The role of the media in expanding the impact of rock 'n' roll

The media has been a critical component in allowing people access to music in a country as large as Australia. Until relatively recently only the government controlled ABC had national coverage. In the 1970s two Australian media institutions emerged to cater specifically for young people: the radio station 2JJ (later JJJ or Triple J), and the TV show Countdown. The following websites are a starting point for analysing the impact of the media.

http://www.milesago.com/radio/2jj.htm is an article on the establishment of 2JJ.

http://www.abc.net.au/triplej/30years/ is the page for Triple J's 30th anniversary and contains a range of archived material that gives some idea of the network's importance.


http://www.countdownmemories.com/beginning_index.html contains a wealth of information about the ABC television program Countdown, which helped launch the careers of many local and international musicians. The site also includes an archive of who appeared on episodes.

http://www.milesago.com/tv/countdown.htm contains an article on the significance of Countdown.

Using this information and further research, draw up two lists. One should be of artists that have been championed by the Triple J network, and the other those artists who were launched by Countdown. These lists then become evidence. The questions below will allow you to become a historian by interpreting the evidence.

Be the historian:

1. Are there any artists that appear on both lists? Can you identify any differences between the types of artists found on the lists? How could you explain those differences?

2. Which party was in government when 2JJ and Countdown were launched? Who was Prime Minister? Should the establishment of this type of youth programming have been a government responsibility?

3. When you examine the evidence of Australian artists whose popularity and influence has emerged from these programmes, could you make a case that the government has made a major contribution to Australian culture?

4. Explain the role the Australian government has played in promoting Australian popular culture.