ABSTRACT

Television began as a novelty in the sixties in Singapore, Singaporeans were gathering in front of television sets, at the Community Centres or their neighbours’ living room. Most were going through a nation building process unknowingly. It is this relationship, where television intersects with the process of Nation building that gave birth to this thesis.

The objective of this study is to reconstruct the development of national identity in Singapore through the launch of television from 1965 to 1974 from a social history perspective, as television is best understood through the society it exists in. This study illustrates that television is an integral part of nation building in Singapore and its complex relationship in constructing the national identity of multiracialism and multiculturalism.

Hence, with an emphasis on the Chinese programs and Chinese magazines, this study will be organized as follows. Chapter one provides a rough sketch of television development in Singapore, establishes the research methodology and defines the scope and aim of the study. Chapter two illustrates the different television programs
filmed locally or bought from abroad and how this constructs a national culture. Chapter three is a study of the magazine *Television and Broadcasting* and its not so subtle nation building messages. Chapter four examines a television program, *Berita Singapura* and a movie, *Lion City*, and with these, understands how television constructs the Nation. Chapter five concludes this dissertation with a description of the relationship between television and national identity.