. In this sense, it seems unlikely that iCan might ever “initiate” citizenship or actualize better participatory forms. While this may seem to be overly cynical, it is a point that some team members from *both* teams support. For instance, when asked about their views on the relationship between their projects and citizenship, Russell, Bridget and Brian suggest that there is no connection:

That's not really something I think about a lot. I would...say it's about someone who is more aware of their rights and responsibilities and their place in society (Russell, iCan Editorial project leader, interview 16/03/2004).

Well, I'm not sure if it is [about citizenship]. The whole point of it was about engaging people and people being engaged in their local areas.... I think the thing is that people view us [iCan / BBC as] being a bit sort of nanny state, mothering, and it's really letting go of the reins and saying, 'there are people out there who are actually doing things and they don't need us' (Bridget, iCan / Action Network, Project leader, interview 18/09/2007).

I don't know [about UT and citizenship], because, where do you see that, the kind of line between, say, citizenship and community? Because, I, I think they are two very different things. Somebody can be a citizen, but they're not necessarily [the same].... or they can be a member of several communities, but they can [not] be a citizen (Brian, Urban Tapestries, Interface designer, interview 26/07/2004).

Third, Russell and Brian answered this question with a tone of surprise, emphasizing the fading of (or lack of agreement or inter-team communication on) original project objectives. Additionally, Russell, Bridget and Brian highlight a gap between project representations and team practices. For the UT case, Brian brings to the fore more of an *absence* of citizenship discourses, not only from formal materials but also from respondents' everyday practices.

The opening quotation for this section shows that the original aims of the Urban Tapestries project included enhancing citizenship through storytelling, social knowledge and the contingent intersections through and with community. And yet, "citizenship" rarely came up as a concept, as a set of practices or in direct relation to the UT platform. In fact, most team references to "citizenship" after the initial project brief was circulated in 2002, were in part inspired by the questions I raised, albeit rarely, as a participant observer. For example, and to my surprise, when asked what Teresa meant when she wrote about the potential of UT as hopefully creating:

... new forms of social currency, a stronger sense of belonging, technological citizenship and social empowerment (Teresa, UT cultural researcher, online article, 2003).

I was referred back to my own work, particularly my use of the term "technological citizenship" when describing my own research interests (Teresa, UT cultural researcher, interview, 26/03/2004).

What is clear is that despite the blurriness around the ways in which citizenship was discursively constructed through and connected to each case, there was a softening of how such discourses were applied. As each case developed, “citizenship” appeared to fade. In addition to this softening and distancing of “citizenship” from each case, citizenship was articulated differently for different audiences. This has implications for the kinds of participation case respondents were able to engage in.

## **Differential citizenships**

Drawing from case materials, it is evident that *no* respondents (producers and users) were directly enrolled or addressed as citizens. However, in public documents, particularly those used for funding applications or for publicity, users were directly constructed as citizens in a variety of ways and in a high number of materials.

iCan was originally a citizenship initiative targeting ordinary people and “small p” politics. As addressed elsewhere, iCan has been designed to help “people who feel disconnected from current political processes but who want to make a difference in civic life” BBC 2004a: 40). Although the focus on the “ordinary” and the “local” is shared with the UT case, the iCan case is unique in the ways in which different publics are discursively positioned. User oriented materials such as promotional materials distributed at public events and on the iCan site do not use the language of citizenship or participation. However, charter renewal documents and official BBC reports make great use of these concepts and terms.

For example, in two of the iCan’s early audience oriented promotional materials, “citizenship,” “citizen,” and “civic issues” are not mentioned at all, while “community,” “neighbourhood,” “Nation” and “country” are mentioned only once (BBC 2003). Any reference to “engaging the political nation” directly or indirectly is also entirely absent. In my view, this highlights fragmented articulations of citizenship, because “ordinary” and “disaffected” publics are not addressed as

citizens. Instead, they are addressed in informal conversational tones. This absence of citizenship language might suggest that the complexity of citizenship is understood by the BBC as beyond “ordinary” comprehension. If this is the case, ideas of citizenship are reserved for those interested in reading BBC, DCMS, Ofcom literatures, some “techno-geek” blogs and other complex materials. As discussed in chapter 5, these audiences are not the “ordinary” audiences or “local” individuals envisioned by the BBC. Yet, there was also an absence of “the citizen” which indicates a problematic relationship between the iCan site as a *citizenship initiative* and users as “non-citizens.”

A further example of this is the “public story,” featured on the iCan site as an instructional guide for newcomers and entitled “Jack changes his GP” (see figure 7.1 below). Drawing from discourse theorists (Potter 1996; Potter and Wetherell 2001; Fairclough 1995; 2001), the “order of discourse” or overall tone of the “public story” is conversational. Fairclough suggests that this kind of tone could “manifest a real shift in power relations in favour of ordinary people”; or alternatively, it could mark the emergence of a sophisticated marketing strategy targeting the commodification of audiences and “ordinary” or “normal” people (1995: 13). The absence of “the citizen” in case materials supports the latter explanation.

**Figure 7.1: iCan’s Public Story, pages 1, 8 and 11 from “Jack Changes His GP”<sup>109</sup>**



This story is about Jack and his frustration with the National Health System (NHS). “Thanks to iCan,” Jack triumphs over these frustrations and takes

<sup>109</sup> The public story, including these pages, were taken from a link on iCan’s front page, URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/icaniimages/tour/index.shtml> (date retrieved, 08/06/2004).

control of his situation and of his health care.<sup>110</sup> Yet, this story is also about the push and pull of power. For example, Jack turns to iCan because of an uncompromising GP and an overly complex health system. In this instance, Jack begins his tale as a disempowered “ordinary guy” subjected to the whims of an unfriendly GP. Jack then actively seeks alternatives by turning to iCan and by arming himself with information. Jack then liberates himself from the complexities and failures of the NHS. The last story panel shows Jack smiling and relaxed. In addition to promoting highly individualized patterns of behaviour, “the public story” leaves out both the public *and* the citizen, following a service oriented consumer narrative. And as such, this story implicitly projects a model of the consumer/citizen rather than an informed and collectively oriented citizen.

The case differs for UT. Although “ordinary” and “local” people are also positioned separately from team members (including peers such as designers, artists, researchers and other “elites”), this case more consistently emphasized the experimental and creative character of the project. The focus on developing “peer-to-peer” networks means that many of the field trial users were already part of the team’s social networks *before* participating in the project. Yet, despite this, UT was also presented differently for different audiences. Although Proboscis and the UT team were considerably more modest about project outcomes; they also tended to exercise “citizenship” discourses only for specific “elite” audiences and participants. The following excerpt from the original research brief illustrates UT’s motivations to investigate the ways new media might foster social connectedness, articulate experiences and share social knowledge:

Likewise the possible significance of *communication technologies for enabling a sense of social connection*, both to others in a distinct urban space, but also to the space itself, will be investigated. In this sense the project will be an inquiry into the determinants and facilitators of a certain kind of *social knowledge*, *that which produces an active engagement or*

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<sup>110</sup> Following the argument introduced in chapter 5, users are positioned in a highly individualized frame. For example, the “public story” takes place in the third person (e.g. “Jack changes his GP” and “he can never get an appointment,” see page 1 and 2), posing distance between the educator and the “educated.” This distance masks the hierarchy between the teacher and the taught. Jack can be “anyone,” and “anyone” can potentially identify with his position.

*participation in the local community, as citizen* (emphasis added, excerpt from original aims of the Urban Tapestries project, circulated 12/2002).

UT is one of many location based projects,<sup>111</sup> yet the focus on citizenship in funding documents and on connecting social knowledge and community distinguishes this project from its competitors. This distinction helped establish a competitive edge in the rivalry private mobile technology developers over public resources and attention. For example, although 58% of the funding for UT came from public sources, securing such funding involved submitting and winning five separate public grant competitions. Similarly, the remaining 42% of commercial funding meant long negotiations with six different corporations, each of which also required that UT came well above a long list of other competitors.<sup>112</sup>

Similar to the differential uses of citizenship in iCan documents, the language of citizenship was primarily employed in UT's funding documents, rather than on or through the platform, in public or internal events and within the team. For example, issues relating to "community reportage," "social capital in the public commons" and "neighbourliness" were circulated as agenda items on invites to public events (e.g. Bodystorming event at LSE, 02/04/2004). Yet, "citizenship" and "citizens" were very rarely related to the platform in team meetings or in project documentation. Similarly, promotional materials and UT site content emphasize "public authoring" and "everyday urban experience" rather than citizenship (Urban Tapestries site, 12/02/2003; c.f. Sonic geographies, 2002). Similarly, communications with users during the field trial, public trial and with individual users did not connect citizenship (or citizens) to, with or through the UT project.

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<sup>111</sup> For some 2003-2004, see the section on Urban Tapestries in chapter 3. Arguably, these early location based projects led to the development of currently popular and commercially viable applications, like Twinkle, an iPhone application that provides a location based extension of Twitter allowing iPhone users to interact with others based on varying degrees of proximity (e.g. 50 km, 100km etc.). Based in San Francisco, Twitter is a popular online and mobile application meant for "staying in touch and keeping up with friends no matter where you are or what you're doing. For some friends you might want instant mobile updates—for others, you can just check the web. Invite your friends to Twitter and decide how connected you want you to be" (Twitter FAQ site, URL: <http://twitter.com/faq>).

<sup>112</sup> Financial figures of UT's project budget were provided by Benjamin, Co-Director of Proboscis and UT in personal communication, 22/04/2004.

Thus, both projects invoke “citizenship” discourses with elite rather than ordinary audiences. It is in these ways that the organizational contexts, interviews with producers and documentary analysis demonstrate how each project promotes very limited patterns of public participation and is *not* about citizenship. The construction of differential citizenships for different audiences suggests that citizenship discourses were used as a legitimating strategy to generate interest, to extend each project’s relevance and to secure financial resources.

## **Legitimizing strategies and shallow participation**

Of the many instances demonstrating that ideas of citizenship are used to manipulate shallow forms of participation, I focus on two. The first gathers empirical evidence that the language of citizenship is used to legitimate each project’s goals and activities. The second offers a brief overview of the ways in which each case designs shallow participatory strategies.

Beginning with iCan, its prominence in BBC charter renewal documents and its subsequent closure (in April 2008) *after* the BBC’s charter was successfully renewed suggests both a manipulative and strategic use of citizenship language.<sup>113</sup> For UT, “citizenship” discourses enabled linkages with academics, civil society activists, artists, designers, technologists and industry professionals; links that were further pursued with Social Tapestries (later iterations of the UT project and platform, discussed in chapter 5). I address each case’s legitimating tactics in turn.

For the BBC, new media projects provide new ways to make the BBC “accountable” to its license fee payers (BBC 2004d: 23; BBC 2004c: 24, 25, 34, 36-37; Hughes, BBC Governance and Accounts, interview 07/04/2004, c.f. Jackson, BBCi’s Communities Editor, interview 11/02/2004). Mark Byford, the

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<sup>113</sup> However, in the *BBC’s Contribution to Informed Citizenship*, iCan was given “three to five years to prove its value” (BBC 2004c: 16). Yet, given the success, widespread excitement about the project and the desolate tone of the project manager when relaying the news of the project’s expiry date, the three to five year life span wasn’t the final word on iCan’s life span (Bridget, Action Network Project Manager, interview 18/09/2007).

former Deputy Director General of the BBC, defines accountability as having two meanings. First, accountability is about making “people in power” responsive to “licence fee payers” and second, accountability is about making licence fee payers accountable to each other. In a seminar on informed citizenship, Byford pointed specifically to iCan as an example of the BBC’s use of the internet to improve accountability:

So firstly, the BBC with its trusted brand value can be a trusted hub for people to engage with each other... actually the people themselves can put the questions and in dialogue with the people in power.... iCan was about a response to political engagement and first and foremost it’s putting people in touch with the contacts that they can then find out more about that issue. And one of the things that I understood was people sometimes feel lonely, that they may feel ‘I’m the only one that thinks this’ but through iCan they can engage then with others and learn how they’re taking forward that case themselves (emphases added, ‘Informed Citizenship,’ BBC Charter Renewal Seminar 2004, November 24th).<sup>114</sup>

This is a powerful series of claims and these two articulations of accountability are significant. iCan is positioned as bringing people together across hierarchies (“with people in power”) and also within hierarchies (“engage then with others”).<sup>115</sup> Although iCan is successful in facilitating interactions between licence fee payers and the BBC, it is less successful in facilitating connections between licence fee payers; and as such, media professionals are positioned as the “people in power.” In contrast, UT employs a similar logic in terms of allowing ordinary people to “engage with others,” facilitating “social connectedness” and encouraging active “participation in the local community.” There is some evidence that each project enables superficial kinds of participation for and between users. Producers, often rightly, claim that such limitations tend to be technical and with more time to work out bugs and develop better systems, these limitations would be corrected. Yet some forms of user participation do appear to be superficial.

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<sup>114</sup> It is important to point out that this is an extremely interesting statement. A number of themes present in the interviews also appear here. For example, “trusted hub” emphasizes the BBC’s central position and alludes to its desired role as the intermediary for such connections; a point that is emphasized by “dialogue with,” “putting people in touch” and “engage with others.”

<sup>115</sup> The contrast between non-users and users is closely linked to those respectively with and without power; a contrast that is highlighted by the description and repetition of users as “themselves,” highlighted by Byford’s implication of the BBC or media as “us” rather than “them” (c.f. Couldry 2000 on the distinction between media people and ordinary people, discussed in chapters 2 and 5).

For example, in addition to creating campaigns, iCan users were able to directly interact with each other by contacting other users through iCan's private messaging system, by commenting on particular content and/or by supporting or opposing someone else's campaign (see figure 7.2 for an example). Despite these options, it seems that users hardly interacted with each other:

I'm not terribly convinced that the iCAN / Action Network site really worked in quite the way the designers seem to have intended as my strong impression is that most of the contributors didn't really network much because they were all posting about their own specialized concerns (Helen, iCan user, interview 2005).

Part of the explanation for this may be that users "can't make comments about a campaign" (Melissa, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).<sup>116</sup> Instead, when browsing other user generated campaigns, users are encouraged to participate by choosing "support" or "oppose," a kind of "click here" participation (see figure 7.2).

Figure 7.2: iCan, the "Buffy Campaign" and "Click here" participation

**The BBC should show the last episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer at 9:00 and completely uncut**

Created on Tuesday 02 December 2003  
Members: 13

**WHAT WE WANT:**  
The last episode of BTVS should be shown at 9 (after the watershed), and completely uncut.

**WHY WE WANT IT:**  
There would be so many cuts, it would be pointless watching it.

**To all iCan users:** You can let this campaign know whether you support it or not. Vote by clicking one of the buttons below.

Users who aren't signed-in can vote more than once, so the figures for "others" should be treated with caution.

**Support?**  
86 signed-in users and 466 others

**Oppose?**  
0 signed-in users and 1 others

**CAMPAIGN DIARY**

> Click to see all journal entries

These are the diary entries for this campaign:

**Did anyone notice we won?!?!**  
Posted by: [redacted] on Saturday 03 January, 2004 00:28  
Well didn't they? Not just the finale but the WHOLE of S7 uncut!! Wheee!

**Read comments and add your own [2 so far]**  
**Make a complaint about this diary entry**

**Buffy cuts**  
Posted by: [redacted] on Wednesday 17 December, 2003 15:27  
Having put up with the cut version of buffy for so long, I think

Sending request to [www.bbc.co.uk...](http://www.bbc.co.uk...)

<sup>116</sup> In contrast, Melissa emphasizes that she has "been consistently impressed by the standard of debate" in users' comments about site content (Natasha, iCan Editorial team member, interview, 30/03/2004).

For a further illustration of the superficiality of “click here” kinds of participation, I draw your attention to the campaign diary in the figure above. Someone posted the message “Did anyone notice we won?!?!” and this message which acknowledges and attempts to celebrate the campaign’s success, received no responses.

Aaron, one of the iCan mentors, also emphasizes the shallowness of iCan’s participatory mechanisms when he claims that he “has not really interacted with any other campaigns” despite supporting “a number of them” (72 years old, retired, interview 17/07/2005). All of these examples point to a lack of collective engagement with the iCan site and highly individualized patterns of participation.

Similarly, UT provides limited avenues for and sometimes shallow forms of public participation. For example, Armand (UT user, 60 years old, reception / security worker, experimental ethnography 08/07/2003) created the following word and image content with a very early iteration of the UT platform (see figure 7.3).<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> This phase of the research was conducted under the supervision of Roger Silverstone.

Figure 7.3: Armand's thread and UT content

### Interview 7: Armand's Thread

1: YMCA

2: Here we are at a place called Sicilian Avenue. Interesting architecture.



3: In Bloomsbury Way there is an interesting house and an old book shop called Swed- enborg house. The book shop is below.



4: The Marlborough is a beautiful building. Must have a long history.



5: Dominion Theatre in Tottenham Court Road, with the lovely statue at the entrance of the theatre.



6: And not far, we have the Centre Point building.



Pocket number six, for example, states, "And not far, we have the Centre Point building," which shows an extremely limited kind of "engagement" with the platform and with the surrounding neighbourhood.

These examples illustrate shallow participatory avenues, and in terms of content, there are questions about how airing uncut episodes of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" or someone commenting on the location of the Centre Point building have anything to do with citizenship, with cultural or political engagement or with meaningful participation.

The final point about these examples questions what user participation means for each of the organizations. In the iCan example (figure 7.2), it is notable that this was a very successful campaign, particularly in terms of changing programming. As a result, this campaign was widely recognized and cited by iCan producers (as noted in chapter 5). In the UT example, content arguably provides the most value to the UT platform, and hence to Proboscis. As such, these examples demonstrate three things. First, an impressive gap exists between the actualities of use and the potentialities of each project. Second, and following from the last chapter, the final say on what content is hosted by either site rests with the producers. Third, while the BBC emphasizes that iCan helps open up “dialogues with those in power,” the “Buffy campaign” was successful in negotiating the wants of a niche fan base. Here, and as emphasized in interviews and participant observation, “those in power” primarily refer to the iCan team and the BBC.

These examples suggest that these technologically specific ideas of citizenship foster limited forms of participation in practice. The original citizenship visions articulated by team members and their organizations fell a little short of their mark. By presenting the empirical themes emerging around shifting citizenship discourses, the differential positioning of citizenship and the manipulation of participation; I argue that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that in these cases, the relationship between citizenship and new technologies is at best tenuous.

Drawing directly from this last point, producers construct users as the objects of citizenship; yet not only do participatory frameworks continue to perpetuate consumer oriented frameworks of and for user activities but users are only “partially participating” because they do not equally share decision making powers; an inequality that is strengthened by the highly uneven distribution of rights (see chapter 6).<sup>118</sup> Each case then positions team members as

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<sup>118</sup> As discussed in chapter 2, the concept of participation has often been critiqued as one that is at worst an “empty signifier” (Laclau 1996) and more optimistically as conditional and contingent (Pateman 1970; Cammaerts 2008; Carpentier 2003). Of this literature, there are two points worth emphasizing. The first is that “participation” is best understood as involving degrees of action and can be categorized as “full” (equal decision making) or “partial” (imbalanced decision

gatekeepers of, to and for the public, for mediating avenues of participation and controlling the reproduction and circulation of symbolic capital (Hesmondhalgh 2007: 36, 206). Yet, the failure of each case to enroll users as citizens, establish deepened forms of public participation and foster local, political and cultural engagement *by* and/or *for* users suggests that ideas of citizenship, in these cases, are hollow. But this is not the whole story. Both cases were experimental in nature (UT explicitly more so than iCan). The fading use of “citizenship” also reflects innate challenges in the technical design of groundbreaking projects wrestling with deeply ingrained institutional habits and numerous uncertainties; including knowledge of how users will or might engage such platforms and possibilities. As such, in the next section I consider the empirical evidence supporting the meaningful association between new technologies and citizenship, albeit for some respondents more than others.

### **7.3. Partial Participation and Uneven Cultural Rights**

Notably, neither producers nor users are directly addressed or enrolled as citizens. For producers, citizenship is directed towards the public. Citizenship is not discussed with most users excluding UT peer-to-peer networks and field trial participants. I argue that this is meaningful but incomplete. The analysis thus far reveals a fracture between the discursive construction of citizenship for users by producers and the role of producers as silent and unacknowledged citizens. Contingently, these fractures mean that users are positioned as the focus of cultural rights and technologically specific ideas of citizenship. It is my view that producers are most able to capitalize on these rights. This is something like a reversal in the framing of citizenship as oriented towards users in each case, rather than towards producers who are largely invisible as citizens. For example, as Benjamin argues:

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making). According to Carol Pateman, full participation refers to “a process where each individual member of a decision-making body has equal power to determine the outcome of decisions,” whereas partial participation is “a process in which two or more parties influence each other in the making of decisions but the final power to decide rests with one party only” (Pateman 1970: 70-71 as cited in Cammaerts forthcoming). From a discursive perspective, this is particularly important because the positioning of publics necessarily constructs various and sometimes contradictory strategies of action, interaction and participation.

I don't think the technologies will [introduce new kinds of citizenship]. I think it's the use of the technologies. If people wish to, if there is a strong enough wish to create a new kind of understanding of citizenship, then I think they will adapt technologies to the system in that process (Benjamin, Proboscis director and UT Co-Founder, interview, 17/04/2004).

Those with the "strongest wish to create a new understanding of citizenship" are the producers, rather than the users. In my view and as I hope to demonstrate in this section, producers (and prod-users) are meaningfully participating in each case.

My justification for this argument is based on an analysis of the way technologies are positioned in the social networks that respondents describe as important to them in interviews and during participant observation. I have chosen to do this by presenting schematic profiles of one producer and one user from the iCan case in order to demonstrate the differences between users and producers common to participants in both cases. It is important to note that I am not arguing that either users or producers are homogenous groups; rather, my empirical research shows that the commonalities shared by producers in both teams are greater than the differences between users and producers. Lastly, I present findings from one focus group and the responses from an open ended questionnaire generated by 11 UT field trial participants. These participants are discussed here as "prod-users,"<sup>119</sup> and they completed weekly questionnaires over the month they participated in the field trial.<sup>120</sup>

The analysis reveals that for most users, new technologies play an instrumental role for extending specific components of their personal networks. In contrast, these new technologies are more likely to play a constitutive role in linking, organizing and extending networks for most producers and "prod-users." As

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<sup>119</sup> Axel Bruns proposes the term "prod-users," and it describes field trial participants better than "users." I adopt this term because although all users from both cases are expected to generate content, field trial participants better encapsulate the blurred relationship between media users and producers than more "ordinary" users (meaning not involved in design, media, research or technology, as defined in chapter 5). I take this stance specifically because, following the ways "ordinary" people are constructed in each case, field trial participants are *not* ordinary. For further insights on the concept of "produsage" please see Bruns 2008 and Jenkins 2008.

<sup>120</sup> It is important to note that while I contributed to the development of the questionnaires, I did not administer or finalize them. However, it was agreed with and indeed encouraged by the Proboscis Co-Director that I could use this data in my research. As such, respondents were informed of these intentions and also agreed to this.

such, producers are better able to capitalize, more so than users, on new technologies as opportunity structures. An analogy of the difference between producers and users is that producers are more like citizens with legal rights, decision making powers and ownership of public territories and communicative pathways; partially because as professionals, they have to be there. In contrast, the majority of users are like denizens, and while every effort is made to make outsiders feel welcome, and even though some of them may very well feel at home, they do not have the same rights, connections, cultural proclivities or sense of full membership to determine the conditions and regulations of wherever it is they live. The producers in these cases are akin to elected political representatives, working on enriching the public commons, building systems of participation and producing the grounds for participation for others. By examining the role technologies play in mediating participatory networks, we see an uneven distribution of cultural rights and partial extensions of citizenship.

## Users

I focus on one user from the iCan case, Aaron, a 72 year old retired male with a low level of formal education. I focus on Aaron because he describes himself as previously uninvolved in political actions. As such, his existing networks are community oriented. Aaron's experiences reveal tensions between thin and thick networks, between individualized patterns of behaviour and collective actions and interactions with "people in power."

By way of introduction, Aaron's main interest in iCan was to further develop his campaign for the improvement of and against the closure of special needs schools. Largely inspired by the refusal of the only local special needs school to accept his special needs grandson, Aaron came to iCan in December 2003 after seeing the site advertised on television. Eventually, after a lengthy and concentrated campaign, of which iCan was only a part, his grandson was accepted into the local school. Thus Aaron's campaign was successful; yet he has strong opinions on why other iCan campaigns fail:

iCan is a wonderful idea but people don't stick to it. They get discouraged and listen to authority figures who tell them 'no it can't be done' and just give up (Aaron, iCan mentor, 72, retired, interview 17/07/2005).

Aaron distinguishes himself from other users through commitment and persistence; distinctions best articulated by Aaron's oft repeated motto: "never give up the fight!" (iCan mentor, 72, questionnaire 07/07/2005; c.f. interview 17/07/2005; numerous online materials). This same persistence is expressed in Aaron's loyalty to his family and neighbourhood community. For example, Aaron introduces another campaign he is a part of, centred in and on "his village":

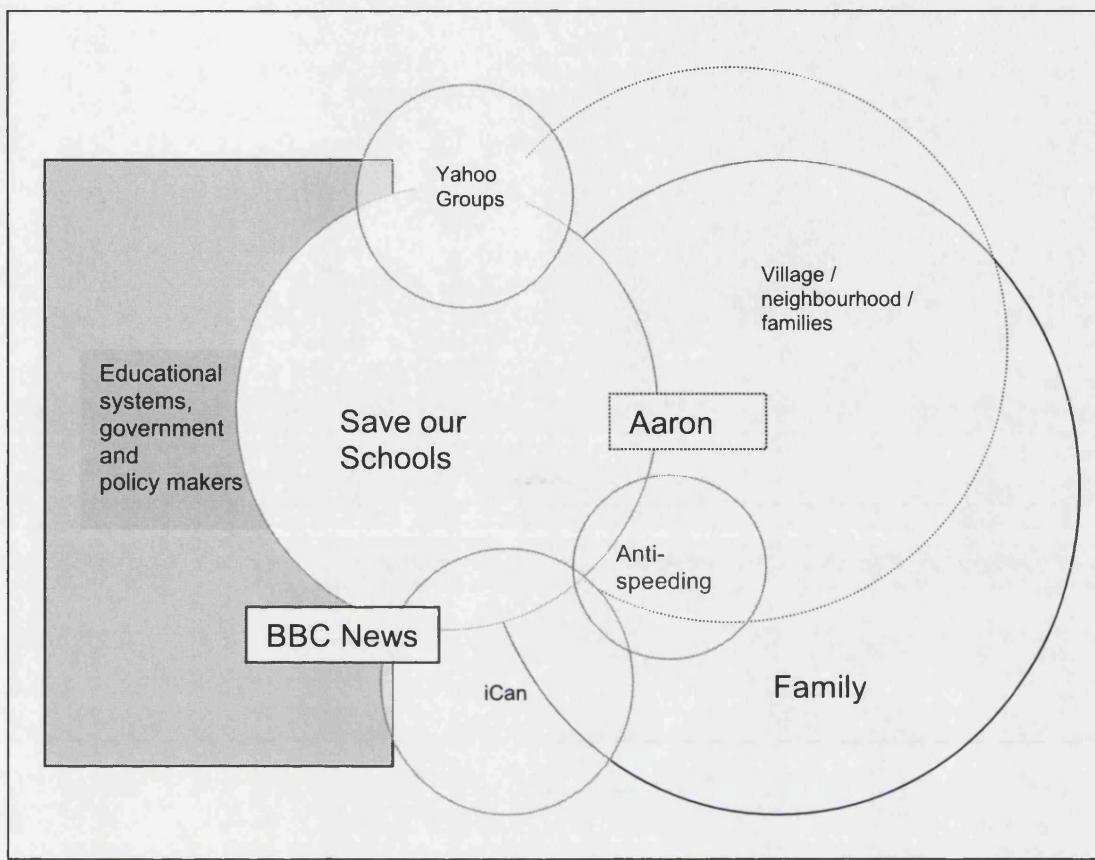
For instance another issue that I am concerned with is [an anti-speeding coalition]. *Our village* is plagued with the rat run brigade, incredibly this campaign has been running for sixteen years, but we *do not intend* to go away (Aaron, 'about me' page on iCan, 2005).

Elsewhere, Aaron identifies himself as part of a family and also as part of a community of families rallying together to protect the best interests of their special needs children. These communities stand in opposition to the education system, policy makers and government. Similar to Helen and Michael, Aaron uses iCan in an instrumental or functional way to promote his agenda and gather support for issues that are personally important to him.<sup>121</sup> The long standing involvement in offline, often volunteer activities is characteristic of all the mentors' descriptions of their campaigns. In their interviews, mentors, similar to Aaron, described long lists of other campaign related activities, of which, iCan played a minor role. See figure 7.4 for a visual representation of the affiliations Aaron describes.

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<sup>121</sup> In some ways this contradicts UT users who often engage the platform in playful and creative ways, rather than instrumental ones. However, for those UT users who I individually interviewed even those who spoke of the ways in which UT inspired their imaginations, the use of the platform was still instrumental; particularly when compared to producers, even if this may in part be due to the technical limitations of such an early prototype.

Figure 7.4: Aaron's self identified networks and affiliations



The point of the above diagram is twofold. First, this diagram illustrates the way that Aaron, Similar to other user respondents, identifies himself as a member of numerous affiliations, often in opposition to "decision making bodies" (Aaron, iCan mentor, 72, retired, interview 17/07/2005). For users, membership is multiple, linked and overlaps several offline communities. In contrast to iCan's target audience criteria, these communities *pre-date* iCan. In this way, Aaron and other iCan and UT users use these kinds of platforms to exercise political, civic or community action through the site in addition to numerous other sites (emphasized further in interviews with Russell and Ryan). As such, offline communities, existing social networks and specific interests play a crucial role in motivating users to contribute to or participate in each case. As noted in chapter 5 and as in the section on limited participation above, each project mostly fails to encourage interaction between "ordinary" people.

Second, as I will discuss further below, the role of technology is almost peripheral to the primary communities that users' identify with (as illustrated above). Although the "Save Our Schools" campaign is important for the quality and health of both the "village" and "family" networks, iCan and even Yahoo Groups are merely tools to promote this importance. In this sense, the role of iCan and new technologies is *instrumental* for Aaron's communities of interest; a finding that contrasts with the organization of cultural rights and technologically specific ideas of citizenship.

## **Producers and "prod-users"**

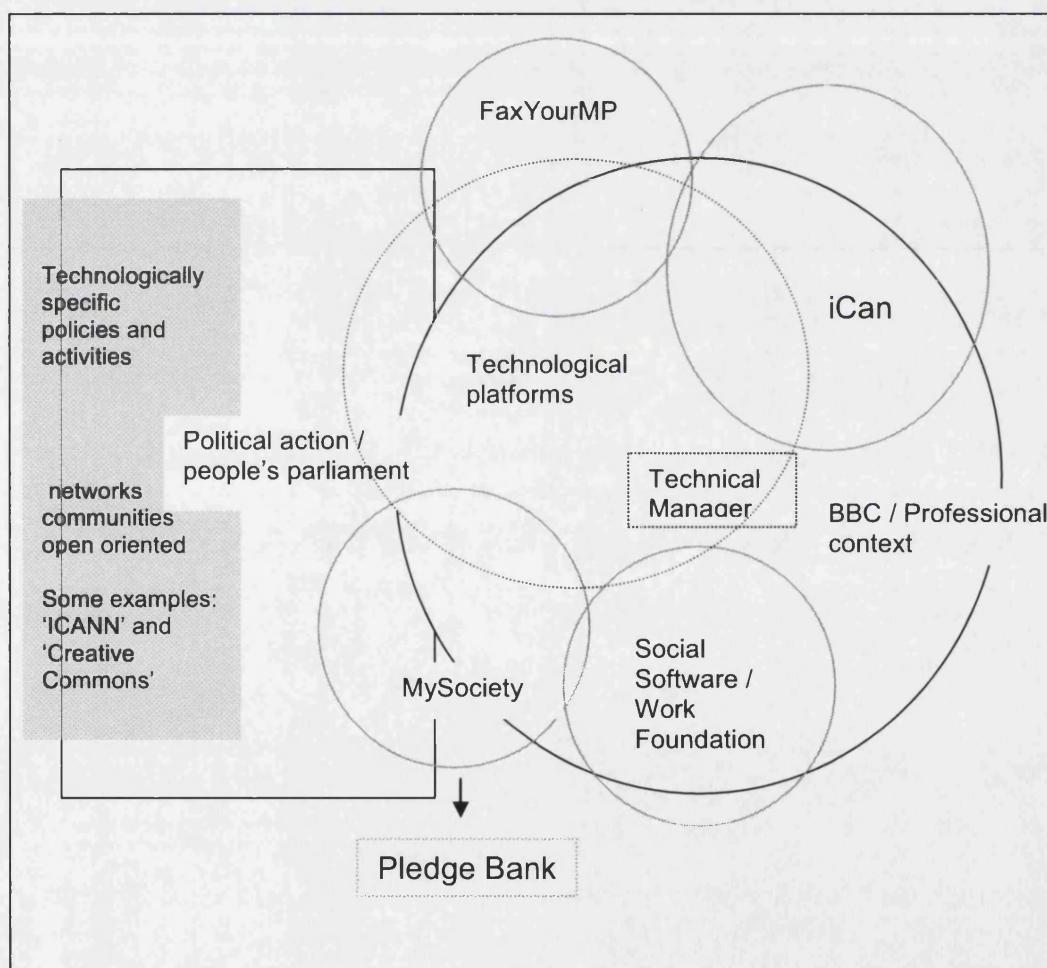
The prevalence of pre-existing, offline communities of interest for users *and* producers emphasizes the importance of tacit and informal systems of membership in developing participatory pathways. While this is also certainly the case for producers, there is a second connotation here: that is, project producers are also responsible for *producing* such communities of interest and sites of action, whereas users tend to only participate in them. (Notably, users are also active producers of their own communities of interest, neighbourhoods and networks, albeit as argued above, these networks are primarily located outside of the project sites).

For example, similar to the UT team, many of the public talks and events that members of the iCan team attended involved a diverse range of people from academia, political and media practitioners, people from industry, e-democracy experts and social analysts (e.g. NotCon / BBC launch conference 2004; Informed citizenship BBC review 2004; IPPR, "Participatory Media 2004"; IPPR "Who protects the public domain?" 2004, etc.). Similarly, since its inception, UT has regularly organized and hosted "creative labs" and bodystorming events, which provide a platform for the team to disseminate current research and elicit feedback (e.g. 3 creative labs 2003-4, 4 bodystorming events 2003-4 and 1 public trial 2005). These events attracted culturally articulate participants with expertise in media, social sciences, industry, art, design and technology etc. In addition to high levels of technological, creative, symbolic and political

literacies, participants generally exhibit advanced interests in the technologies themselves. In this sense, their experiences are bolstered by networks of personal exchange, in addition to those mediated online or through each project. And as such, I argue that the role of new technologies in each case *amplified* existing literacies and *extended* collaborative social networks for producers and for those formally or informally affiliated as “prod-users.”<sup>122</sup>

As an example, figure 7.5 shows Ryan’s self identified social networks and communities of interest (iCan, Technical manager):

**Figure 7.5: Ryan’s self identified networks and affiliations**



<sup>122</sup> For Axel Bruns, the concept of prod-users “ultimately traces back its lineage to open source” (interview with Bruns in Jenkins 2008: np); and is based on four principles: 1) open participation, 2) fluid heterarchy, 3) unfinished artefacts and a continuing process; and 4) common property and individual rewards. While the distribution of copyright ownership to organizations and team members suggests that the last criterion, “common property,” does not apply, Bruns’ principles apply most to field trial participants and team members than users with no pre-existing affiliations or interests.

Ryan participates in several volunteer, politically oriented projects involving new media networks and platforms (e.g. FaxYourMP, iCan, MySociety, Social Software, Pledge Bank). As such, Ryan shows advanced levels of technical and cultural literacy and is closely affiliated with several densely knit and mediated communities. New technologies are at least partly successful in making social networks for producers and prod-users because of a shared interest in the technology itself. Ryan's self identified networks provide a strong example of how far this kind of technological currency can go. This is certainly the case for team members from both cases and UT field trial participants. For example, Stewart and Toby (UT field trial and focus group participants) identify the ways in which the UT platform inspired the pursuit of existing technological knowledge ("Blast theory") and technologically oriented networks:

No new social encounters but it got me an interview with [name of journal] (the most prestigious scientific journal bar none) which was very cool. It has also made me much more interested in this type of technology and how it might be used – things like Blast Theory, for example, who I have contacted with an aim to getting more involved with their work (Stewart, UT field trial and focus group participant, week 4, questionnaire, 15/08/2004).

[I shared the platform with] colleagues in the [London based research organization] and other universities and research labs, some working in related areas. I felt proud to be a part of a project so cool, so cutting edge, that actually works. Some of our current research is about the concept that people create trails through an ecology of information as they learn, and UT is an actual manifestation of [something like this] (Toby, UT field trial and focus group participant, week 4, questionnaire, 08/08/2004).

Thus, for Ryan, Toby and Stewart (and for many other team members and field trial participants), "technological platforms" are an integrative point for numerous communities of interest and as such *constitute* sites of action. Brian, concisely summarizes this point when he talks about how the UT team managed to "engage something a lot bigger" through the UT project:

I've worked with [Russell] and [Christina] in the past, and they're kind of sound, you know, they do, like, organize sound things. It's not that I've really got a notion into the traditional people's plaything, and you know.... *And it was more, just being interested in the kind of the vague ideas, and notions, and then being able, you know, being able to kind of engage, you know, in*

*something that's kind of, like, a lot bigger* (Brian, UT Interface designer, interview, 26/07/2004)

The “something a lot bigger” refers to the shared cultural ideals and political aims bundled up in project goals. Similar to other users, most field trial participants were able to connect either project to this sense of “something a lot bigger.” For example, Billy reflects on his experience with the UT platform, claiming that his own interests in the technology itself were not sufficient to “draw him into it”:

*I didn't really manage to integrate it into my leisure time very well. I don't think I am enough of a techy to be drawn into it, without the presence of friends also doing it. If there were others I knew well doing it, then I'm sure I could have been more interested, but I never got past the novelty value of it I'm afraid* (Billy, UT field trial participant, week 4, questionnaire, 12/08/2004).

Another field trial participant writes that one of the reasons UT had no impact on his sense of community is because he doesn't “live on the map,” suggesting that sites of action must be shared in order to generate interest *and* participation:

*[On UT and community] No, not really. Two reasons: I don't live on the map myself. If I did, I think the combination of me being at home a lot (I freelance from home for a couple of days a week) and how I've been using the phone would mean I would have used it more for leaving idle messages. Second the interface doesn't really afford conversation. People left comments, but they didn't really feel part of the area (I was rarely in the same area as the pocket I was reading because I found it quite hard to find myself on the map* (Drew, UT field trial participant, week 4, questionnaire, 10/08/2004).

While Drew may share advanced technological literacies with other prod-users, the fact that he identifies himself as living off the map is interesting. Drew's point suggests that even if some of the conditions are right to build or extend cultural networks, additional factors such as location have a role in patterns of public participation.

## **Participation and social capital**

There are numerous ways of making sense of participation within these cases; and there are many points of overlap and at times, even paradoxes.

Nonetheless, there seems to be qualitative differences between the kinds of participation various respondents are able to engage. As such, I draw from chapter 2, employing two key distinctions around participation and social capital. First, Nico Carpentier's distinction between "content-related" and "structural" participation (Carpentier 2004 : 21-22); and second, the distinctions between "bridging" and "bonding" social capital (Norris 2002; Coleman 2004; Coleman and Marsh 2004).

The distinction between content related and structural participation is important here as it mirrors distinctions many have made between "partial" and "full" participation (as discussed in chapter 2). Full participation entails "equal decision making powers" and often refers to both the processes and outcomes of decision making procedures; a point that Carpentier includes in "structural participation." Content-related participation refers to the ways in which people might or do participate in the production and generation of content. Of course, both content and structural participation often overlap, particularly regarding the editorial logics (decision making processes) governing the publication or inclusion of content on media sites or programming. However, for these cases, users are partial participants in the production of content; forms of participation that take on much deeper implications in terms of cultural citizenship, rather than only decision making. For example, content production, in this sense, relates to issues of voice, representation and inclusion (Miller 1998; Murdock 1999; Stevenson 2001 as discussed in chapter 2).

Pippa Norris describes the differences between bridging and bonding social capital:

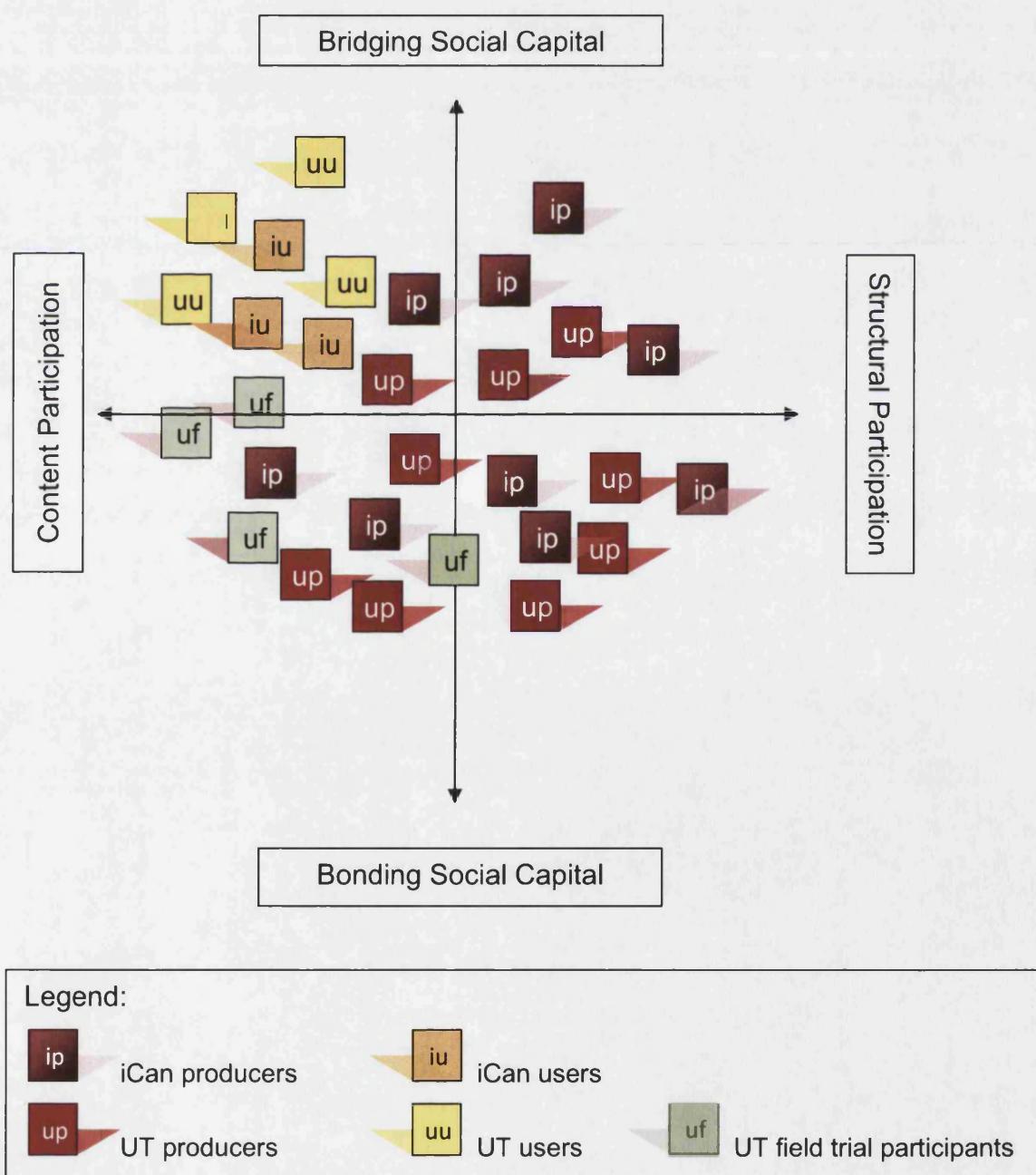
...Putnam (2000, 2002) has drawn an important distinction between bridging groups that function to bring together disparate members of the community.... and bonding groups that reinforce close-knit networks among people sharing similar backgrounds and beliefs (Putnam as paraphrased by Norris 2002: 3).

Bridging social capital includes wide ranging "weak ties" and is often thought to "link heterogeneous groups of people" (Wellman 1999: 3); whereas bonding social capital includes deeper, "strong, solidary ties" (Wellman 1999: 10).

Internet and internet mediated networks are sometimes characterized by bridging social capital and plenty of “weak” ties. While these networks may appear to be fragile, weak ties are important for introducing fluidity, dynamism and an increased capacity for individual choice and movement (e.g. Bennett 2003a; b).

Based on these distinctions, clear patterns emerge in the differences between users, producers and “prod-users” (UT field trial participants) as depicted in figure 7.6 below.

**Figure 7.6: Project mediated participation and social capital**



The above diagram shows clear cleavages between respondent groups. Both iCan and UT users develop bridging social capital (Coleman and Marsh 2004), but only in terms of content related participation. In contrast, UT field trial participants or “prod-users” primarily develop bonding forms of social capital. Based on the amplification and extension of existing social networks, it is more likely for this group to also develop bridging social capital through content related participation. However, because of their connections with producers, this group is more likely to have an influence on structural features of the site, even though final decision making still rests with producers. Finally, producers develop bridging and bonding social capital through both content and structural participation.

In this way, producers are not only producing sites of action and participatory pathways for users but they are also best situated to capitalize on the benefits of such sites of action; particularly in contrast to users and even prod-users. As Stevenson argues, the “politics of ‘voice’ requires a redefinition of who has a right to speak and make themselves heard in contested public spheres” (Stevenson 2006: para 5.6).<sup>123</sup> Given that producers are responsible for constructing “communicative relations” and managing what Couldry calls the “crisis of voice,” I argue that producers were in an especially important role for negotiating citizenship (Couldry 2008: 16).

iCan and UT not only open up the potential for weak ties between users, but also establish links between users and mainstream media. For example, when asked if iCan helped his “Save our Schools” campaign, Aaron replied:

Yes, iCan has drawn a lot of media attention to my campaign. It was picked up by channel 4, who may have found out about it via the iCan site; it has also been covered by the BBC as the media love stories about children with disabilities who are having their schools shut down (Aaron, iCan mentor, 72, retired, interview 17/07/2005).

iCan’s success in bridging users’ stories with the mainstream media has been widely recognized and was also reported by other iCan user respondents.

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<sup>123</sup> A point that Citizens Online emphasize when they write “content is a key issue in digital inclusion and clearly the BBC is providing an extremely valuable service here for many excluded groups and communities” (Citizens Online in BBC and Various 2004: 12).

Bridget contextualizes the scope of this experience when she claimed that “about 20% of user campaigns get picked up by television and radio programmes” (iCan / Action Network Project manager, interview 18/09/2007). Additionally, as noted by Stewart and Toby (UT field trial and focus group participants), UT also helped them make connections with a prestigious science journal and other London based research centres and labs. In this way, bridging social capital, for users, is multi-directional. Yet, as discussed above and in other chapters, bridging social capital here is still individually oriented. It is on this point that producers really seem to differ.

For example, in terms of literacy,<sup>124</sup> the picture is rather uneven. Aaron stands out from other iCan mentors because unlike Helen and Michael who came to iCan with advanced technical skills, iCan helped Aaron develop new literacies. During an interview, Aaron spoke about the way iCan helped familiarize him with the use of new technologies, such as how to use the “internet network,” “how to do research” and described “the potential of the internet as amazing” (Aaron, iCan mentor, 72, interview 17/07/2005). However, the production of collaborative projects and networks oriented towards “that bigger something” by producers highlight the development of what two scholars in the political economy of wikis and participatory media call “collaborative literacies,” which:

... are literacies ‘which are not regulated or systematized by the formal rules and procedures of social institutions but have their origin in the purposes of everyday life’ (ibid.). Collaborative literacy practices develop, and are learnt informally (Suoranta and Vadén 2008: 125).

In this sense, producers are able to instantiate: formal rights, bridging and bonding social capital to develop new pathways and approaches to public

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<sup>124</sup> Although referenced in chapter 2, literacy is a complex term inferring a huge range of skills and capacities relating to basic reading comprehension and numeracy and extending into more complex capacities like understanding media, technical and software skills etc. Livingstone defines media literacy as something that “is pan-media in that it covers the interpretation of all complex, mediated symbolic texts broadcast or published on electronic communications networks... literacy foregrounds the technological, cultural, and historical specificity of particular media as used in particular times and places” (Livingstone 2004: 5). For more on literacy please see Sonia Livingstone (2004: Nd; Livingstone, Bober et al. 2005; Livingstone, Van Couvering et al. 2005).

participation, and enriched models and modes of citizenship. It is in these ways that producers are able to engage in exceptional participatory strategies.

Thus far, I have presented empirical evidence suggesting that each case facilitates some kinds of participation for some users, while limiting or even disabling some participatory pathways for others. Contrasting these participatory modes as either “super” or “ordinary” may be overstating the case, but these terms highlight the cleavages between producers and users. In some ways, these cleavages are recognized by some producers. For example, when asked about the relationship between iCan and citizenship, Ryan replies:

It's difficult really to say whether iCan has had any impact on people's perception of that [political issues generally and citizenship specifically], but, *we want to change people from being passive citizens to being active citizens*. I think I'd have trouble saying that this is a new type of citizenship.... But [if it is] I think it's a changing type of citizenship rather than some kind of radical new citizenship model (Ryan, iCan Technical manager, interview 26/03/2004).

The shift from passive to active citizens is an important enactment of cultural rights. As argued in the beginning, citizenship is multi-dimensional and contingent upon who is participating and the conditions for participation. In this sense, producers are *already* “active citizens” and are actively producing participatory pathways for users and also for themselves. For producers, internet and mobile technologies in use help in the construction of citizenship oriented social networks and thus, they extend and amplify existing networks. Cultural rights are important for determining participatory modes and even which participatory avenues might be available. Overall, the data presented in this section illustrates ways in which participation is enabled more for some respondents than for others. The unevenness in the quality of participation and in the distribution of cultural rights indicates that each case is only *partially* focused on citizenship.

## 7.4. Networked Participation and Public Citizenship

There is also substantial evidence that technologically specific rights extend cultural forms of citizenship and democratize participation. In response to a question on the relationship between their projects and citizenship, Melissa and Christina highlight the role of new media in providing information, enabling access and organizing communicative relations, albeit in case specific ways:

Yes, *iCan does enable a new kind of citizenship*. I think so because it empowers you with information, because the world is a bit more complicated ... I feel it is a bit of a catch up, catch up with how you are in a complicated world, so before you had your familiar and seamed networks and a real power relationship with the subjects of that realm, you always, there were always other people around you with the knowledge .... I think sometimes you can't meet the right people you need to debate and expand your mind and find the knowledge, or whatever (Melissa, iCan Broadcast Journalist, interview 30/03/2004).

So I do think that UT is absolutely and intrinsically related to citizenship. I don't think it is just about enhancing - *it is about allowing new routes and approaches* and encouraging new communication and investment by people in their communities. I believe that *access to innovative cultural forms is a crucial part of the process of social and cultural development and an important route to what for me - is a sense of citizenship* (my emphasis, Christina, co-director of Proboscis and Urban Tapestries, personal communication 13/02/2004).

According to Melissa, iCan helps create new literacies and opens up greater opportunities to develop bridging social capital. According to Christina, new communicative “routes and pathways” facilitate greater connections between people and their communities. Interestingly, Christina identifies “access to innovative cultural forms” which evokes Frankenfeld’s technologically specific right of “innovators to innovate.” This connection to cultural rights is important in fostering “senses of citizenship.”

Both Melissa and Christina highlight their project’s innovative contribution, and thus of new media, in fostering new pathways and reconfigured relationships; arguments that have often been embraced by citizenship and new media scholars alike (see chapter 2 and 3). These points are of critical importance. It seems that emergent literacies and “innovative cultural forms” are especially prevalent for producers; but similar to the evidence for “limited participatory forms” and “non-citizenship,” this is not the whole story.

In one sense, the experimental nature of both projects make it difficult to understand the ways in which new technologies and citizenship intersect as there has not yet been enough time for these intersections to cohere or gel together. As noted, UT respondents *did* consistently express a heightened sense of place and community after using UT. Stewart eloquently describes this heightened sense when reflecting upon his experience of UT, noting that while the content was “mundane,” it was also “touching”:

The point is, these pockets struck me as *simultaneously quite mundane, yet touching*. It really brought home to me the reality of day to day life for myself and others... So from that perspective, I guess UT gave me a greater sense of empathy for my fellow human – a heightened recognition of the fact that we are all the same, but all unique with our own view of the world. So ‘yes’ my sense of community was affected in this way and I think it’s left me *more likely to listen to others* (Stewart, UT field trial and focus group participant, week 4, questionnaire, 15/08/2004).

Stewart’s point starkly contrasts with the “Did anyone notice that we won?!?!” post (Figure 7.2). Nonetheless, while users may have considerably less access to cultural rights, these users are able to contribute their own voices and content (however managed or manipulated by producers). While these kinds of publicly oriented platforms have historical precedents in public access television, in public service broadcasting and in public art, these sites mark a shift in the organization of public participation. The relationship between new technologies and citizenship in the cases presented here strengthen cultural dimensions of citizenship and emphasize networked modes of participation. The empirical cases presented here suggest that citizenship practices are being extended into the cultural sphere. I argue that this extension and reorganization of public participation contributes to what I have called “public citizenship.”

The case for “public citizenship” can be made based on “networked” modes of production and reconfigured institutional contexts. Charlie Beckett argues that journalism, similar to other forms of symbolic production, is no longer the work of individual reporters; instead, “networked journalism” is the norm. Networked journalism is:

...a return to some of the oldest virtues of journalism: connecting with the world beyond the newsroom; listening to people; giving people a voice in

the media; responding to what the public tells you in a dialogue. But it has the potential to go further than that in transforming the power relationship between media and the public and reformulating the means of journalistic production (Beckett 2008: 43).

Both cases highlight what Beckett refers to as “the oldest virtues of journalism”; that is, the prioritization of and re-orientation towards the “public,” through new technologies, in the production of knowledge and public community support networks. In this sense, networked modes of production are transformative and lead to networked forms of participation. Aaron and Ryan’s self identified networks and affiliations provide examples of networked modes of public participation (see figures 7.4 and 7.5).

One of the strongest examples of prioritization of the public in organizational practices comes from BBC archival research between 1938-39 and 1946-48; a time period that was chosen specifically because it was at this time that television, similar to the internet in the 2000s, was becoming institutionalized within the BBC. This research shows that the BBC, similar to contemporary internal and external critiques, was trepidatious towards the public (c.f. Scannell and Cardiff 1991: 73 ff.). Yet, despite this, there was an entire series of letters and correspondence between the BBC and a number of active members of the Association for Education in Citizenship (AEC) regarding the citizenship curriculum in BBC programming.<sup>125</sup> The outcome of this lengthy communication

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<sup>125</sup> Archival materials were collected from the BBC Written Archives file “R16/6/1 (or R1b/b/1)” on “Education: General – Association for Education in Citizenship File 1a, April 1937 – April 1939”; including 1) Association for Education in Citizenship Pamphlet, Conference on the Challenge to Democracy at Ashridge College, July 8th-14th, 1937; 2) Letter from Eva. M. Hubback (Director of AEC) to Miss Somerville (BBC Director of School Broadcasts) 25th January 1938; 3) Memorandum on “Suggestions for a Series of School Broadcasts on Citizenship,” Unsigned Letter – 25th July 1938; 4) Central Council for School Broadcasting, Confidential Internal Circulating Memo, from North Regional Director, Patrick Thornhill, 28th July, 1938; 5) Central Council for School Broadcasting, Internal Circulating Memo, from the Secretary and To 1. Mr. Reid; 2. SEA (Schools) 2a. Mr. Cameron; 3. Reid [last in handwriting], 4th August, 1938; 6) Record of Interview at 2:45 pm with Lady Simon, On the subject of: The Memorandum from the Manchester Branch of the Association for Education in Citizenship, 21st October 1938; 7) Letter to Mr. Cameron from [Lady] Shaw [?] D. Simon, Broomcroft, Ford Lane, Didsbury, Manchester 20, Telephone: Didsbury 3368, 26th October, 1938; 8) Local Government and Training in Citizenship in School Broadcasting – Letter [?] to Miss Gibbs and Mr. Dixon, 30th November 1938; 9) Letter to Mrs. Hubback (AEC) from [BBC] Secretary, 15th December, 1938; 10) Letter to Lady Simon (AEC) from [BBC] Secretary, 16th December, 1938; 11) Letter to Mrs. Maud Gates from Secretary, 16th December, 1938; 12) Letter/Memo, From Asher Lee, Services Educational Unit, London

was the “introduction of specific training in citizenship into School Broadcasting” (from document 8: “Local Government and Training in Citizenship in School Broadcasting – Letter to Miss Gibbs and Mr. Dixon,” 30th November 1938). This specific citizenship training included 6 “citizenship” broadcasts in 1939-40 that dealt with the following subjects:

1. Municipal Election (November)
2. The opening of Parliament (November)
3. County and District Council Elections (March)
4. The Budget (April)
5. The steps in the passing of a bill through Parliament (Possibly in the summer term)
6. A Department of State (from document 8: “Local Government and Training in Citizenship in School Broadcasting – Letter [?] to Miss Gibbs and Mr. Dixon,” 30th November 1938).<sup>126</sup>

These archival materials show that linking citizenship with the public and *with* ordinary people is a remarkable shift in organizational practices. In this sense, even if journalistic practices and the production of media content have always been networked, the iCan case illustrates a powerful redefinition of citizenship and reconfiguration of organizational strategies used to structure citizenship; both of which are based on the inclusion of “ordinary” people (however nominal) in making those definitions and in reconfiguring citizenship oriented organizational strategies. While the same argument cannot be supported by archival research for the UT case, it is certainly an argument producers use to strengthen the value and uniqueness of the “public authoring” platform. As such, “public citizenship” as a term and as a concept is distinct from other modes and models of citizenship (such as the cultural citizenship dimension).

An argument for public citizenship raises tremendous issues of control, access, regulation and ownership not only of such resources but also in how they are administered and by whom. In this sense, the association between citizenship

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FORCES EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTS: CITIZENSHIP IV, Recorded Programmes Representative, Glasgow, 14th February, 1946; and 13) Memo/Schedule: Forces Educational Broadcasts: Citizenship IV, No date, No author names.

<sup>126</sup> It is important to note that this curriculum later shifted rather drastically in or by 1946 to include topics and “stories on the Forces of Community Centres, Clubs and Cultural Societies of Great Britain” in a weekly 20 minute “light programming” broadcast (from document 12: Letter/Memo, From Asher Lee, Services Educational Unit, London, FORCES EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTS: CITIZENSHIP IV, Recorded Programmes Representative, Glasgow, 14th February, 1946).

and media producers is both extremely problematic and extremely promising. Producers repeatedly show strong commitments to public-oriented values, concerns for the protection of the public domain and responsibility towards not only users but also towards individual members of the public. In these ways, each case demonstrates actual shifts in the organization of citizenship. While still largely normative, each case also shows tremendous potential for providing dynamic public resources, instantiating new literacies and enabling collectively based social capital.

## **7.5. Towards Public Citizenship and the Extension of Cultural Rights**

On one hand and regardless of the success or failure of either project, each case adds a creative richness to the cultural sphere. Each case plays with new approaches to power, to public representation, to membership and opens up interesting avenues for public participation. We see new configurations of what it means to be a citizen, however limited and problematic such attempts may be. As Silverstone suggests:

There has to be a way to consider the issues: to till the ground perhaps, so that it becomes more fertile and so that the seeds of political action and professional judgement have greater likelihood of germinating (Silverstone as cited in Beckett 2008: 169).

And arguably, both cases are evidence of genuine and practical attempts to fertilize the grounds for democratic growth and establish richer frameworks for public participation. The analysis of patterns of participation support claims that new technologies “connect the connected.” However, this is not the end of the story. In such a competitive and arguably “anti-public” environment, power is not homogenous or evenly distributed even amongst the “connected.” As such, the ways in which new media strengthen and extend social networks, amplify forms of capital, develop literacies and open up participatory avenues for producers are all significant contributions to citizenship frameworks, even if these contributions do not match up with the original aims and objectives of each case.

This chapter examined cultural rights and participation in two case studies of UK based citizenship initiatives. There are three key findings emerging from this analysis: citizenship is contingent; different patterns of participation emerge; and the emergence of a cultural model of citizenship I call “public citizenship.” Both cases exercise different ideas of citizenship which are dependent upon the audience and circumstances at play. Ample evidence demonstrates that the language of citizenship is integrated in the set of tactics used to legitimize each project, sometimes at the expense of meaningful participation. While the empirical data suggests that these cases fail to be about citizenship, they contribute to another interpretation. This view looks at the patterns of public participation in both cases as partial and uneven. Some respondents were able to participate in citizenship oriented ways, whereas for others, low levels of social and cultural capital acted as barriers. For these respondents, each case fostered individualistic kinds of participation. Other respondents employed networked patterns of public participation; working with others and extending their personal, social and cultural groups into their respective projects. All of these patterns of participation signify the extension of cultural forms of citizenship. Related to this, the institutional association between ordinary people and the organization of citizenship marks a significant difference. I refer to this association as “public citizenship,” suggesting that although it is not entirely *new*, it is distinct.

## Chapter 8. Concluding Remarks: Cultural Rights and the Idea Public Citizenship

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### 8.1. Introduction

[Citizenship means to me] the ability to live freely and do the things the way you want and the things you want to do.... I can't be terribly political...because it would draw attention [to me] and that would be even worse. I can't, well, I fear that I can't do anything that would put me in the spotlight.... and, I can't leave the country. I can't work, legally. I couldn't go to university. I have a lot of limitations on my life, and the way I can live my life especially when planning for the future (Isabelle, 27 year old illegal immigrant living in North East London, interview, 30/11/2002).

The power and “ability to live freely” is a tremendous capacity; one that is often invisible to, or at least taken for granted, by those who are able to do so. And this is one of the factors inspiring this thesis and a whole series of questions<sup>127</sup> about meaning and technologically specific ideas of citizenship. As an illegal immigrant, Isabelle must manage significant limitations, envision a short term future in her everyday life and negotiate constant threats of what might happen if she “draws attention” to herself in order to stay in the country she calls home. In short, citizenship for Isabelle, dictates more of what she cannot do rather than what she can do.

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<sup>127</sup> Such questions ask, for instance, about the nature of social change, the constructions of inclusion or exclusion, in increasingly globalized, shifting and mediated environments. Issues which are based in and across many social science disciplines (e.g. political science, political sociology, sociology, geography, gender studies, post-colonial research, science and technology studies, history in addition to media and cultural studies).

On the face of it, new technologies do not change citizenship. The internet, location based or mobile technologies do not play a role in what makes me a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of the UK; and such technologies do not invite those who are “outsiders,” such as Isabelle, to become “insiders.” Yet, they do play a highly visible role and significant role in the management of information for, by, through and to citizens.

The bigger point is that citizenship matters. It matters for those who are citizens and it matters just as much for those who are not. This thesis has looked at two publicly funded cases in a global city and at the ways in which processes of inclusion are or become “bundled up” in technological practices (Silverstone 1994: 79). In this sense, I have not looked at what happens (or to whom) on the “excluded” sides of the digital divide. Instead, both cases offer insights into the ways processes of inclusion are discursively constructed and enacted within two “elite” cases with ample resources for experimenting with technologically specific ideas of citizenship. In addition to offering insights into processes of inclusion, this research also makes sense of how ideas of citizenship inform: the extension of citizenship, the articulation of cultural rights and patterns of public participation.

I want to make three points about the kinds of contributions this research makes to media and citizenship studies in these concluding remarks. The first concerns method and research design. The tiered case study method is particularly useful for conducting research on “messy objects” and abstract concepts. As a result, these methods are valuable research tools. The second contribution unpacks the mechanics of inclusion in order to understand respondents’ differing patterns of public participation. I argue that cultural rights help enable or disable these patterns of public participation; which has important consequences. These consequences point to the extension of cultural forms of citizenship. Related to this, I argue that this research demonstrates that forms of cultural citizenship are rearticulated as *public* forms of citizenship. Although public citizenship is *not* new, it is distinct from cultural citizenship because it points to a strengthening of cultural rights in organizational practices; practices that address “ordinary” people in *public* organizations through

citizenship claims. In my view, this makes a valuable contribution to questions about technologies and citizenship.

## **8.2. Messy Objects: Contextualizing Cases and Research Design**

At the beginning of this research, I envisioned the relationship between new media and citizenship to be one that could produce a fixed observable outcome; an outcome that could somehow be “captured” from “out there,” and “pinned down” through careful observation and analysis. Yet, the emphasis on the “new” and transformative in technologically mediated citizenship, relationships, affiliations, and politics inspired a deep scepticism. I could not imagine how clumsily inserting the internet, location based technologies or mobile phones into social relations, for instance, could have any impact on the practice, understanding or experience of citizenship. I could not see how such technologies might have had any impact on reducing experiences of exclusion for people such as Isabelle (quoted above). Despite this scepticism, I wanted to find, to discover the “thing” (or the absence of the “thing”) that was encapsulated in the relationship between new media and citizenship, even if that “thing” was emergent, unpredictable, fleeting and messy.

In an effort to manage the “messiness” of citizenship, I chose to focus on two case studies. John Law argues that “realities...are vague and indefinite” and he suggests that researching the “mess” of realities requires “methodological assemblages” (Law 2004: 14; c.f. Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Bijker 1999; Costigan 1999; Jones 1999b; a; Bauer and Aarts 2000; Couldry 2000a; Livingstone and Press 2006). Drawing inspiration from Law’s claim about the “mess of realities,” I employed just such a strategy. My methodological assemblage included multiple qualitative methods, including: participant observation, interviews, focus groups, archival research, documentary analysis and experimental ethnography. I applied a similar kind of logic to the interpretative frame, using thematic and discourse analysis to make sense of a lot of different materials. Such an approach was useful for exploring the

multiple tiers and domains related to each case, best understood as “messy objects.” This thesis has shown, as I argued in chapter 4, that different kinds of evidence and multiple methods are advocated by new media researchers and have the potential to make findings “stronger” by grounding them in diverse and varied sources (Gross, Giacquinta et al. 2004 [1971]: 100). Part of this strength was the inclusion of producers and their organizational contexts. And indeed, my findings reflect these multiple perspectives.

Case studies open up deep complexities within a “concatenation of domains” (Stake 2000: 439-440). Rich, vibrant and extensive empirical material provides at least one advantage. First, for example, I think my findings are thorough and rigorous. Contrasting perspectives and sources *do* strengthen the findings, because although this research is not applicable to every instance of “technologically mediated citizenship,” it takes into consideration a deep view of each case. As such, the chances of random or atypical evidence grossly influencing the analysis of this research are reduced, as the quantity of comparable empirical materials grew over time.

As mentioned above, each case is, in and of itself, a “messy object.” Mapping the ways in which citizenship does (or does not) fit into the contours of each case is an even messier task. Part of this mess depends upon the analytical and theoretical heritages used to “fix” or make sense of the relationship between citizenship and “technologies.”<sup>128</sup> Had I chosen different primary frameworks (e.g. identities, exclusion and the digital divide; radical or appositional forms of citizenship; trans, post, or national citizenships etc.), my findings likely would have been very different. Inferences need to be made very carefully with an emphasis on the importance of *context*, theoretically and empirically. The specificity of the genre of project (e.g. citizen journalism, social networking sites, blogs, wikis, YouTube, file sharing network or mobile platforms such as twinkle, etc.) on the configuration of membership, rights and

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<sup>128</sup> In this sense, John Law’s claim that “methods, their rules, and even more methods’ practices, not only describe but also help to produce the reality that they understand” (Law 2004: 5, 143; c.f. Haraway 1996) is particularly salient.

obligations and participation is significant.<sup>129</sup> For example, the “collaborative literacies” that Suoranta and Vadén (2008) refer to emerge from what Jenkins calls “commons based peer production” associated with open source projects or Wikipedia. In contrast, the only real collaboration between respondents in my cases was between producers (and UT’s “prod-users”), and that collaboration involved either production or discussion of the project itself.<sup>130</sup>

This research is specific to publicly funded projects “coordinating participation” (as Carpentier describes it) of and for the public. As such, my findings would also likely be very different had my cases included grassroots social movements, open source communities, “hacktivists,” citizen journalists, file sharing networks or corporate social networking sites (see for example, Castells 1996; Hauben and Hauben 1996; Castells 2001; Downing 2001; Rodriguez 2001; Bennett 2003; Tremayne 2007, among others). Based upon the evidence presented in this thesis, I would argue that the key difference between sites fostering “coordinated participation” and “bottom-up” participation is the shift from external to internal sources of motivation.

While all of the examples mentioned here share “new media” platforms, they differ wildly when it comes to purposes, logics and practices for using those platforms. I suspect that activists would occupy positions more closely related to the producers within my cases than to users; an observation that explains why so many have made claims about “new” technological or electronic forms of citizenship (see chapter 3).<sup>131</sup> This is significant, and supports much of the work done on new media and social movements emphasizing the

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<sup>129</sup> Please note that by “genre of project” I am referring to the project aims and capacities rather than to the “genre of media.” Although these are related, I argue that it is the aims of the project that invoke specificities of action, invite particular kinds of members over others, position particular rights and facilitate certain forms of participation.

<sup>130</sup> The case could have been a little different for Urban Tapestries, had the project significantly developed to include the technological capacity to respond to user generated content and had its user base grown to support a much larger number of users.

<sup>131</sup> A suspicion which has provoked a series of questions that I hope to address in a two year research project which targets similar contrasting sets of actors, provisionally entitled, “Rights, Technology, Action! The Cultural Politics of Global Participation.” This project empirically examines the rights and participatory strategies promoted in citizenship related initiatives from paired sets of what can loosely be defined as global actors from opposite ends of the top-down / bottom-up scale (i.e. Microsoft’s work on global citizenship in its corporate social responsibility department / the Electronic Frontier Foundation’s work on technologically related civil liberties and human rights, amongst others).

democratizing potential of internet mediated networks (e.g. Tsaliki 2002; Bennett 2003; Coleman 2004; Cammaerts and Carpentier 2006).

For the remainder of my concluding remarks, I concentrate on patterns of public participation and cultural citizenship. Following this section, I strengthen the argument for “public citizenship” and consider some of the implications bundled up within this re-modelling of citizenship.

### **8.3. Public Participation and Cultural Citizenship**

The technological environment, including the worldwide distribution and social profile of users, concluding that at present the Internet has provided alternative channels of communication primarily for countries and groups already rich in informational resources. In this view the Internet, like cable TV, mobile phones, and fax machines before it, connects the connected more than the peripheral (Norris 2001: 95).

The research reported in this thesis supports well established findings that new technologies connect those who already “connected.” By unpacking the mechanics of connection, it is possible to say something about the ways in which patterns of public participation are organized in my cases. The analysis of technologically specific ideas of citizenship addressed in chapters 2 and 3 point to the expansion of cultural forms of citizenship. This expansion has important ideational consequences in the case studies and in the negotiation of cultural rights. I turn to each of these points in this section.

Chapter 5 analyzes the organization of membership within each case and as such, provides evidence for the kinds of predictable channels that mobilize (and by default, demobilize) formal and informal kinds of membership. The most significant implications from this are two-fold. First and foremost, the employment of citizenship discourses and the differential distribution of rights and obligations point to each media organization’s manipulative strategies. For example, both cases also articulate active strategies (intentionally or otherwise) on the part of the organizations hosting each case, to *centralize their media organizations as public centres and as public sites for action*. Thus, the politics

of connection employed through and within both cases are both recursive and constitutive. For iCan, this recursivity was directed towards the media (e.g. BBC and mainstream news); whereas for UT, this recursivity was oriented towards those peers who tend to have advanced technological literacies. Such manipulative strategies help explain limited patterns of public participation and non-citizenship oriented behaviours.

This brings me to my second point. These cases suggest that technologies do not necessarily strengthen embedded circuits of exchange and the reproduction of symbolic power. Citizenship discourses tend to embed the advance of technologies within normative ideals of political or cultural engagement; as such, ordinary users are often peripheral to networked patterns of public participation. This is important, both in the small but not insignificant contribution offered to understandings of inclusion, and also in making sense of the relationship between new technologies and the (re)production of inequalities.

### *Public Participation*

However, the evidence is also contradictory. While there are strong indications that patterns of public participation are shallow, as described above, there are also indications of deeper kinds of engagement. Although producers and their organizations are trying to create opportunity structures for citizenship from the “bottom-up,” those opportunity structures are crafted from the “top-down.” As I argued in chapter 7, the data suggests contradictory patterns of public participation in the two cases I have researched here: including limited participation, partial participation and lastly a kind of networked participation. The last participatory pattern suggests a strengthening of (cultural) citizenship, resulting in a re-modelling of citizenship, and what I have suggested is best described as “public citizenship.”

Although evaluating each project was never one of the overall aims of my research, it is important to take note and reflect upon the fact that each project is no longer in existence. The BBC’s *Action Network* closed at the end of April 2008 and *Urban Tapestries* became *Social Tapestries* in 2005. In part, the

closure of these projects reflects a shortened lifespan of new media projects, perhaps characteristic of the rapid development of technical platforms, emerging software systems (e.g. social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Bebo) and larger socio-economic factors (e.g. BBC budget cuts; funding objectives etc.). A factor also represented in the position both projects occupy within the broader media landscape as proto Web 2.0 and social networking platforms. As proto-projects, they firmly encapsulate early attempts to invoke a participatory ethos through technical design. Also, and as argued throughout this thesis, the closure of these projects also partially indicates an ambiguous and superficial commitment to citizenship, from both producers and their organizations. These projects also offer proof of the ways in which new technologies can develop collaborative literacies and facilitate new freedoms, albeit conditionally.

### *Cultural Citizenship*

As discussed in chapter 2, Pakulski claims cultural citizenship prioritizes the “symbolic and ideational sphere” (1997: 80). As such, cultural rights facilitate the ways in which citizens are able to negotiate symbolic realms. However, in chapter 6, I analyzed the formal conditions of use in both cases, finding that these conditions (mostly) allocate cultural rights to producers and cultural obligations to users. This uneven distribution of cultural rights contradicts the “bottom-up” objectives of each case. Producers and their host organizations are granted almost total copyright and ownership rights of all user generated materials. As discussed in chapter 7, Arnstein would suggest that as a result of the maldistribution of cultural rights, neither producers nor users engage in “genuine” forms of participation. Instead, producers engage in strategic tactics to get content and users employ shallow forms of participation. Producers would likely object, claiming that change is slow, institutions are slow and organizational structures often lag behind cultural shifts in the design and implementation of citizenship (discussed in chapter 6; c.f. Deuze and Bruns 2007)<sup>132</sup>.

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<sup>132</sup> Deuze and Bruns cite the BBC's *Action Network* as an example of “participatory media” and drawing from four other cases of such media, argue that “in every case, the approach to participatory journalism is a hybrid between institutional or commercial support and community

One of the implications of this uneven distribution of cultural rights, concerns the ways that new technologies contribute to reformulations of class. This opens up an important line of inquiry regarding new technologies, the division of labour and relationships to forces of production in technological cultures. Some of these implications are touched upon below.

## **Networked Participation and Free Labour**

Networked participation refers to the collaborative and interactive behaviours. While there are numerous instances of producers working alongside colleagues and peers, this is not the case for users. As such, there are tensions around the ways in which networked forms of participation can meaningfully extend cultural practices into citizenship dimensions. Producers and “prod-users” who engage in public kinds of networked participation indicate strong citizenship orientations. In contrast, users very rarely collaborate with other users and instead, tend to provide “free labour.”

The lines dividing users from producers are also present in the ways each case is orientated and this line distinguishes between those respondents who behave in either a member-centred or a membership-oriented fashion. There are further distinctions regarding these differences. For example, team members were most often paid in cash or exchange for their time. Users, in contrast, are not directly offered rewards for participating or contributing content. Durkheim argues that the division of labour is important for the “social solidarity” and social cohesion:

It is through the division of labour, or at least mainly through it, that the cohesion of societies would be ensured. It [the division of labour] would determine the essential characteristics that constitute them.... It must possess a moral character, since needs for order, harmony and social solidarity are generally reckoned to be moral ones (Durkheim 1984 [1893]): 24-25)

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engagement. Further, although in all cases the Internet plays a significant role, in several instances other media\*cell phone, newspaper, and magazine\*are also involved” (2007: 325). This point supports the lag between cultural and institutional change emphasized by producers.

Social cohesion is important and holds special significance for citizenship. The reorganization of the division of labour has been picked up by many in terms of the blurring contexts of consumption and production, the commodification of cultural goods , immaterial labour and the emergence of new classes of professionals and amateurs (e.g. Barney 2000; Jenkins 2003; Terranova 2004; Jenkins 2006; Vanni 2007; Bruns 2008; Jenkins 2008; Keen 2007; Petersen 2008). For example, the insecurities, low wages and patterns of under-employment associated with “precarious work” and “McJobs” (see Menzies 1996; Terranova 2004; Vanni 2007) are often felt most keenly by women, minorities and the economically disadvantaged in advanced capitalist societies and developing countries (e.g. Wichterich 2000). This points to numerous questions regarding how forms of labour organizes social and economic divisions of labour and make “property relations into public [and] political issues” (Benhabib 1994: 92, 79). Such issues demand further research particularly in relation to what Terranova refers to as “free labour” in, for example, developing user generated content.

In line with many others, I have suggested that power is not homogeneous or evenly distributed, even among elites. In this sense, the ways in which each project amplifies connections, enriches resources and strengthens networks *for* those already connected is valuable. Additionally, it is significant that each project uses new media to strategically centralize media organizations as sites of public action and as public centres; and this offers a valuable contribution to public structures and organizations. This last section points to sometimes implicit themes emerging from this research, identifying significant directions both for future research and the lines of inquiry that could not be as deeply developed as I had hoped. However, unpacking the mechanics and patterns of connection within my research builds upon understandings of inclusion and offers insights on the ways processes of inclusion work in relation to new media. Nonetheless, I reflect upon another way that my research makes a contribution to citizenship and media studies in the following section on “public citizenship.”

## 8.4 Public Citizenship and New Technologies

... the overwhelming power of the media in the political life of social democracies has led some to argue that the media have now become 'the new public sphere' (Terranova 2004: 132).

The idea of public citizenship attempts to capture the ways in which technologically specific ideas of citizenship, at least in practice, involve making space for ordinary people in cultural institutions. However, public citizenship is not new. It is not new because public citizenship is about the extension of cultural dimensions of citizenship to include cultural rights. For example, in chapter 2, I suggest that cultural citizenship prioritizes issues of voice, representation and inclusion within public territories and platforms. In this sense, cultural citizenship and public citizenship prioritize rights to "propagating a cultural identity or lifestyle" and "social conditions enabling creativity" (Stevenson 2001). These cases demonstrate early attempts to build participatory structures which widen to include active practices of self-representation and collaboration (Giddens 1996; Murdock 1999). This is one of the distinguishing features between public and cultural citizenship. In these ways, both cases strengthen and extend existing forms of cultural citizenship.

Also, as argued in chapter 7, "public citizenship" is distinct from cultural citizenship for two additional reasons. First, it is distinct, because public citizenship indicates that cultural forms of citizenship are becoming fixed in institutional structures. Contingently, this also means shifts in the ways in which citizenship is and has been publicly configured as a framework from the governance of citizens for and by the state towards the governance of citizens by and for the cultural industries; a point that draws from Terranova's claim at the start of this section. An example of this includes the two-way flow of rights "to access" between users and professionals: including the formalization of user rights to access public information *and* more easily get in touch or have access to project producers. For producers, these include strong emphasis on the formalization of organizational rights to use and to "access" users and their personal information (discussed as the "tripling of access" in chapter 6).

Based upon the archival research and documentary analysis presented mostly in chapter 7, BBC citizenship projects differ radically from those in practice in the 1930s and 1940s. Archives show that citizenship programming was almost entirely defined by material focused on laws, government and politics. Current citizenship projects celebrate ordinary people, marking a significant change. It is meaningful that public organizations are designing citizenship projects with ordinary people in mind. While both the BBC and Proboscis formalize their control and ownership of personal information and user generated content in their terms and conditions, the importance of the “public” character of such content is absent. While the potential for actualizing such public frameworks appears to be there, additional steps need to be taken in order to protect and foster the public. It is also important to develop the argument that although public citizenship is about the strengthening of cultural citizenship, it is not an entirely new model.

Thus, while there are limitations and considerable concerns associated with “public citizenship,” the relationship between public organizations and ordinary people is valuable. In a climate where public services are under threat from the advance of capitalism and neo-liberal regimes, culturally oriented public organizations *need* strengthening. Arguably, the centralization of media organizations, even if this means they are the new “power-container of industrial capitalism,” is a potentially valuable contribution to public life (Nash 2001: 88).

## **Historical relativity and precedents**

The media historian, Carolyn Marvin, opens her classic book with the sentence “*new technologies* is a historically relative term” (emphasis in original, Marvin 1988:3). This is important and is especially relevant to the point I want to make here: public citizenship, in principle at least, is not new. In both cases, new technologies do *not* invite or instantiate new kinds of citizenship. At least, they do not do so in ways anticipated by those involved in designing, implementing and managing each case.

Similarly, many others have long observed this strengthening in radio, mass media, newspapers, audience discussion or radio call-in programmes, the telephone, other “old” media and even electricity (e.g. Marvin 1988; Martin 1991; Alexander and Pal 1998; Livingstone and Lunt 1994: 4-5). Thus, the principles of public citizenship are *not* new; and while new technologies may be correlated with the organizational reconfiguration of public institutions and ordinary people, they are certainly not the cause.

And yet, citizenship necessarily encompasses more than the individual, more than the collective and the interstices between the two. It is at these interstices where the strengthening of cultural dimensions of citizenship cannot adequately explain the findings from each case. The extension of Marshall’s model of citizenship to include the cultural dimension does not explain the proliferation of technologically specific ideas of citizenship. Nor does it explain the significance of publicly funded organizations taking up citizenship initiatives involving communication technologies. Public citizenship points to the strengthening of institutional or organizational logics in facilitating “bottom-up” citizenship foundations.

Citizenship has always included the public and has always been oriented towards the public or common good (even if there have been stark limitations on what is considered “public” or the “common good”). Yet, both cases reorient citizenship practices towards the cultural industries and within the public sector. I close this discussion with a reflection on the best and the worst implications associated with public citizenship in relation to both cases.

## Promises and perils of public citizenship

While public citizenship certainly invites numerous promises and instances of positive social change and empowerment for *some*, it also carries risks and exclusions. Including, as many have suggested, the institutionalization of soft power (e.g. Nye 2004; Chouliaraki 2007), increased responsibilities for new media producers and users, while also escalating the systemization of advanced personal data collection.

Without a doubt, all respondents (both producers and users) expressed excitement about and took pleasure in participating in each project. UT particularly fostered creative processes through its public authoring platform and iCan users spoke with pride about the quality of their campaigns and the times when mainstream media picked up their stories. In public events, producers buzzed with the exhilaration of sharing treasured ideas and the potential of being part of making “that bigger something.” In my own view, I also thoroughly enjoyed conducting this research, continually finding myself impressed and inspired by all of my respondents, particularly the vision, knowledge and passion team members expressed in interviews, participant observation and in public events. This excitement is meaningful, but it does not tell the whole story.

The power of these projects to generate such “excitement” for all participants illustrates the considerable successes and moments of empowerment (even if unequally experienced) so characteristic of both projects. These very positive experiences suggest that both projects have made considerable contributions to the people involved in them. Arguably, these “pleasurable modes of engagement” point to freedoms involving creative and collaborative processes (as discussed in chapter 2, 4 and 6). And it is not only individuals who benefit. Both projects also, through the lessons learned from malfunctions and impressive achievements alike, make valuable contributions to a more dynamic public sphere. Both projects are exemplary instances of the kinds of things publicly-funded organizations and the cultural industries *should* be doing. Certainly, the new technologies used in both cases significantly lower entrance

costs for many participants, even if only partially to some public arenas. Yet, with this ease also comes a reduction in stability, security and permanence (e.g. Bennett 2003). Richer public resources lead, arguably, to a stronger public domain through innovative ways to archive and publicize national and local memory, increased possibilities for citizen led collective associations and easier ways for citizens to build and develop social capital.

However, public citizenship is not all positive. On one hand, publicly generated resources and strategies for ordinary participation are fragile, as illustrated by the closure of iCan due to BBC budget cuts. The advance of capitalism carries threats of privatization and this may invite the manipulation of personal data to increase profits and maximize entertainment value. The “participatory ethos” and strategic use of new technologies also naturalizes technologies as inherently participatory, obscuring private interests and masking manipulative tactics. For example, both of my cases are elite and publicly funded cases – what would be the story for profit motivated organizations? While iCan producers engaged in fair practices and honoured the informal rights of users, they were under no obligation to do so. If these producers were to leave the organization, as they did in iCan and UT, the formal conditions allocate total control of user generated content to the organizations. And with this turnover, individual producers are not there to temper this organizational control with informal practices. These factors highlight the fragility of public resources and the importance of how such valuable *public* resources need to be protected.

Thus, while the principles of full participation and increased “connectivity” are alluring, they also come with significant and often invisible or naturalized costs. Each case used incredibly complex platforms, employed sophisticated logics that may enhance some kinds of literacies for some people in some ways; but they also demand advanced skills, impressive competencies and well developed abstract creative thinking capacities. All of which seem to be shared by producers and UT’s “prod-users.” The implication here is that in order to fully engage with each case, people must meet higher and embedded educational, cultural, symbolic and increasingly technical pre-requisites.

Again, while framed by new technologies, these promises and perils are not new; they rearticulate long standing concerns about the fabric of democracy and the ways that political or cultural forms of engagement are woven into this fabric with wires and webs, devices and digital networks.

## 8.5 Power and Freedom in Technological Cultures

The modern preoccupation with citizenship is an expression of a desire to create, and the capability to imagine, comprehensive membership frameworks... But the aspiration to recover small and close-knit communities continues to coexist with the new citizenship frameworks, the most authoritative of which is the nation-state, while others are revised and new ones are imagined (Shafir 1998: 23).

In many ways this thesis has taken on one genre of what Shafir identifies as the “modern preoccupation with citizenship.” For this research, this preoccupation has been with technologically specific ideas of citizenship and the ways in which these ideas are meaningful in theory and in practice. These ideas and practices may stem from long standing motivations to erase ugly social problems through the powers of new technologies. It is accurate to suggest that both of the cases I have researched were born out of a desire to *make the world a better place*. And to an extent, these desires have been realized albeit in more ways for some than for others.

Technologically specific ideas of citizenship are one of many sets of proliferating citizenship discourses indicative of the pluralization of citizenship. Nationally based rights and obligations, inclusions and exclusions, constraints and freedoms, may take a back seat within genres of “technologically oriented” citizenship forms. However, as Isabelle reminds us at the beginning of this chapter, constraints and exclusion have by no means faded from the realities of citizenship. In this sense, there is a real tension between the legitimacy of expanded citizenship dimensions and shallow conceptions of citizenship characterized by manipulative and limited forms of participation. Yet, whether it is legitimate or not, forms of citizenship are changing.

And this raises the issue of what has been deeply implicit throughout my research: the issue of power. Drawing from Nikolas Rose's work on freedom as both liberating and constraining, power is both productive and restrictive (Rose 1999). The freedoms and forms of citizenship emerging within both cases are *conditional*. These conditions involve various tensions between resistance, micro politics of power and overall socio-political structures (c.f. Cammaerts and Carpentier 2005: 10).

These models of power also apply to the construction and reproduction of what I have referred to elsewhere as the Trojan horse of symbolic power (drawing from Bourdieu 1990; Thompson 1995; Couldry 2000b; Bourdieu 2001 [1983]). By this I mean that the promises each case makes to circulate symbolic power are often empty, hollowed out like a Trojan horse and carrying instead, a concentration of cultural rights granting organizational control over symbolic power. Similarly, the creative freedoms and individual liberties associated with technologically specific ideas of citizenship are present in the cases, albeit in ways that are most apparent for producers. As Roger Silverstone so beautifully articulates:

It is all about power of course. In the end. The power the media have to set an agenda. The power they have to destroy one. The power they have to influence and change the political process. The power to enable, to inform. The power to deceive. The power to shift the balance of power: between State and citizen; between country and country; between producer and consumer. And the power that they are denied: by the State, by the market, by the resistant or resisting audience, citizen, consumer. It is all about ownership and control: the who and the what and the how of it. And it is about the drip, drip, drip of ideology as well as the shock of the luminous event. It is about the media's power to create and sustain meanings; to persuade, endorse and reinforce. The power to undermine and reassure. It is about reach. And it is about representation: the ability to present, reveal, explain; and also the ability to grant access and participation. It is about the power to listen and the power to speak and be heard. The power to prompt and guide reflection and reflexivity. The power to tell tales and articulate memories (Silverstone 1999: 143).

This research builds upon Silverstone's description of power. Public citizenship means that cultural and media organizations have the potential to be *institutions of power* as they never have before.

Power is central to the point about familiarity, of technological and ideological naturalization, of the time it takes to *learn* about and *adapt* to the complexities of change. I argue in chapter 5 that proximity to symbolic power enhances the depth and the efficacy of membership as opportunity structures. Thus, while these cases inspire the social *imaginary*, they do so accompanied by the “drip, drip, drip of ideology.” This “ideology” naturalizes specific participatory pathways as technological rather than as designed by organizations and negotiated by producers.

Technologically specific ideas of citizenship also threaten a narrowing of citizenship practices based on the ease with which culturally literate elites are able to more easily engage than “ordinary” citizens. And as observed in my cases, many ordinary citizens are living “off of the map” rather than as engaged with communities that are not technologically mediated. As such, public citizenship risks enforcing the centralization of media organizations as dominant sites for public inclusion and the recirculation of capital within institutionalized networks of power. The promise is that these rearticulated forms of cultural citizenship create stronger avenues for public participation in publicly oriented cultures.

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## Appendices 1.1 – 1.2: Introduction

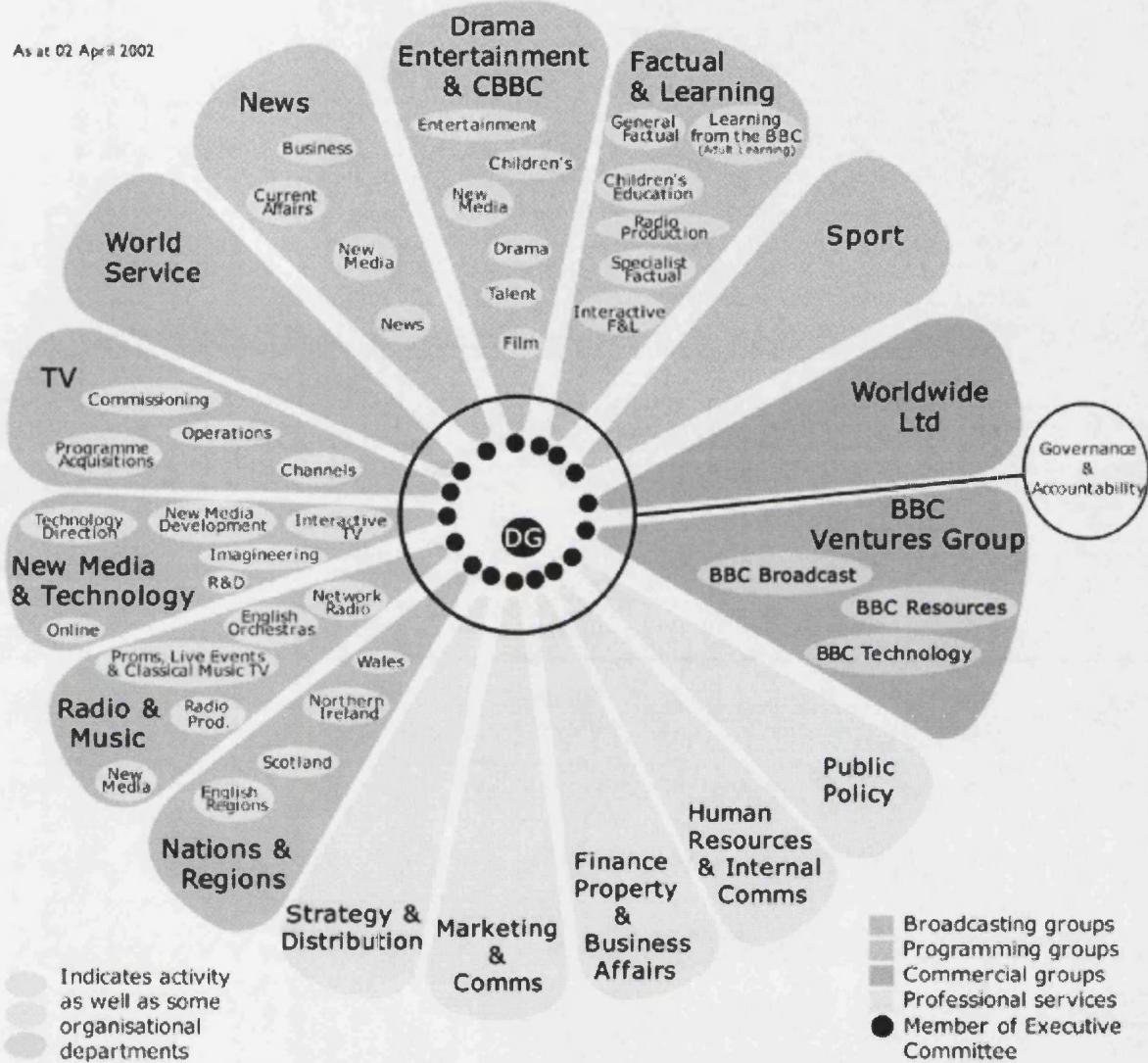
### Appendix 1.1: Overview of Potential Cases

	What	Pros / Benefits	Cons / Issues
1	<p>CRIS (Communication Rights for the Information Society):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- aims to create a 'declaration of communication rights'</li> <li>- case study would involve comparison of political 'declarations' aiming to find what is different, and why it is significant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- elements of 'Declaration' contain many of the elements / 'new' rights posed by advocates of/for TC</li> <li>- transnational: thus provides a point of looking at changing notions of public/ social/ civil spaces</li> <li>- clearly fits into the rights and obligations framework (although obligations may be underdeveloped)</li> <li>- have access and recommendations to some key players through Robin Mansell and Nick Couldry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- huge. Encompasses a number of 'digital' elements including education, e-commerce, e-health, e-government, e-environment, ICTs and gender</li> <li>- as a campaign, CRIS may neglect some of the more negative implications of ICTs in the field (e.g. have a technotopic view of ICTs and rights)</li> <li>- does not directly address citizenship</li> <li>- perhaps engage an overemphasis on policy, declarations and resolutions and contingently lose the materiality of TC practices?</li> </ul>
2	<p>DRM (Digital Rights Management)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the movement towards legislating intellectual property</li> <li>- legitimating /standardizing / translating digital identities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- specific to local territories, but applicable across national boundaries and is thus also transnational, facilitating analysis of local/global /citizen spaces</li> <li>- facilitates a comparison to the kinds of civil laws Marshall notes and the emergence (or reconstitution) of a new kind of citizen</li> <li>directly addresses 'Public Knowledge', 'Public Interest' and relates to the 'culture industries'</li> <li>- looks at patterns of distribution via new media; which may provide an interesting comparative point</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- does not directly address citizenship, issues of fair use, privacy, security, corporate abuses and piracy</li> <li>- empirical work would most likely involve analysis of legal documents</li> <li>- appears to ideologically engage an anti-corporate / commercial attitude (e.g. Stallman 1996), although industry and commercial interests appear to be most the active in DRM</li> </ul>

What	Pros / Benefits	Cons / Issues
<b>3</b> Education and IT in the UK (Education and Citizenship in Scotland) - Juxtaposition of citizenship and ICTs in the classroom	- involves a national initiative directly linking citizenship and ICTs - A rich area that clearly bridges social, political and civil dimensions of citizenship - Media literacy - Perhaps do a comparative analysis of the legislature or textbooks in relation to citizenship, ICTs and education before and after ICT implementation	- preliminary analysis suggests that the emphasis for these initiatives is primarily on training young citizens how they can use ICTs as tools in order to augment their experience of citizenship - Massive project, ranging from England to at least the far reaches of Scotland, it will be very difficult to understand what may be regional differences versus the influence of ICTs
<b>4</b> BBCi: (e.g. iCan – a platform for civic participation) - examine public statements, goals, objectives Particularly the history, development and aims of BBCi	- highlights the relationship between nation (or sense of nation) and media - public broadcasting is a critical point for thinking about media and public space and provides a central starting point for thinking about pre / post new media and citizenship - BBC has a long history of fostering citizenship, national identity and multi-cultural content through its programming	- the BBC has many references in its history files to the media, nation and citizenship, but this seems to fade (based upon a preliminary analysis of their website) - BBCi is a huge entity, responsible for a multitude of projects – the ones most appropriate for exploring TC does not seem clear - Access?
<b>5</b> E-Democracy initiative: (e.g. Citizens Online, UK Online, the Citizen's Portal, government-online)	- directly links citizenship with new media - provides insight into an almost completely political dimension, including emphasis on standard political issues concerning participation, civic engagement, voter turn-out and electoral practices / campaigning asl	- confined to mostly the political realm - Citizens Online and the Citizens Portal have been accused of being primarily lobby groups campaigning for particular interests (reiterative of Norris' 'cyberenclaves')

	What	Pros / Benefits	Cons / Issues
6	<p>Urban Tapestries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a location-based wireless application that allows users to publicly author place based stories, while engaging other users' tales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- engages a form of the 'intimate citizenship' that Stevenson discusses in relation to cultural citizenship and challenges the nature of citizens' / users activities</li> <li>- have close contact with the project and designers and thus access to sources</li> <li>- based at the community level: facilitates an understanding of some of the more implicit aspects of TC</li> <li>- representative of a number of other emergent location based applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- conducting the fieldwork may depend upon the completion of the prototype, which may take a long time</li> <li>- because it is just a prototype and it is not a widespread technology, it may be difficult to differentiate between potential and material</li> </ul>
7	<p>'Global Civil Society'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a hugely contested label referring to a number of actors (including NGOs, INGOs, BINGO's, TNCs and a range of actors participating in global events like world summits and the anti-capitalist movement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- very rich topic and promises interesting research</li> <li>- 'global actors' (e.g. such as NGOs, social justice activists etc.) and the communication systems they use would be an interesting case study</li> <li>- takes place on a transnational level: bridges local and regional issues/concerns with transnational governing bodies (e.g. Beijing 1995 conference on women, World Social Forum 2001) particularly given the relationship between formal and informal aspects of such meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- does not directly address citizenship</li> <li>- occupies a mammoth and highly contested field</li> <li>- spans a number of different projects, movements, organizations</li> <li>- a lot of previous work has been and continues to be done in this area</li> <li>- popular topic; much work has been done in this area</li> <li>- access?</li> </ul>
8	<p>Telecities Tele-Democracy project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Massive project involving the implementation of e-democracy via new technologies, involves more than 120 European cities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bridges gap between the local and the global</li> <li>- the network approach to linking digital cities, may prove worthwhile</li> <li>- citizenship is linked with particular kinds of software / forms of communication (e.g. groupware, databases, e-mail)</li> <li>- uniquely bound to local and regional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- like many other projects, it is built upon objectives and practice still has a considerable way to go before one can judge its success / efficacy</li> <li>- based upon 'digital cities' which prove to be a less than useful case study (inferring from Blacksburg and DDS)</li> </ul>

## Appendix 1.2: BBC “Flower”



The above chart depicts the structure of and organizational divisions within the BBC as of April 2002. Although the BBC has been and continues to undergo substantial restructuring, this chart does provide a useful overview of the BBC's organizational structure. The chart was kindly provided by Lizzie Jackson, BBCi Communities Editor at that time.

## Appendices 3.1 – 3.2: ‘Technological’ Rights and Obligations

### Appendix 3.1: New Rights and Obligations

Rights and Obligations in Netizenship, Cyborg and Technological Citizenship					
Right	Cultural Citizenship Rights	Netizenship Rights	Cyborg Citizenship Rights	Technological Citizenship Rights	Obligations
Access [Cyber Citizenship]	Knowledge Information Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Universal and Equal access to knowledge and information</li> <li>- Access to broad distribution</li> <li>- Universal access at no or low cost</li> <li>- Equal quality of connection</li> <li>- Equal time of connection</li> <li>- No limitation to access to read, to post and to otherwise contribute</li> </ul>	Freedom of Information “Citizens shall have access to all information held about them by governments or other bureaucracies .... at the expense of the bureaucracies.”	To knowledge or information	To learn and use knowledge (for self validation, safety, peace of mind)
Right to Participate [Cyber Citizenship]	Participation	No limitation to access to read, to post <i>and to otherwise contribute</i>		To participation	To participate and to accept the will of the majority
Right to Privacy and Security [Cyber Citizenship]	-	Freedom from surveillance, targeted marketing (Gandy 2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Right of Electronic Privacy</li> <li>- Mosco and Cyber citizenship: ‘the right to privacy and security’</li> </ul>	-	-

## Rights and Obligations in Netizenship, Cyborg and Technological Citizenship

Right	Cultural Citizenship Rights	Netizenship Rights	Cyborg Citizenship Rights	Technological Citizenship Rights	Obligations
Freedom of Expression	To creativity and the conditions that propagate creativity right to propagate a cultural identity or lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Freedom of Electronic Expression to promote the exchange of knowledge without fear of reprisal</li> <li>- Uncensored Expression</li> </ul>	Freedom of Electronic Speech	-	-
Right to Political Equality [Cyber Citizenship]	Political and economic security inclusion across race, sexuality, gender – embracing diversity and multiplicities	Consideration of one's ideas on their merits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Freedom of Consciousness</li> <li>- Right to Political Equality"</li> </ul>	To guarantees of informed consent	To exercise technological civic literacy and technological civic virtue
Freedom from Commercial Manipulation			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No official Spokesperson</li> <li>- Uphold the public grassroots purpose and participation</li> <li>- Volunteer Contribution – no person profit from the contribution freely given by others</li> <li>- Protection of the public purpose from those who would use it for their private and money making purposes</li> </ul>		

## Rights and Obligations in Netizenship, Cyborg and Technological Citizenship

Right	Cultural Citizenship Rights	Netizenship Rights	Cyborg Citizenship Rights	Technological Citizenship Rights	Technological Citizenship Obligations
Right to Mobility			Freedom of travel (virtually or in the flesh, at their own risk and expense)		

## Appendix 3.2: Rights and obligations in Marshall, cultural citizenship and the UDHR

Technologically mediated rights and obligations	Citizenship dimensions and corresponding rights and obligations	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
	<p>Civil:</p> <p>'Courts of Justice' (circa 1832)</p> <p>Rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- right to individual freedom</li> <li>- liberty of the person</li> <li>- freedom of speech, thought and faith</li> </ul>	<p>Article 1:</p> <p>"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights..."</p> <p>Article 3:</p> <p>"Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person"</p>
Right to communicate		Article 18:
Freedom of expression		"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion..."
Right to interactivity	<p>- the right to own property</p> <p>- to conclude valid contracts</p> <p>- the right to justice</p> <p>- the right to work</p>	<p>Article 19</p> <p>Article 17:</p> <p>"Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others"</p> <p>Right to justice – Articles 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11</p>
		Article 23
		"Everyone has the right to work..."
	<p>Obligations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to other civilians (through wages and unionisation)</li> </ul>	<p>Responsibility:</p> <p>Article 1: "They should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood"</p>
Right to participate	<p>Political:</p> <p>'Parliament' and 'local Government' (circa 1918)</p> <p>Rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- right to participate in the exercise of political power</li> <li>- right to vote</li> <li>- right to run for a position as political representative</li> </ul>	Article 21:
Right(s) to access		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives</li> <li>2. Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.</li> <li>3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority in government [elections]....</li> </ol>
	<p>Obligations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to work</li> <li>- to contribute to the economy and government through taxes</li> </ul>	

	<b>Social:</b>  'Educational system[s] and social services'  (circa 20th Century)	
	<b>Rights:</b>  - whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security	<b>Preamble</b>  Articles 22, 25, 26, 27
<b>Right to equality</b>	 - the right to share the full in the social heritage  - to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society	
	<b>Obligation:</b>  - public duty  - education	<b>Article 29</b>
	 - to ensure the betterment of the individual and the polis or common good	
<b>Right(s) to participate</b>	<b>Cultural:</b>  Symbolic, representation, media, museums etc.	<b>Article 27</b>  1. Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
	<b>Rights:</b>  <b>Obligations:</b>	

## Appendices 4.1 – 4.3: Capturing Technological Citizenship

### Appendix 4.1: Materials for Case Studies

iCan	Urban Tapestries
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT</b>	
Documentary Analysis	
23 public BBC and DCMS documents	
Promotional materials and press releases	Documentary Analysis
Blog postings	Original funding applications and project proposal
BBCi Employees:	Promotional materials and press releases
Julia	Blog postings
Sandra	
Alysa	
Cassandra	
Archival Analysis	Desk Research
BBC Written archives 1946-56	Public Art: fanzines, community murals, graffiti
Participant Observation:	Participant Observation:
NotCon / BBC launch conference	3 x creative labs
Informed citizenship BBC review	4 x bodystorming events
IPPR – participatory media	6 x team meetings
Who protects the public domain? (IPPR)	public trial

## CITIZEN / SUBJECT (Interviews)

## Core Production Team

Benjamin (x2)  
 Oliver  
 Brian  
 Denise  
 Christina (x2)

## Core Production Team

Derek  
 Bridget  
 Russell  
 Theresa  
 Melissa  
 Caro  
 Ryan

## Former production team members

William  
 Simon

## Users / Participants

Rosemary  
 Michael  
 Aaron

E-mail correspondence regarding specific questions and general issues with all respondents

## Users / Participants:

Interviews with 9 users  
 Mandy  
 Stanley  
 Jill  
 Mark  
 Justin  
 Maria  
 Betty  
 Armand  
 Joe  
 Betty

Data from public trial (100 participants) generated by Proboscis

Open ended questionnaires from 4 week field trial (11 participants), generated by Proboscis

Focus group with 3 / 11 field trial participants

Jason  
 Stewart  
 Toby

E-mail correspondence regarding specific questions and general issues with all respondents

## TECHNOLOGICAL PLATFORM

iCan web-Site: 8 month web archive (April – Dec. 2004) of multi-layered site

Public campaigns, user campaign diaries, public comments

UT Platform: available content (March 2004 – July 2005)

Based on material produced by respondents, focusing on pockets and location based contexts (threads)

## **Appendix 4.2: Interview Schedule**

### **General BBC Interview Protocol**

I). Informed Consent

II). Demographics

II.I) What age/age range are you? \_\_\_\_\_

II.II) What is your gender? \_\_\_\_\_

II.III) What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

II.IV) What area do you live in? \_\_\_\_\_

II.V) What is your nationality/ethnicity? \_\_\_\_\_

### **1. General Introduction:**

1.1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

1.2. How would you describe your work?

1.3 What project (or projects) are you currently working on?

1.4. What is your role in that project?

1.5. How does it work?

- What are its aims and objectives?

1.6. How big is it?

1.7. How did you get involved in those projects?

1.8. How many people are working on this project?

1.9. What audience does your project aim to reach?

- And how?

(Who are you trying to get involved)

1.10. Do you think this is (or can be) an important project?

- Why or why not?

(e.g. will it have an impact on users? On the public? If so, how?)

1.11. What future do you see for your project?

1.12. If you had absolutely no restraints, what would your project look like?

1.13. Do you have any projects that you would like or are hoping to work on?

- Why?

1.14. What do you think of your project's success, or potential for success?

(Do you think your project is successful? How do you define success?)

1.15. What kind of relationship does your project have with the public?

1.16. What kinds of technology do you work with?

1.17. How would you describe your relationship with ICTs? Would you consider yourself an early adopter?

## **2. Project Introduction**

2.1. Can you please tell me where you and your project fit into this chart?

2.2. Where does the BBCi fit? Interactive services?

2.3. What, if any, kinds of mandate are you responsible for upholding?  
(E.g. the BBC charter)

2.4. Who regulates your work? Who do you report to?

2.5. How is your work evaluated?

2.5. How do users/the public contact you if they have feedback? How do they make a complaint?

2.6. What kind of relationship does public/user input have to the BBC (e.g. where does it go – or what do you do with it?)

### **3. Key Concepts:**

3.1. Do you think the BBCi creates a new kind of public space?

- Why or why not?

3.2. What kind of relationship does the BBCi aim to have with the public?

- With communities?

3.3. In your view, does your project create or contribute to new kinds of public spaces?

- What kind of space are you creating?  
- Whose space is it?

3.4. What is your vision of public space in relation to BBCi/your project?

3.5. What kinds of (particularly online) risks do you consider for your work?  
(E.g. identity theft, privacy, surveillance, obscenity laws, protection of youth)

3.6. What kinds of protective measures do you take?

3.7. Do you think interactive services/new media can enable new forms of social interaction or relationships?

- Why?
- How?

3.8. In your view does BBCi or your project make possible a new kind of citizen?

- a new kind of citizenship?  
(e.g. via participation, national belonging, user/audience based communities)

3.9. Have you seen any evidence of this in your work?

3.10. How do you respond to critiques of social capital?

#### **4. Conclusion**

4.1. Do you have any other comments, observations or questions you'd like to add?

4.2. Do you know other people who I could talk to?

4.3. Can I talk to you or interview again in the future?

## **Appendix 4.3: Informed Consent to Participate in Research**

You are asked to participate in a research project conducted by Zoe Sujon, who is a doctoral student at the London School of Economics and will be referred to throughout this form as 'the researcher'.

The project is supported by SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council), ORS (Overseas Research Scholarship), the Canadian Women's Club and the London School of Economics

You have been selected as a participant for this research because you are someone who is engaged in, or is knowledgeable about, iCan (BBC's Action Network) or Urban Tapestries.

### **Purpose of the Research**

This research aims to understand how information and communication technologies (ICTs) are or can be related to citizenship in the 21st century. Emerging narratives about 'technological citizenship' - an umbrella term for discourses about e-citizenship, cyber citizenship, digital citizenship, netizenship and cyborg citizenship - suggest that new media are facilitating the transformation, extension and/or reconstitution not only of what it means to be a citizen but also the spaces of civil society. My doctoral work aims to understand these 'emergent' spaces and processes, and poses the following research questions: 1) how are new media related to changing territories of citizenship and 2) what is the relationship between new media and the constitution of particular subjects, namely the 'technological' or 'mediated' citizen.

This research is being conducted for a section of the researcher's doctoral thesis and significantly contributes to one of the case studies comprising the empirical component of this thesis.

### **Procedures**

As a volunteer participant in this research, you are asked to read and accept this form, complete a short questionnaire and participate in an interview. On average, this should take approximately 45 minutes to an hour but may extend slightly beyond this.

### **Potential Risks and Discomforts**

The researcher has not identified any potential risks or discomforts to the respondents.

### **Potential Benefits to Subjects**

Participation in this research provides a contribution to academic work on the juxtaposition(s) between new media and politics generally. Respondents may enjoy making this contribution and the process of exchanging ideas about the character and nature of their experiences.

### **Confidentiality**

The doctoral research conducted here is intended to become public information, albeit public information that respects your individual rights and privacy. Conventionally social scientists protect research participants' privacy by anonymizing names and any other personal details that can lead to the identification of respondents. However, some participants prefer to have their real names recognized. As a result, please specify below which option you would prefer:

I want complete anonymity

I want my real name used

### **Participation and Withdrawal**

Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time and without penalty. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to or cannot answer and remain in the study. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. Should

you withdraw from the study, you will decide at that time if the researcher can use the data you have provided to that point.

The researcher may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

**Consent to Participate in Research**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the above information, understand the research project and/or protocol, and consent to participate in this research.

**Permission to publish and use for educational purposes**

I grant permission to the researcher (Zoe Sujon) to publish, present and use any data collected during the research. This permission extends to future work or editions of any publication, presentation or reports, including the non-exclusive world-wide rights in all languages, and to the prospective publication in academic, research and educational publications and the Internet.

---

Signature of Participant

## Appendices 6.1 – 6.2: Rights and Obligations

### Appendix 6.1: 'Producer' rights and 'user' obligations

	Producer Rights	User Obligations
Urban Tapestries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. right to amend terms and conditions</li> <li>2. right to not have to notify users of any change</li> <li>3. right to provide 'as is' service / site</li> <li>4. right to delete data</li> <li>5. right to modify data</li> <li>6. right to content copyright</li> <li>7. right (but not obligation), in our sole discretion, to refuse to publish or to remove or block access to any Content you provide at any time and for any reason, with or without notice</li> <li>8. right to have third parties who may be advertised and/or made available on or through this web site</li> <li>9. right to DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND</li> <li>10. right to make interruptions, errors, viruses, delays, insecurities, inaccuracies, unreliability, poor quality</li> <li>11. right to any and all copyrights, trademarks, patents, trade secrets, and any other proprietary right that we may have in our web site,</li> <li>11. a) its content</li> <li>11. b) the goods and services that may be provided.</li> <li>12. right to assign our rights and obligations under this Terms of Use</li> <li>13. right to NOT BE LIABLE for almost everything</li> <li>14. right to have no responsibility or liability for the timeliness, deletion, failure to store, inaccuracy, or improper delivery of any data or information.</li> <li>15. right to not be responsible to</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. adhere to terms</li> <li>2. adhere to changing terms at any time</li> <li>3. you must register on our site</li> <li>4. agree to provide truthful information when requested</li> <li>5. be at least the age of thirteen (13) or older</li> <li>6. maintain the confidentiality of your password</li> <li>7. responsible for all uses via your registration and/or login</li> <li>8. agree to immediately notify us of any unauthorized use</li> <li>9. agree that all information or data ....shall be the sole responsibility of the person providing the Content</li> <li>10. agree that our web site may expose you to Content that may be objectionable or offensive</li> <li>11. provide any Content or perform any conduct that may be unlawful,</li> <li>12. impersonate or misrepresent... any person</li> <li>13. impersonate or misrepresent... any content</li> <li>14. collect or harvest any data about other users</li> <li>15. engage any commercial manner or unauthorized advertising</li> <li>16. provide any Content that may give rise to our civil or criminal liability</li> <li>17. including but not limited to laws relating to copyright, trademark, patent, or trade secrets</li> <li>19. grant copyright to producers</li> <li>19. a) you agree to grant to us a worldwide, royalty-free, perpetual, non-exclusive right and license</li> <li>20. You agree to indemnify and hold us harmless... due to or arising out of your conduct or connection with</li> </ol>

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	<p>you in any way for the Content that appears on this web site nor for any error or omission.</p> <p>16. right to not be liable for or responsible in any manner for any of your dealings or interaction with third parties.</p>	<p>this web site or service</p> <p>20. a) your provision of Content</p> <p>20. b) your violation of this Terms of Use</p> <p>20. c) or any other violation of the rights of another person or party.</p> <p>20. d) applies to ... our subsidiaries, affiliates, related parties, officers, directors, employees, agents, independent contractors, advertisers, partners, and co-branders from any claim or demand, including reasonable attorney's fees</p> <p>21. YOUR OWN RISK</p> <p>22. written consent</p> <p>23. you will have no rights to make any commercial uses of our web site or service without our prior written consent.</p> <p>24. abide by the laws of England and Wales</p>
iCan (terms)	<p>1. may change terms at any time</p> <p>2. content, services, products provided 'AS IS'</p> <p>3. no warranty</p> <p>4. no liability</p> <p>5. right to make errors, interruptions, transmit viruses and contain bugs</p> <p>6. right to not make corrections</p> <p>7. full copyright</p> <p>8. to take action against any user, especially if breaking the rules</p> <p>9. right to use any available information about users to exercise control and ensure rules are followed</p> <p>10. right to inform third parties (e.g. users' employers, schools, or ISPs) of bad behaviour</p> <p>11. right to delete any content at any time and for any reasons</p>	<p>1. to be of 'legal age'</p> <p>1. a) if not of legal age, to get consent from parent or guardian</p> <p>2. use bbc.co.uk for lawful purposes</p> <p>3. to exercise online safety</p> <p>4. to be legally bound by terms and conditions or NOT USE SITE</p> <p>5. to review terms and conditions</p> <p>5. a) keep informed of changes</p> <p>6. to NOT use, in any way, BBCi content for commercial purposes</p> <p>7. to use content only for personal purposes</p> <p>8. to not infringe on anyone else's rights</p> <p>9. to grant the BBC a 'perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive, sub-licensable right and license to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, translate, create derivative works from, distribute, perform, play and exercise all copyright and publicity rights with respect to your contribution worldwide and/or to incorporate your contribution in</p>

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		<p>other works in any media now known or later developed for the full term of any rights may exist in your contribution, and in accordance with privacy restrictions set out in the BBC's privacy policy</p> <p>10. warrant anything you contribute is your own original work</p> <p>10. a) is not defamatory</p> <p>10. b) does not infringe any law</p> <p>10. c) indemnify the BBC against all legal fees, damages and other expenses</p> <p>11. waive any moral rights in your contribution for the purposes of its submission to and publication on BBCi and the purposes specified above</p> <p>12. read local house rules of any BBC community you may use</p> <p>13. contributions must be civil and tasteful</p> <p>14. no disruptive, offensive or abusive behaviour</p> <p>15. to use an appropriate and inoffensive user name</p> <p>16. to respect the complaints facility</p>
iCan (rules)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. remove content</li> <li>2. enforce rules and laws</li> <li>3. do not endorse or support any of campaigns</li> <li>4. iCan aims to help you change the world around you</li> <li>5. right of disassociation to and from users and their content</li> <li>6. right to bar users</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. users to stick to these rules</li> <li>2. Stick to the truth</li> <li>2. a) Base your contributions on accurate facts not assumptions</li> <li>2. b) support them with sources or weblinks</li> <li>3. Not to be libellous</li> <li>4. Respect others.</li> <li>5. We don't want contributions that are abusive, threatening, offensive, obscene, harassing, harmful, inflammatory, racist or otherwise objectionable.</li> <li>6. No personal attacks</li> </ol>

## Appendix 6.2: 'Producer' obligations and 'user' rights

	Producer Obligations	User Rights
Urban Tapestries	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We are not providing you with any implied or express licenses or rights</li> <li>2. The failure of either party to assert any right under this Terms of Use shall not be considered a waiver of any that party's right and that right will remain in full force and effect;</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. (implied) right to pursue copyright infringement or a violation of your intellectual property rights</li> <li>1. a) provides contact details of UT 'copyright agent'</li> </ol>
iCan (terms)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to protect personal details with limitations</li> <li>1. a) only used by BBC and its service providers</li> <li>2. to act in accordance of the law in England and Wales</li> <li>3. to protect BBC space from abuse, illegal behaviour or content and commercial gain</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to retrieve, change or delete details placed with us</li> <li>2. freedom from unnecessary e-mails</li> <li>3. right to agree to e-mail</li> <li>4. right to know consequences if rules are broken</li> <li>4. a) and BBC's actions against violators</li> <li>5. right to know and be informed of how one has breached BBC rules</li> <li>6. right to be warned of any actions BBC will take</li> </ol>
iCan (rules)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. safe, civil and constructive</li> <li>2. BBC is committed to impartiality</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. iCan users to make contributions or run campaigns</li> <li>2. (implied) change the world around you</li> <li>3. elected representatives can participate</li> <li>4. add a comment</li> <li>5. write something longer or on a different subject, why not write an article, case study, or guide?</li> <li>6. contact BBC</li> </ol>

