

The May 18, 2017, Halifax gathering¹ was the last of five regional events that will culminate in the convening of a national three-day conference in Ottawa. The event began with an opening ceremony by distinguished professor Catherine Anne Martin² who is the 14th Nancy's Chair in Women's Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University. She is a member of the Millbrook First Nation in Truro, Nova Scotia. She is also the first Mi'kmaq filmmaker from the Atlantic region. She has also been a past chair of APTN and a board member. Professor Martin conducted a talking circle which she believed was a necessary step for participants to get to know one another and for them to feel connected in order to share their stories.

Following the circle, a panel made up of Francella Fiallos, Maureen Googoo and Aggie Baby shared their respective broadcasting stories in a panel called "Indigenous voices? Challenges in community radio." Fiallos explained her role at CKDU³ which she described as amplifying community voices. Aggie Baby and Googoo mentioned that they had met through the events at Burnt Church. Googoo is owner and editor of www.Kukuwes.com, an online news provider that she supports through crowdfunding and sales from some online ad space. It is through her studies at St-Mary's University in political science and journalism at Ryerson and Columbia that Googoo learned the skills for her work such as creating websites, learning about digital media, video and radio. She is the only radio reporter for her site. She explained that she was the first Indigenous person to work for the Chronicle-Herald and the only Mi'kmaq journalist for a time in the 1990s. She was often told that she was biased in covering Indigenous issues. However, she wanted to cover the Indigenous beat. She was the Halifax correspondent for APTN for six years. In total, Googoo has worked as a journalist for 30 years. She says there are currently under 10 reporters in the Maritimes region to cover issues and this is not enough. She believes the need for Indigenous people is to support online producers to share stories, to encourage them and to tell them they can make a living doing what they do.

Aggie Baby said that she found radio while she was healing. She had burned out from a social work job and returned to Cape Breton. Her first radio experience on Membertou C99⁴ was to introduce songs in her community. With her experience in social work, she started acknowledging the work of first line emergency people and police officers, as well as providing helpful public service announcements. She wanted to connect people to health services. She played Indigenous music and incorporated some from various regions and she shared stories about old time sand legends she learned while doing beadwork. Because of her Sam the Record Man included an "Indigenous Artist of the Year" category in the East Coast Music Awards.⁵ She became the first Mi'kmaq woman on ECMA radio. Her entire program featured only Indigenous music. Her program's mandate is summed up in Aggie Baby's saying, "Play it loud, play it proud." Aggie Baby explained the use of the "hot clock" and how she structures her shows for the community. She starts with community, then extends to other areas to bring together the Mi'kmaq nation. This model has been successful, according to Aggie Baby, because even people who tell her they don't like bingo say they want to play due the engaging programming.

1 <http://indigenoustradio.ca/Halifax.php>

2 <https://ukings.ca/people/catherine-anne-martin/>

3 <https://www.ckdu.ca/>

4 <https://www.facebook.com/C99Membertou>

5 <http://ecma.com/awards>

During the discussion, the panel was asked which technological options to choose to begin dabbling in media. Googoo said it depends on resources available. She explained how she started in her own basement. They, she said you can use Soundcloud, but it is important to find out what's available. She said that her radio show is entirely based on what she collects for her website and that she gets inspiration from listening to other Indigenous shows. She also repurposes material for podcasting. Fiallos explained that to start is the hardest part, but with campus and community radio, you can engage for a very small cost. She also suggested getting involved with a local campus-community radio or the CBC doc project.

When asked about how to engage youth in policy, Googoo explained that it is important to reach out and to show them that writing can be done as a career. She suggested it is important for Indigenous youth to participate in writing workshops and continue efforts within universities to promote writing as a career. Fiallos mentioned that there is Indigenous participation on Twitter and it is important for media makers to consider how to remain relevant. She says that it is important to go to youth as we can't expect them to come to us.

John Gagnon, CEO Wawatay, said that Wawatay is developing a web app for live streaming their station, so youth can tune in while playing a game or facebooking. He mentioned the need to syndicate Indigenous language programming throughout the country and that perhaps a relationship should include radio stations throughout the country. He mentioned Wawatay's testing of www.CleanFeed.net where studio to studio quality broadcasting can be used by people to link and record or broadcast live.

Carolyn King, CKRZ,⁶ mentioned a forum for youth at the University of Guelph, however it ended up being more adults, so there was a difficulty to recruit youths. The youth mentioned they wanted people to talk to them the same way they talk to each other and they said that they did not want to engage because they often felt the agenda was already set. Experiential learning was something that King mentioned as needing to be nurtured and supported for youth participation in policy and media making. Aggie Baby says that asking children to help out in media making is planting a seed. Getting them interested in policy, is about being sneaky she said. In other words, getting young people to learn things indirectly and giving them a challenge to find "the loopholes in policies." Aggie Baby said the toughest thing to tackle with youth is policy. "Let's talk about the policies they care about," she said, "like not wanting to play music that promotes suicide or playing music that opposes cyber bullying.

George Marshall from Potlotek Communication Society agreed, adding that it is important to bring kids to stations to do radio, to plant the idea and so that they can make media and share their ideas. It is also important, he says, to look at policy in the classroom, to teach kids about it. Promoting Indigenous language is also important, he said, as well as explaining how the CRTC works, how ideas from young people can impact the world. Mike Metawabin added that it is important to find ways of protecting Indigenous languages in the age of Google and insure that it is not appropriated is another concern. "That is a question I have for the CRTC," he said. Fiallos mentioned the importance of creating spaces for language within existing programming. The panel ended with thoughts about the need for media education and training, finding ways to fund media making and teaching, and support for other media models, like co-operatives.

6 <http://ckrzfm.com/>

After lunch, participants heard “Decolonization? Hand the media back! A view from Pjilasi Mi'kma'ki” with Annie Clair, podcaster and producer of Pjilasi Mi'kma'ki,⁷ who discussed the importance to have her voice heard as her language is important to her. She said she wants people to listen to her podcasts and recognize what she is saying in the Mi'kmaq language. Adding, she hopes that other Mi'kmaq people might hear the language and want to speak it again. She said language makes us who we are. She concluded there is a need for Indigenous radio stations to be broadcasting in the language, as the language is what is needed to reaffirm the culture. Clair also said she wants to tell Indigenous stories because she feels that even people on reserves were not being told the truth about what was happening to Indigenous people. For example, the news coverage of the fracking protests happening in New Brunswick were untrue. She also said she was never told about the 60s scoop and residential schools. Clair said her parents never told her what had happened. She shared her hope that there will be good settler, non-Indigenous journalists who discuss Indigenous issues. She mentioned that there is only one designated APTN reporter for all the Maritimes. In order to continue preserving her language, she has been making baskets with other women speaking the language. Clair mentioned there is also online language lessons and a Twitter Hashtag called #speakmikmaq. She says that to continue her work, she needs support from her community as she is working for them. Clair also said that for the CRTC to know what is really going on in Indigenous communities, they need to “speak with communities face to face.”

During the discussion, Claudine VanEvery-Albert, CKRZ, observed that something is wrong with language use when it is not alive. When the dialects are so diverse that it becomes wrong, it reflects that a language is dying. She offered the example of saying “soda” or “pop” or “so-der” in English or many ways of saying the same thing. “When people begin to tell you its wrong, it makes a person ashamed to speak the language,” VanEvery-Albert said, “But there is no wrong, if you speak the language you speak it. Our languages are dying in our faces, and I encourage everyone to stop say it's wrong.” Continuing the discussion about language, Metawabin suggested having a conference about Indigenous languages and bring the youth as he feels the language grows with everyday activities. Trail radio is an example he used of the language’s vibrancy as people talked, but people stopped using it and they also stopped going out to the land.

Concerning the policy,⁸ VanEvery-Albert commented about the difficulty in knowing what they policy is and what it isn't. The policy at the moment is not written like a policy and she said this shows disrespect by the CRTC to allow a policy to be written this way and to allow it to go on for 27 years without a review. “We think community and we think sovereignty. Now is our chance to write into it the things we see are important.” VanEvery-Albert continued, “The policy policy says there are only two types of radio stations when there are probably many more.” It was suggested by Kim Logan of CKRZ that perhaps there should be many types of radio stations, such as a Native C, “One that we can develop the criteria for,” she said. Logan also pointed to an assumption in the policy that the Band Council funds radio stations, but it is not always the case she said. The policy, she noted, also does not have a precise definition of Indigenous music. Additionally, Logan discussed the challenges determined by limits on advertising set out in the policy. That they should be eliminated, but keeping ad costs to a minimum, as the goal should be to inform communities. There are too many caps and restrictions, she said, when the

7 <https://pjilasimikmaki.wordpress.com/>

8 <http://crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/1990/PB90-89.htm>

services are for the community. “They are not listening,” Logan said adding, “and we have no input.” She also recommended that having an Indigenous board that would negotiate with Indigenous broadcasters would help the sector get beyond the “struggle to survive.”

VanEvery-Albert said, when CKRZ shows up in June, they will present a Type C policy. Then she shared a story about her life experiences living under the Indian Act. I am not an Indian she said, I am Kaniien'keha:ka or Mohawk in English.” She asked, “How can this policy address our nationhood and not address us as homogenous Indians.” VanEvery-Albert concluded, “When we go forward and use the radio stations to enhance our nationhood, we need to be connected to all of our sister communities across the country ... then we will really be talking about sovereignty in action.” Kind added to this statement by affirming radio broadcasting can cross borders and therefor connect the Mohawk nation, which is spread across several provincial and state borders.

Metawabin mentioned that the policy needs to work for the people and what they are trained to do. He said that the government and the CRTC should commit to a new policy because of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He says this policy should make room to protect intellectual property and knowledge against cultural appropriation and the piracy taking place within Indigenous communities. He mentioned the importance of sitting down with Indigenous people to build a policy, make a commitment to show respect and protect our languages and oral traditions. There is a need to get together language broadcasters Metawabin with youth.

Gagnon observed that there is a need to organize an Indigenous language conference. He added that the policy should mandate Type B stations to broadcast a required percentage in Indigenous languages, “Or else you are just another Canadian radio station.” He also suggested that maybe Indigenous radio stations that are making millions in surplus annually may not require funding. He once again emphasized the need for a network to connect stations and to build on the work done provincially, but that it would be a good idea to band together coast to coast to force the federal government to increase funding. He suggested that all 600 plus Indigenous communities could apply through the fund because, Gagnon said, “at the moment we are living in bureaucratic assimilation.” He feels they are losing funding because of the required paperwork and because the sector is not organized. Googoo added that there is a need organize to assist with the lengthy paperwork required for funds like the Canadian Publishing Fund and the Canadian Media Fund.

The day concluded with presentations on “Preserving Indigenous Language: Challenges and Solutions” by Morris Prokop, Executive Director of OKâlaKatiget Society⁹ and “e-Centres: Community-based production/broadcast facilities” by Brian Beaton, Treasurer, First Mile Connectivity Consortium.¹⁰ Morris presented history of Labradorinaut that ran for 25 seasons. He also mentioned the importance of language and culture which, he demonstrated are, are linked to self-esteem in recalling the regional meeting in Iqaluit. He described the challenge of archiving, because in 2005 the archive was wiped out because of a station fire. OK Society is now working to digitize what remains. Beaton shared his PhD study and advocacy work with First Mile. He stated that his work is for his grandchildren and future generations. He described the successes and challenges of creating Indigenous owned digital and broadcasting

9 <http://www.oksociety.com/>

10 <http://firstmile.ca/>

infrastructure. For First Mile, the community ownership model is a best practice. He also share a report¹¹ on the promotion of Indigenous languages and cultural resurgence promoted by digital technologies. In conclusion, Beaton pointed to the need for supporting Indigenous language content, local and ongoing training at all levels in the community, organizing technical support and infrastructure that suits needs, and creating relevant funding mechanisms.

This review was prepared by Genevieve Bonin, reviewed by Gretchen King, and translated by Lauriane Tremblay. Sources include:

@radioautochtone (2017). Tweets retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/radioautochtone>

Audio Archive (2017). The 5th Event for The Future of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Broadcasting: Conversation & Convergence (Halifax). Audio retrieved from: <http://indigenoustradio.ca/Halifax.php>

Bonin, G. (2017). Personal notes. The Future of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Broadcasting. Halifax, King's College.

11 <http://firstmile.ca/mwc-fni-report-supporting-indigenous-language-and-cultural-resurgence-with-digital-technologies/>