

Bridging the Airwaves

Examining Joint Israeli-Palestinian Radio Stations and Their Contributions to Local Peace Journalism and Peacebuilding Practices

The Gordon Sinclair Scholarship Essay

Gillian Carr

Abstract

Using case studies, this paper examines the role radio stations promoting cross-cultural dialogue play in contributing to a culture of 'peace journalism' in national/local media in Israel and the Palestinian Territories and its contributions to peace building practices. The current mainstream media environment in the region remains segregated, with the majority of Israeli and Palestinian media resisting integration or increased plurality of voices and views within their respective organizations and their subsequent output. Due to a protracted conflict environment that exacerbates sensitivity to accusations of patriotic/unpatriotic values in media reports when straying from the dominant discourse, a culture of 'war journalism' is found in the region. As a result, consumers of the abovementioned media receive distorted views of the other community, contributing to distrust and demonization of its members. The radio stations used for this paper's case studies are exceptions in this environment and while each has the common goal of encouraging a combined Israeli-Palestinian media landscape and open dialogue that encompasses the narrative of both groups, their approaches vary in implementation. The operationalization of their goal is analyzed, noting common setbacks and successes as well as experiences of the journalists/media staff to see whether these organizations fulfill and promote a framework of 'peace journalism' as advocated by Galtung and others. Methodology includes conducting interviews from staff members of the respective stations and analyzing primary and secondary data such as news reports, instructional pamphlets and relevant peace media literature.

Introduction/Background

Protracted conflict permeates the entirety of a society. No sector remains unaffected, perhaps least of all its media, which in its natural role plays a large part in shaping how its citizens see, hear and understand a conflict. The role of an ethnocentric media in exacerbating ethnic or nationalist conflict within societies has been widely documented, most prominently with hate radio in Rwanda and state-

owned television in Bosnia, although many examples can be found around the world. Less known and highlighted is the potential positive role the media can play in reducing conflict and contributing to peace building and dialogue within a society.

Johan Galtung posits that there are two roads the media can take when reporting conflict: the more popular low road, which he identifies as “War Journalism”, sees conflict as a battle, conflates it with violence, and views it as a zero sum game with winners and losers. Alternatively, there is the high road, “Peace Journalism”, that focuses on conflict as a process for transformation and change. It attempts to break down black and white views of each side, highlight resolution and solutions to violence and encompasses a holistic view of the conflict, where the focus is not only on “our side”. (Galtung, *High Road 2*) Galtung and others build on this observation by advancing that depending on its portrayal of conflict, the media can aid in influencing away from, or towards conflict resolution, conflict transformation and peace. (4)

In Israel and the Palestinian Territories, the population lives with a conflict that has stretched on for more than sixty years. Their reality is reflected in the news they watch, the radio they listen to, and the papers they read. Portrayal of the conflict in the national media depends on the source but the vast majority, whether of Jewish-Israeli, Arab-Israeli, or Palestinian origin, can be said to view it through a war-oriented rather than peace-oriented media lens. (Kasbari 40)

As Gadi Wolfseld has noted, each side is increasingly aware of the power and social capital the media attracts in modern society, and the idea of media as another weapon has grown. Increasingly, this has also meant attracting the attention and

sympathy of the international media so as to increase perception of the “real victims” of the conflict. (Wolfsfeld, *News Media and Second Intifada* 2) But more importantly for this paper, the effects of media portrayal of the conflict within the region are also vital in the construction of how each group views the other. (3-4)

A key component of peace building in divided societies is the encouragement of dialogue and the building of trust to begin reconciliation between groups in conflict. The media is an influential tool in this process because of its bridging nature that can be used to disseminate accurate information to a population and promote messages of tolerance among different sects of society. (Forsberg 2)

Using case studies, this paper looks at the current state of ‘mainstream’ Israeli and Palestinian media and contrasts it with the examination of three radio stations, two of them jointly-run Israeli-Palestinian stations and one Israeli-international station that promotes cross-cultural dialogue and interaction in their productions and analyse their contributions to peacebuilding in Israel and the Palestinian territories through the lens of peace journalism/peace-oriented media theory.

Peace Journalism

Peace Journalism or Peace Media can be understood as a “normative mode of responsible and conscientious media coverage of conflict that aims at contributing to peacemaking, peacekeeping and changing the attitudes of media owners, advertisers, professionals and audiences towards war and peace.” (Shinar 2)

Most views of journalism and information media derive from normative frameworks about its contributions to a (democratic) society. While there are different paradigms, as recognised by Nordenstreng, across them there are four general goals that the media are expected to hold to: 1) monitor events, persons, ideas in the public sphere and contribute to the flow of information to the public, including the violations of moral and social code of the society 2) provide an independent “watchdog role”, critiquing society and its institutions. 3) provide access and encourage of plurality of voices and actors as necessary or appropriate 4) contribute to the shared consciousness and identity of the community as a whole, and also to its smaller sub-groups. (qtd. in McQuail 160) These goals, by and of themselves, are not necessarily conflictual in their nature but research has shown that in general, the nature of the media’s output traditionally gravitates towards conflict narratives. (Wolfsfeld, *Media and Path* 16) Wolfsfeld advances that certain factors are privileged in the traditional newsgathering and packaging environment, which preclude an emphasis on conflictual, rather than peaceful interactions. These factors of immediacy, the search and “need” for drama, simplicity, and ethnocentrism encourage dichotomisation, black and white views, stereotypes and an “us against them” mentality, fostering hostility. (16)

To illustrate this idea, Galtung puts forward an analogy, where health journalism is instead “disease journalism”, where every health issue is reported as a battle between disease and the human body. The focus of all reporting would be on overcoming the disease, but only by violent means, such as surgery or chemotherapy. If one stretches the analogy to conflict situations, it is easy to see its

similarities to “disease journalism” where there is overemphasis on certain aspects, rather than a holistic overview, leading to distortion of the actual issue. (2)

Peace journalism aims to shift away from these depictions of conflict. If one shifts the focus, the media can instead aim to have an impact on a conflict where their role becomes one of communication *enablers*, instead of only being information *providers*. (Hieber 1) That information coming from the media is framed in a certain way and by itself does not lead to improved knowledge. But if media can be used to promote instead for “genuine communication”, reporting *on* and *between* a pluralistic society(ies), it can be a function appropriate to the conditions for peacebuilding. Rejecting conflict-driven reporting and narratives, or “War Journalism” can accomplish this. (1)

Israeli Mainstream Media

With a vast array of media found in the country set all along the political spectrum and targeted at diverse audiences, it is impossible to identify an overarching view about the nature of Israeli media reporting on the conflict. Nonetheless, there are some general trends that can be identified within the Israeli mainstream media as War Journalism characteristics. This paper will briefly look at four trends: 1) ethnocentric reporting, 2) portrayals of Arab-Israelis/Palestinians in Israeli media, 3) the practice that Israeli media academic Daniel Dor refers to as “the suppression of guilt” or how Israelis view their role in the conflict and 4) the structure of news reporting on the conflict.

I. Ethnocentric Reporting

Israel as a state has fundamental tensions of identity, between civic and ethnic nationalism. While all who reside within its borders are technically granted citizenship and afforded the privileges that go along with it, such as voting rights, in Israel's case it is also defined as a Jewish state, and a number of basic laws and national symbols privilege this religious/ethnic identity over the civic one. (Wolfsfeld and Frosh 110) The mainstream media, with a few exceptions such as the left-leaning newspaper *Ha'aretz*, does not provide extensive coverage on political, social, economic, or cultural developments in minority communities, particularly in regards to the Israeli-Arab community, but also the Ethiopian and former Soviet Union immigrant communities. (Open Source Center)

Although Arab-Israelis make up almost 20 percent of the population of Israel, a study in 2006 conducted by Agenda Israeli Center for Strategic Communications showed that they received only 0.69 percent exposure in news and interview programs in the Hebrew language media. (Open Source Center) In addition, the number of Arab-Israelis employed in the media sector stands at one percent and most Israeli media organizations employ none at all or only a token number. Therefore it is unsurprising that more than 60 percent of Arab-Israelis feel that the mainstream Hebrew media does not represent them (Open Source Center). Most owners and editors of media in Israel assume that the Jewish majority has little interest in the Arab minority. Even the newspaper *Ha'aretz*, which is unusual in its coverage of Arab issues, has a Jewish journalist covering the beat and it is the only major Israeli news organization to assign a permanent reporter to the beat. (Avraham, Wolfsfeld and Aburaiya 123) *Ha'aretz's*

coverage is still essentially ethnocentric as its editorial policy dictates that their coverage of the Arab minority is in relation to potential the group has to dictate and influence the conflict with the Palestinians. (129)

II. Portrayals of Arab-Israeli Minority, Palestinians

Perhaps most indicative of a war journalism slant found in the mainstream media is their portrayal of Palestinians and Arab-Israelis. If they are covered in the mainstream media at all the Arab minority are shown in a threatening context or their representation in the media is typically connected to the Israeli-Palestinian context and they are portrayed as “the enemy.” (Kasbari 40) Following Gadi Wolfsfeld’s theory that journalists attempt to build news that is *socially* and *culturally acceptable/familiar*, with an ethnocentric media, there is an assumption that the majority has little interest in the minority unless “such groups represent a threat to the social order.” (Avraham, Wolfsfeld and Aburaiya 118) The portrayal of the “other” or minority in a society has been studied and research has shown that when these groups receive media attention, the coverage is available only in certain frames and contexts.

In an analysis of Hebrew language newspapers, the most frequent coverage of Arabs was related to deviance – 31 percent dealt with criminal activity in the Arab sector and 15 percent was about Arabs as a security threat to the country. (117) The study also revealed that the media relied on government and military sources to learn about Arab-Israeli issues and rarely went to the actual community for information/interviews. (123)

The press coverage of Palestinians in the occupied territories in Hebrew-language media is worse, with sensationalistic coverage being the norm when it came to reporting on the conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis. Wolfsfeld, in his analysis of the media coverage of the Oslo Peace Accords noted the increasing “tabloidization” of the Israeli media and a security framing within this practice that included a constant portrayal of Palestinians as a threat, usually associating them with terrorism and terrorist attacks. (Wolfsfeld, *Middle East and Ireland* 25) This included specific words and associated images of Palestinians when the conflict was discussed in the news. As a consequence, those watching/reading these news reports could not receive an accurate representation of pro-peace and anti-peace sentiments as found in the Palestinian population. (25)

III. “True Victims” of the Conflict and Suppression of Guilt

Media content that creates fear, inevitability and resignation among a population is also highly indicative of war journalism and is especially prevalent in Israeli media. The United States Institute of Peace’s report “Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies” cites that when there is a significant reporting in a negative/pessimistic tone creates impressions that a country’s situation is worsening considerably and “provides justification for people or groups to stop and reverse that slide by taking decisive action, including violence.” (Frohardt and Temin 3) Israeli media often slides into this role, as an example: whenever there was a suicide bombing, the evening news would usually be extended from the

normal 30 minutes to 44 minutes and other than weather and financial market updates, would be devoted solely to coverage of the attack. (112)

Additionally, overemphasis on certain grievances, inequities and atrocities (whether recent or historical) can create an impression that circumstances are actually worse than they are and a particular group is more victimised than it actually is. (8) Daniel Dor, in his book “The Suppression of Guilt”, analyses a selection of mainstream reporting on the conflict and particularly on the re-occupation of the West Bank in 2006 during Operation Defensive Shield. In his analysis, Dor finds that the variance of perspectives, many of them critical, in the media towards the conflict (and in particular, the military operation) made it difficult to pigeonhole all Israeli news providers as simply being patriotic/nationalistic. (5) But the different media shared a similar emotional attitude with respect to a global discourse of blame towards Israel, and they offered a perspective of what it meant to be Israeli – where it seems as though they constantly are blamed by the world for something they are not guilty of. (5)

This Israeli identity discourse also went hand-in-hand with the world-view that denies guilt by blaming the other side – essentially anchoring themselves in a perpetual victim role. Dor finds that the mainstream media, in their framing of the conflict and obsession with a *suppression of guilt* – where unintentional acts by Israeli government/military/society contributing to ongoing conflict are acknowledged but intentional acts are unreported and suppressed – prevents Israeli society from developing a discourse of responsibility for their role in the conflict. (7) Dor advances that regardless over the “origins of the conflict”, a discourse of

responsibility is necessary for Israelis to assume, in order to contribute to a solution for the conflict. This is vital since it is the Palestinians who live under occupation and not the other way around. The Israeli identity, as defined by the Israeli media, and its constant suppression of guilt effectively contributes to the continuation of violence. (7)

IV. Structure of news reporting on conflict

The placement of news is also essential for framing the news in a conflict-driven narrative. Keshev, the Israeli media monitoring organisation has highlighted that news pieces related to the conflict are most prominent, as the typical news paradigm suggests that the most important news/facts is the first to be shown. (Keshev 17) Israeli deaths from the conflict were highlighted and headline rhetoric often provided justification or sanitisation in the wording of operations carried out by Israeli military forces. Palestinian deaths counts or negative impacts of the conflict on their community were often buried further the back of newspapers. (17)

Palestinian Mainstream Media

While within the Palestinian media landscape, few dissident voices are found, mainly among columnists, the majority of Palestinian media is “fully mobilized for the cause,” which translates into a high incidence of war journalism reporting. (Miftah 2005) Reasons for this are attributed to 1) Corruption and political patronage/ties 2) lack of education/freedom of the press and 3) the development of the media’s role during years of occupation. Despite a prevalence of war-oriented media, both Miftah (the Palestinian media monitor) and Keshev’s media monitoring

have made it clear that nothing in their research quantified labelling the majority of mainstream Palestinian media as “inciting to violence”, as it is often accused of doing by Israeli critics. (Keshev 2)

Corruption and Political Patronage/

Ties to Media, Development of Palestinian Media

In comparison with Israeli media, organisations in the Palestinian territories have not had the ability or freedom to develop internal institutions (civil society), infrastructure and education in order to have the freedom of press typically associated with international standards of journalism. (Khatib 1) With many media positions having their salaries directly paid for by the Palestinian Authority, as well as the organisations finances being subsidised by the government, censorship, both overt and covert, limit the ability to write on certain issues or to express certain views. (Live from Bethlehem)

Additionally many Palestinians working in the media perceive it as a patriotic task, where they can be political actors in the struggle for a free and independent state *through* their work. (Kasbari 40) The percentage of journalists and other media professionals who receive training is low. Historically, many of the journalists working in the territories were also political activists with the PLO and used their work to write about the evils of the occupation without necessarily referring to facts. This view towards media and journalism has shifted in the post-Oslo period as the Palestinian media has begun to liberalise, with many effects coming from the emergence and penetration of pan-Arabic channels and the training of

correspondents to report for them. But many of the newly-trained journalists coming into structure are still stifled by an illiberal regime which prevents freedom of speech, and would not hesitate to arrest and accuse journalists as working with the Israelis or Islamic Jihad factions. (Khatib 1)

Palestinian Media's Portrayal of the Conflict

About 70 percent of daily news coverage is related to the conflict. Miftah, in its analysis, reported that the Palestinian media's framework for the conflict sees the Israeli occupation as the reason behind the current confrontation, which they view as immoral and illegal. (9) They typically advocate for the two state solution, although some of the more radical media, such as those connected to Hamas do not. In general, the Palestinian media does not present any Israeli viewpoints of the conflict in an article or a human dimension to their suffering. (Miftah 2002) While an Israeli journalist may occasionally seek a Palestinian viewpoint for a story, it is extremely rare that the opposite will happen. (Wolfeld, *Some Basic Lesson* 113) Miftah asserted that the main deficits of Palestinian media arise from what is not reported. They cite that Palestinian media gives up their public watchdog role when they do not criticize militant attacks happening inside Israel. Humanizing the damage of the conflict is not a priority for the Palestinian media and attacks on Israelis are covered in an unprofessional way. This is seen in unclear reporting of actual circumstances of an attack and in word choices such as 'martyrdom operations', which could indicate a tacit approval for the attacks. (Miftah, 2005 7)

When reporting on casualties caused by the conflict, in contrast with Israeli media, which tends to overemphasize common human connections to those killed in attacks, Palestinian deaths were commonly portrayed as numbers. There was little coverage into their lives and common portrayals usually only included photos/footage of their dead, bloody bodies in a morgue or where they had been killed. (Miftah, 2005 9)

Israeli casualties are rarely mentioned in news reports and often those that are children or civilians are grouped as belonging to the “Israeli Occupying Forces.” (Miftah, 2005 7)

In general it can be seen that the Palestinian media does not advocate or enhance independent critical thinking in the public sphere but instead tends to reflect the dominant views of society, which can be assessed as a war-dominant framing of the conflict, similar to the mainstream Israeli media.

Shared Media

There is a prevalence of war-oriented frames in both the Israeli and Palestinian mainstream media and within their respective frameworks there is a constant “othering” and dehumanising portrayals of the opposing group and an effort to portray their own side as the true victims of the conflict, placing the blame solely on the other group. Avenues to practice Peace Journalism from within these media landscapes are limited by the constraints of political will and a community tolerance to listen to the new viewpoints of the non-dominant group. However, one avenue for peace journalism/peace media is through a common shared media, which can provide a moderating influence and a constant ability to check that there is shared landscape and variance of views. (Wolfsfeld, *Some Basic Lessons* 41) As a

platform for dialogue between the two groups that rarely interact, it can be seen as an ideal place for conflict transformation to occur. (Hieber *Media As Intervention 2*)

Access by both groups to one another can be difficult, particularly as Israeli citizens are not permitted to enter the West Bank or Gaza without permission from the authorities and Palestinians face many checkpoints and inquiries when they venture into Israel. (Kasberi 40) Nonetheless, there have been attempts by those in smaller, alternative media to bridge the divide. There are scattered publications that attempt to incorporate shared stories of events or encourage dialogue between the two groups. They are usually small publications that are part of a local or international NGO's project to promote tolerance and peaceful interaction/co-existence. While these are interesting cases, they have natural limitations in their audience, and so in interest of specificity, this paper focuses on media aimed at a wider audience, ie. aiming eventually to be or already gained a presence in the wider mainstream media landscape.

Some of the most effective joint media, with the potential ability to attract audiences away from mainstream news sources has come from the medium of radio, and the analysis of three radio stations will demonstrate how the work of these peace-oriented media organisations could offer more opportunities for peace building. The radio stations chosen for this case study are, from what this researcher has come across in the literature the only stations that had/have such a mission. While there are a number of independent stations that are aiming to improve general media standards, such as the Palestinian Ma'an News Agency, very few

stations have the specific goal of peace-oriented media and dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians.

Radio as Peacebuilding Tool

It is important to outline why radio is a useful media medium to use to promote peace building activities. In other countries where peace-oriented media has been successful, mainly on the African continent, it has typically been through radio, one is able to reach more people caught up in conflict than any other medium. (Hieber *Lifeline Media* 1) Within the constraints of conflict or post-conflict societies, it has a number of attractive features. Radio does not require electricity, literacy, and it comparatively cheap to produce in comparison with television. It can cross geographical barriers and boundaries, and is widely available to people isolated by poverty, conflict with its ability to evoke “images beyond reality, crossing time and space without limit.” (Hieber)

It has limitations specific to Israel and the Palestinian Territories, particularly in attaining wide-area coverage because of the crowded airwaves due to small area and the resulting difficulty of attaining broadcasting licenses. But as a medium for peace-oriented media, its benefits outweigh its weaknesses, particularly because of the its cost-efficiency and accessibility to the widest number of people in the region, as well the local population’s situations and habits of where and when they listen to the radio. (Chen) Surveys of media-consumption habits also indicate that the population in both societies have high radio listenership. (Keshev)

Therefore, it is not surprising why it is often chosen as a vehicle in Israel and the Palestinian Territories for joint peace-oriented media.

Case Study One: Voice of Peace Radio 1973-1993

The Voice of Peace radio began broadcasting illegally in 1973, from the ship MV Peace anchored off the coast of Israel in the Mediterranean. It was the project of Israeli peace activist Abie Nathan, whose previous activities to encourage dialogue included flying solo into Egypt to meet with the president of the country. With the slogan "Give Peace a chance," it was not only the first pirate radio station in Israel but also was the first popular media station to advocate dialogue with the Palestinians and the other neighbouring Arab nations. (Associated Press)

Voice of Peace broadcast mainly in English with both Israelis and international DJs among its staff. It did not have Palestinian or Arab-Israelis on staff, but the station had Arabic-language news, along with its English and Hebrew language newscasts. (American Israeli Cooperative Enterprise) The main goal of Voice of Peace was to encourage dialogue between Jews and Arabs (including Palestinians) in the region, and the director of the station Nathan, was jailed several times in the 1980s and early 1990s for meeting covertly outside Israel with Yasser Arafat and other members of the PLO, when it was still illegal for Israeli citizens to have contact with the organisation. While Voice of Peace's programming followed that of a popular commercial music station, albeit one with a constant peace-oriented jingles and popular anti-war songs, it also served as a platform to raise ideas of non-violent interaction between the groups, with its DJs advocating

dialogue with people traditionally perceived as “the enemy”. (Tal) In its 20 years of broadcasting, the station gained a large following among Israeli youth because of its 24-hour non-stop broadcasts, and the popular songs it played. It also occasionally interacted with Palestinian organisations as well, with one of the station’s biggest successes came from a 1989 taped broadcast greeting from Yasser Arafat, wishing the Jewish people of Israel good holidays in Hebrew. (Voice of Peace 2)

The biggest contribution of Voice of Peace in peace building terms could be said to be in normalising the idea that Israelis could have dialogue with the Palestinians and the other Arab states and that peace between the different groups in the region was possible. It is difficult to assess the impact for Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza, although it is likely those who had short-wave radios also listened to the station, as it was the only one playing “popular” (American/European) music due to Israeli broadcast license laws. And while they did so, they also would have heard that certain Israelis wished to speak with them for the peace process, even if the official government policy indicated otherwise.

The Voice of Peace stopped broadcasting and its ship was scuttled in November 1993, two months after the Oslo Peace Accords were signed. The decision came when Nathan, as the founder of the station, decided that the station’s mission had succeeded in encouraging dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians. Part of the decision to close the station also likely came about as a result financial difficulties in continuing to run the ship. (Tal) The Israeli broadcast media landscape opened up considerably in the years following the Oslo Accords but no other peace-oriented radio rose to replace the Voice of Peace until the mid 2000s.

Case Study Two: RAM FM 2007-2008

RAM FM was an English-language commercial radio station launched in early 2007 and was the initiative of Isaac Kirsh, a South African businessman. His Radio 702 station was cited as instrumental in promoting dialogue between the white minority and black majority in South Africa before and after Apartheid ended in the country and Kirsh believed a similar station could work to encourage communication between Israelis and Palestinians. (Feuilherade) RAM FM's main studios were in the West Bank city of Ramallah and their station's broadcast license came from the Palestinian Authority, however, the station also operated studios in Jerusalem, circumventing licensing laws with produced content travelling between the two locations by microwave link. (Houk) The reason for the two offices was a result of increasing border difficulties in the early 2000s for Palestinians to cross into Israel and government-mandated instructions for Israelis not to enter into the West Bank for security reasons. (Laub)

Israelis, Palestinians, Arab-Israelis and international staff staffed RAM FM, including a number of experienced DJs who had worked in cross-cultural dialogue radio beforehand with Radio 702 in South Africa. Despite the mandate to encourage dialogue between the two groups, in its first year 80 percent of the RAM FM's programming was popular music, and its few talk shows only rarely discussed issues related to the conflict. The station also had a news team consisting of both Israeli and Palestinian journalists who worked together to produce an hourly update on current affairs and news concerning both communities. (Chen)

Management at the station indicated that over time they planned to

eventually incorporate more over peace and dialogue messages in their programming. The first goal of the station was to encourage audiences from all groups to tune in, and in this the station was successful, with their market research indicating an estimated 106,000 Palestinians and 390,000 Israelis tuned into the station on a regular basis. (Chen) The station's main morning show, "Talk at Ten", would eventually discuss more controversial subjects such as Israeli settlements in the West Bank and callers from both Israel and the Palestinian territories would phone in with their comments and views. (Laub) On the journalism/news side, the station used a style guide decided by staff from both groups on neutral phrases and words to be used and attempted to incorporate stories from both communities in their hourly news reports. (RAM FM 1) The decision to use English as the main language was also based in dialogue principles, with the station's management citing that it was a neutral language in addressing the conflict. (Chen)

In April 2008, Israeli police raided RAM FM's Jerusalem office, arresting the seven journalists and DJs who were working in building and confiscating the equipment used to broadcast. They were charged with illegally broadcasting in Israel without a license, and for "potentially interfering] with airport and flight radio frequencies", although this charge was later dropped. (Houk) As a result of this, the station was temporarily off-air in Israeli territory. It closed permanently a few months later in October 2008, as a result of lack of funding/low profitability. (Associated Press)

Case Study Three: Radio All For Peace 2004-present

Radio All for Peace is the only peace radio station still on-air and broadcasting. It was established in East Jerusalem in 2004 as a joint Israeli-Palestinian not-for-profit radio station and was the initiative of the Palestinian non-governmental organization "Biladi" and the Israeli-Arab research center "Givat Chaviva". (Croitoru) It also receives funding from the European Union and other international governments. The station first broadcast over the Internet, playing Israeli and Arabic songs and eventually moved to the radio waves on two frequencies, one for Hebrew-language programs and one for Arabic-language programs, with a couple English-language programs broadcast on both frequencies. A mix of volunteers and paid staff from Arab-Israeli, Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian backgrounds run the station. The station has a clear mandate in that it is "aimed at a wide audience amongst both people and provides messages of peace, cooperation, mutual understanding, coexistence and hope." The station's programming reflects this aim, with different shows discussing aspects of the conflict. It is different from Voice of Peace and RAM FM, in that while it also plays popular music, the majority of its programmes are "talk radio" that attempt to address the long-standing conflict between the Palestinians and Israelis and encourage dialogue and a framework of peaceful co-existence that incorporates the views of both groups. (Radio All For Peace)

The station focuses on bringing new voices to radio such those working in civil society organisations, and those working for human rights, women's rights, environmental rights that are not often heard on mainstream stations, to "give *stage* to civil society and organisations working towards peace". (All For Peace 1) The station

has also hosted shows that discuss the aspects of healing and forgiveness from both sides. The recent version of the programme is hosted by two men, an Israeli and a Palestinian, who both lost daughters to violence related to the conflict; in their program they speak about issues related to the conflict and their programme emphasises non-violent resistance. (All For Peace 4)The Hebrew language side of the station also produces programmes aimed at the two communities who tend to be the most resistant to peace with the Palestinians: Russian-speaking immigrants and the religious community. 20 percent of their programming is in Russian, aimed at the former Soviet Union country immigration community, and they have a weekly religious programme hosted by a different rabbi from Rabbis for Human Rights each week to reach out to the orthodox communities. (All For Peace 1)

However, because its programming is focused on dialogue between the two groups and the material is often “heavy” subject matter, All For Peace does not have the audience penetration and cross-over appeal to mainstream audiences that the other two stations received while they were broadcasting. Because of broadcast licensing regulations it also does not reach the entirety of Israel and the Palestinian Territories, for instance, it does not reach the Gaza Strip with its radio frequency although listeners from that area can still tune in online. But the station’s audience numbers have been growing though since the station was launched in 2004 and in early 2010, it was estimated that there was 227,000 monthly hits for their online website. (All For Peace 1)

Characteristics of Peace Journalism/Peace Media Fulfilled

The three case studies present the spectrum of approaches that peace-oriented media have taken in the region. Despite their differences, they all share characteristics of peace journalism not found in the mainstream Israeli and Palestinian media as outlined below:

I. Encouraging Dialogue and Commonality

All three stations' programming emphasised the view that there needs to be communication between the two groups if there is to be an end to the conflict. Each station's core mandate was aimed at reducing the isolation that Israelis and Palestinians have vis-à-vis one another via the medium of radio. Radio is a particularly useful medium in this regard, in that people from very different backgrounds can connect via phoning in or by going to local stations to respond to an issue and interact with another guest on a radio programme in a way they could not have accomplished face to face. However, radio can be difficult medium too, when it would be easier to host a show, such as a roundtable with guests in the same studio but logistics related to the region's security situation prevent this from happening.

In the pursuit of commonality and reminding their listeners that their own group was not the only ones to suffer from the conflict, Voice of Peace had dedicated moments of silence during their transmissions to remember people from all countries/different groups who had lost their lives in the conflict.

In pursuit of both dialogue and commonality, both RAM FM and Voice For Peace have had Israelis and Israeli Arabs/Palestinians hosting shows together. The shows could

be mostly non-political, such as RAM FM's Mike and Arda show, (an afternoon music show), or it could be innately political such as All For Peace's programmes that bring together Israelis and Palestinians who have lost family members to discuss issues related to the conflict. Similar opportunities that allow Palestinians and Israelis to communicate together or speak to one another without being in the context of the conflict are rare or non-existent in mainstream media. Additionally, All For Peace has programmes that give Palestinian/Israeli-Arab politicians a platform to address Hebrew audiences in their language, an opportunity not often found in the mainstream Hebrew media. (Davis)

In RAM FM's newsroom, both Palestinian and Israeli journalists used a carefully negotiated style guide with common language and there was an emphasis on "every story had to have both sides." Complaints about RAM FM's bias came from both Israelis and Palestinians claiming that the station favoured one group, which the journalists working at RAM interpreted as a success in bringing together balanced views of the news.

II. Normalising Relations/ Diminishing the "Other" in the Media

Starting with Voice of Peace in the 1970s, with their programming that called on the Israeli government to have dialogue with its neighbouring countries, including the Palestinian leadership in exile at the time, all the stations promoted the idea that it was necessary to interact with the "other" group, and see them as potential partners in finding a solution to the conflict rather than an enemy.

Even though RAM FM was not as overtly “peace radio” as the other two stations, its actions followed similar principles in that it tried to normalise small daily interactions between Israelis and Palestinians. For example, even the announcing of prize winners could be said to be a normalising activity – that Hannah from Tel Aviv had won one of the prizes and Abdullah from Ramallah had won the other, it demonstrated a common similar experience “winning a prize”, that would not likely be found in media that catered specifically to one group. It also allowed the listeners to get used to hearing names of the other group in a context not tied to the conflict. (RAM FM/All For Peace 1)

RAM FM’s Middle East Eyewitness hourly news also aided in this regard in its portrayal of the “other group” in establishing joint news policies. While the station covered events directly related to conflict in its news coverage, it also made a point to cover regular, everyday stories not related to it, such as sports events and art-related events from both communities. (RAM FM 1)

As well, the stations offered opportunities for Israelis and Palestinians working in media to interact for the first time in a professional setting, which does not often arise in the segregated mainstream media. The presence of non-local editors of South African and Australian nationalities to act as mediators was cited as useful for those first months. (RAM FM 1) The All For Peace station also has a policy in introducing the political language of the other group. As an example, it uses the words “occupation” and “occupying forces” in its Hebrew language programming when referring to Israeli military incursions and settlements in the West Bank and the asymmetrical Israeli-Palestinian power dynamics of the conflict are fully

acknowledged in its programmes. In the Arabic language programmes, Palestinians are also informed about Israelis' views in the newscast that provided a summary of translated Hebrew-language news. (Croitoru)

III. Promoting Co-existence

That these stations are present in the media landscape is a signifier that people from all groups involved in the region's conflict can co-exist and interact peacefully. Each station focused on the idea of peaceful co-existence differently with their broadcasts. Voice of Peace called on those in civil society as well as the government to listen to a message of peace, although it could be argued that it never really defined exactly what steps should be done after a peace was achieved, it is assumed co-existence would be possible. RAM FM decided to approach the message slowly and subtly, in that it even though it was launched as a peace radio station, it gained a popular audience in its first few months because of its music and its news, and any peace building work it was doing was more "undercover". Nonetheless, the structure of the station, in its staff and programming aimed at those in Israel and the Palestinian Territories indicated a view towards peaceful interactions and co-existence. All For Peace's programmes are specifically aimed at introducing its audiences to joint world-view that acknowledges the unequal power dynamic involved in the conflict. Its programmes aim to "provide hope" and "prepare its listeners for the morning after the conflict" when there could be peaceful co-existence between the two groups with a two-state solution. (All For Peace)

IV. Reducing the Gatekeeper Role/Increasing Media Plurality

Having peace radio stations in the media landscape adds plurality to media voices speaking about and covering the conflict. It allows the audiences in both Israel and the Palestinian territories an alternative choice when they search out news about the conflict. Much of mainstream media's news sources tend to come from official government and societal institutions, while in the work reported on by Radio All For Peace and RAM FM, there was/is a conscious emphasis on interviewing those in civil society who are working towards peaceful resolutions and a closer connection with civil society and grassroots organisations. (All For Peace 1) While some of the people working with these stations have media backgrounds (ie. trained in journalism, worked in media), a large percentage, particularly in All For Peace, are volunteers; members of their respective societies who are involved with the station as another avenue to continue peace building work they've already begun within other civil society organisations. (All For Peace 3)

Limitations and Challenges Facing Peace Radio in the Region

At present time, All For Peace is the only radio station specifically designated as peace-oriented media that is still broadcasting, but their scope of reach is limited by their broadcast license as well as a specific voice that does not necessarily have mainstream appeal. The Voice of Peace's presence in the media landscape is long gone, although a small group of former DJs currently host an online revival of the station that repeats old broadcasts and has a limited audience/online presence. (Voice of Peace) RAM FM is no longer operating, and as a commercial radio station

their planned model was not sustainable as it had difficulty attracting the equal advertising it wanted from both Israeli and Palestinian businesses. (RAM FM 1)

Language barriers in general are also an issue, as most Israelis do not learn Arabic, and while a higher percentage of Palestinians understand Hebrew, it is unlikely that they would search it out to listen over an Arabic-language station. Separate language broadcasts like All for Peace's are possible but there are limitations in the broadest sense of incorporating a genuine shared landscape, since the bilingual speakers among both populations remains low and therefore limits the pool of potential interview guests from the other group for cross-cultural dialogue. Another possibility and the one chosen by RAM FM is choosing to broadcast in a shared language, such as English. Studies have indicated that up to 40 percent of both Israelis and Palestinians have comprehension of English, however, the effectiveness of terms of general comprehension of a "peace-oriented" message is unknown. (Feuilherade) Additionally, as cited above, a station that focuses its programming solely around peace building issues tends to limit its audience. It not unreasonable to assume those living in Israel and the Palestinian Territories, as their everyday life is affected by the conflict, might be hesitant to tune into a station whose main programming is about the conflict (albeit in a different fashion than mainstream media). It is perhaps "message fatigue", which would explain the relative popularity and mainstream audience penetration of RAM FM and Voice of Peace that put more emphasis on its music rather than its peace messages. (Laub)

Any future efforts to introduce peace-oriented radio stations in Israel and the Palestinian Territories would do well to examine these challenges and limitations of

the medium and the situation in the region. There are potential peace building and dialogue opportunities within peace-oriented radio but also relative constraints that should be improved upon if these stations wish to make inroads in attracting mainstream audiences.

Works Cited

(all interviews conducted for this paper were anonymised with permission and followed the guidelines of the University of St Andrews research ethics committee, July 2010)

(email), Voice of Peace 1. Interview. Gillian Carr. 27 January 2010.

(email), Voice of Peace 2. Interview. Gillian Carr. 2 February 2010.

(skype), All For Peace 3. Interview. Gillian Carr. 16 August 2010.

(skype), All For Peace 4. Interview. Gillian Carr. 16 August 2010.

(skype), RAM FM 3. Interview. Gillian Carr. 18 August 2010.

(skype), RAM FM/All For Peace 1. Interview. Gillian Carr. 26 July 2010.

1, All For Peace. Interview. Gillian Carr. 28 January 2010.

1, RAM FM. Interview. Gillian Carr. 26 January 2010.

2, All For Peace. Interview. Gillian Carr. 28 January 2010.

2, RAM FM. Interview. Gillian Carr. 27 January 2010.

American Israeli Cooperative Enterprise. "Abie Nathan." 2010. Jewish Virtual Library. 3 August 2010

<<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/AbieNathan.html>>.

Associated Press. "Police shut J'lem studio of station promoting coexistence." 8 April 2008. Haaretz Newspaper Online (English). 7 January 2010

<<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/police-shut-j-lem-studio-of-station-promoting-coexistence-1.243576>>.

—. "Pro-peace West Bank radio station closes down due to lack of funding." 11 August 2008. Haaretz Newspaper Online (English). 7 January 2010

<<http://www.haaretz.com/news/pro-peace-west-bank-radio-station-closes-down-due-to-lack-of-funding-1.251493>>.

Atkin, Jennifer. "Media Strategies." March 2005. Beyond Intractability. 17 June 2010 <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/media_strateggies>.

Avraham, Eli, Gadi Wolfsfeld and Isaam Aburaiya. "Dynamics in the News Coverage of Minorities: The Case of Arab Citizens of Israel." Journal of Communication Inquiry 24.2 (2000): 117-133.

Baskin, Gershon and Hanna Siniora. "No "Mission Impossible": Teaching Israeli and Palestinian Teens Peace." Kuriansky, Judy. Beyond Bullets and Bombs : Grassroots Peacebuilding Between Israelis and Palestinians. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2007. 1-382.

BBC News. "Pirate radio stops Israel flights." 7 June 2007. BBC News. 12 January 2010 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6732813.stm>.

Borkovski, Sima. "All for Peace: A Palestinian-Israeli Radio Station." 11 May 2005. Worldpress.org. 8 August 2010 <<http://www.worldpress.org/Mideast/2079.cfm>>.

Botes, Jannie. "'Dialogue of the Deaf': Reframing the Debate over Media and Conflict." Track Two 7.4 (1998): 1-9.

Chen, Joanna. "Bridge Over Troubled Borders." 18 September 2007. Newsweek. 7 January 2010 <<http://www.newsweek.com/2007/09/17/bridge-over-troubled-borders.html>>.

Chomsky, Noam and Edward S Herman. Manufacturing Consent: The political economy of the mass media. New York: Pantheon Press, 1988.

Cohen, Raymond. "Language and Conflict Resolution: The Limits of English." International Studies Review 3.1 (2002): 25-51.

Croitoru, Joseph. "The Israeli-Palestinian Radio Station "All for Peace" Promoting Mideast Dialogue on the Airwaves ." 30 November 2004. Qantara.de: Dialogue with the Islamic World. 17 August 2010 <http://www.qantara.de/webcom/show_article.php/_c-478/_nr-197/i.html>.

Daraghmeh, Mohammed. "How does the Palestinian media construct the conflict and how it is affected it?" The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research. 12 August 2010 <<http://spirit.tau.ac.il/socant/peace/psp/downloads/Daraghmeh's%20lecture.pdf>>.

Dor, Daniel. The Suppression of Guilt: The Israeli Media and the Reoccupation of the West Bank. London: Pluto Press, 2005.

Entman, Robert M. "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm." Journal of Communication 43.4 (1993): 51-58.

Feuilherade, Peter. "Radio dialogue opens in Ramallah." 22 February 2007. BBC News. 7 January 2010
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6383849.stm>.

Forsberg, Sandra Pineda de. "The role of the mass media through a Peace Media Lens ." New Routes 11.4 (2006): 1-5.

Frohardt, Mark and Jonathan Temin. Use and Abuse of Media in Vulnerable Societies. Special Report. United States Institute of Peace. Washington D.C. : United States Institute of Peace, 2003.

Galtung, Johan. " The Task of Peace Journalism ." Ethical Perspectives 7.2-3 (2000): 162-167.

—. "High Road, Low Road." Track Two 7.4 (1998): 1-6.

—. "Peace Journalism as an Ethical Challenge." GMJ: Mediterranean Edition 1.2 (2006): 1-5.

—. "Violence, Peace, and Peace Research." Journal of Peace Research 6.3 (1969): 167-191.

Gilboa, Eytan. "Media and Conflict Resolution: A Framework for Analysis." Marquette Law Review (2009): 87-110.

Gitlin, Todd. The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

Haaretz Service. "Israel ranks low for freedom of press, after Gaza war media ban." 20 October 2009. Haaretz Newspaper Online (English). 7 August 2010
<<http://www.haaretz.com/news/israel-ranks-low-for-freedom-of-press-after-gaza-war-media-ban-1.5765>>.

Hackett, Robert A. "Is Peace Journalism Possible? Three Frameworks for Assessing Structure and Agency in News Media." Conflict and Communication Online 5.2 (2006): 1-13.

—. "Journalism versus Peace? Notes on a problematic relationship." GMJ Mediterranean Edition 2.1 (2007): 47-53.

Hajela, Deepti. "Palestinian-Israeli Radio Aims to Unite ." 19 December 2004. My Hero.com - Associated Press article. 8 August 2010
<http://www.myhero.com/go/hero.asp?hero=radio_AP>.

Hanisch, Thomas. "Situating Peace Journalism in Journalism Studies: A Critical Appraisal." Conflict and Communication Online 6.2 (2007): 2-9.

Hieber, Loretta. Lifeline Media: Reaching Populations in Crisis: A Guide to Developing Media Projects in Conflict Situations. Geneva: Media Action International (MAI), 2001.

- . "Media as Intervention: A Report for the Field." Track Two 7.4 (1998): 1-7.
- Houk, Marian. "Jerusalem Court releases radio staff from house arrest but maintains gag order." 15 April 2008. American Chronicle. 7 January 2010
<<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/58519>>.
- Howard, Ross. An Operational Framework for Media and Peacebuilding. Report. IMPACS – Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society. Vancouver: IMPACS – Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society, 2002.
- . Conflict-Sensitive Reporting: State of the Art. Course Handbook. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Paris: UNESCO , 2009.
- . Conflict Sensitive Journalism. Handbook. IMPACS. Vancouver: IMS (International Media Support) and Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society, 2003.
- . "Media and Peacebuilding: Mapping the Possibilities ." Activate Winter 2001: 12-13.
- Ilani, Ofri. "Pirate radio, IDF crowd Israel's airwaves with broadcasts." 27 July 2007. Haaretz Newspaper Online (English). 10 January 2010
<<http://www.haaretz.com/news/pirate-radio-idf-crowd-israel-s-airwaves-with-broadcasts-1.226320>>.
- Kasbari, Carol Daniel. "Examination of Peace Journalism in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories: Challenges and Opportunities." GMJ: Mediterranean Edition 1.2 (2006): 40-44.
- Khatib, Nabil. "Media Landscape in Palestinian Autonomous Areas." August 2002. The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research. 10 August 2010
<<http://spirit.tau.ac.il/socant/peace/psp/downloads/6%20-%20Khatib%20Nabil.pdf>>.
- . "The Structure of the Palestinian Media." R.Nets (Editor) The Palestinian Media February 2003: 5-16.
- Laub, Karin. "FM station draws Israelis, Palestinians." 26 March 2008. USA Today. 7 January 2010 <http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-03-26-863244667_x.htm>.
- Live: From Bethlehem. Dirs. Matt Sienkiewicz and Joseph C. Sousa. The Media Education Foundation. The Media Education Foundation, 2009.
- Lynch, Jake. "What's so great about Peace Journalism? ." GMJ: Mediterranean Edition 1.1 (2006): 74-87.
- McGoldrick, Annabel and Jake Lynch. Peace Journalism. Stroud: Hawthorn Press, 2005.
- . "What is Peace Journalism?" Activate Winter 2001: 6-9.

McNair, Brian. An Introduction To Political Communication. 2nd Edition. London: Routledge, 1999.

McQuail, Denis. McQuail's Mass Communication Theory. 4th Edition. London: Sage Publications, 2000.

Najjar, Orayb Aref. "New Palestinian Media and Democracy." Seib, Philip. New Media and the New Middle East. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. 191-212.

Open Source Center (US Government). "Open Source Center." 16 September 2008. Israel -- Hebrew- and English-Language Media Guide. 10 August 2010 <<http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/israelmedia.pdf>>.

Outhwaite, William. The Habermas Reader. Oxford: Polity Press, 1996.

Radio All For Peace . "About the Radio: A Palestinian-Israeli Radio Station." 7 August 2010. Radio All For Peace (website). 7 August 2010 <<http://www.allforpeace.org/viewpage.aspx?pageid=1&lang=1>>.

Reljic, Dusan. The News Media and the Transformation of Ethnopolitical Conflicts. Handbook. Berlin: Berghof Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2002.

Schult, Christoph. "'I Will Censor Anything That Will Be Useful to the Enemy.'" 23 April 2010. Spiegel Online International. 26 July 2010 <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,690811,00.html>>.

Shinar, Dov. "Epilogue: Peace Journalism, The State of the Art." Conflict and Communication Online 7.7 (2007).

—. "The Peace Process in Cultural Conflict: The Role of the Media." Conflict & Communication Online 2.1 (2003): 1-10.

Spencer, Graham. The Media and Peace: From Vietnam to the 'War on Terror'. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Spurk, Christoph. "The Media and their Role in Civil Society Peacebuilding." International Studies Association. San Francisco: International Studies Association , 2008.

Tal, Noam. "Abie Nathan - Biography." October 2007. Abie-Nathan.com. 3 August 2010 <<http://www.abie-nathan.com/pages-eng/biography.html>>.

The Associated Press. "Israeli peace pioneer Abie Nathan dies aged 81." 28 August 2008. Haaretz Newspaper Online (English). 10 August 2010 <<http://www.haaretz.com/news/israeli-peace-pioneer-abie-nathan-dies-aged-81-1.252775>>.

The Center for the Protection of Democracy in Israel (Keshev) and The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Dialogue and Democracy (Miftah). Reading Between

the Lines: An Israeli-Palestinian Guide to Critical Media Consumption. Media Monitoring Report. Jerusalem: Miftah/Keshev, 2009.

The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy (Miftah). Public Discourse and Perceptions: Palestinian Media Coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict. Media Monitoring Report 2005. Jerusalem: Miftah, 2005.

—. Public Discourse and Perceptions: Palestinian Media Coverage of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict. Second Media Monitoring Report. Miftah. Jerusalem: Miftah, 2005.

Veronica TV (Netherlands). "Voice of Peace: The Day the Music Died 1-2." 29 July 2009. Youtube (Veronicastory channel). 26 July 2010 <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGpmfczFewg>>.

Voice of Peace. "The Voice of Peace - Home." 26 June 2009. The Voice of Peace. 8 January 2010 <<http://www.thevoiceofpeace.co.il/>>.

Wolfsfeld, Gadi and Paul Frosh. "ImagiNation: News Discourse, Nationhood and Civil Society." Media, Culture & Society 29.1 (2006): 105–129.

Wolfsfeld, Gadi. Media and the Path to Peace. Cambridge: Cambridge Printing Press, 2004.

—. "Promoting Peace through the News Media: Some Initial Lessons from the Oslo Peace Process." Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics 2.4 (1997): 52-70.

—. The News Media and Peace Processes: The Middle East and Ireland. report. United States Institute of Peace. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001.

—. "The news media and the second intifada." Palestine-Israel Journal 10.2 (2003): 1-4.

—. "The News Media and the Second Intifada: Some Basic Lessons." Harvard International journal of Press/Politics 6 (2001): 113-118.

Wolfsfeld, Gadi, Maurice T Awabdy and Paul Frosh. "Covering Death in Conflicts: Coverage of the Second Intifada on Israeli and Palestinian Television." Journal of Peace Research 45.3 (2008): 401-417.

Wolfsfeld, Gadi, Paul Frosh and Maurice T Awabdy. "Covering Death in Conflicts: Coverage of the Second Intifada on Israeli and Palestinian Television." Journal of Peace Research 45.3 (2008): 401-417.