

North York focus makes radio station unique to CRTC

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ble, responsible group." Unfortunately, nobody possessed the knowledge of how to go about doing this, added Yigit, there was a lot of talk about a license, but no one knew the first thing about the applications procedure.

By the fall of 1985, Yigit and Broitman had decided that they would take on the drive to gain a CRTC license, but as Yigit emphasizes, they still had a lot to learn. At the time, Yigit was Programme Director for Radio York, while Broitman served as News Director and Sheffman, Station Manager. Initially, the station was preparing to apply for a carrier-current license which would allow Radio York to be transmitted throughout the campus on the AM band. But Broitman explained that a carrier-current system would be too expensive because of the cost for the transmitter required for each building to which the signal would be sent.

By December '85, Yigit and Broitman's dream seemed to be too far out of reach. "We were just ready to give the students back their money," said Broitman, "and forget

the entire idea." But through the encouragement of various Radio York alumni, Broitman and Yigit began to see the possibility of obtaining a low-powered FM license, and began drafting the application immediately. Even though Yigit majored in economics in his undergraduate studies, he would be in charge of the programming aspects of the application, while Broitman with his humanities background would complete the financial part.

But according to both, it was this crucial understanding between the arts and business side of the organization which allowed Radio York to experience such a smooth transition and file a successful application.

According to Yigit, the application had to demonstrate to the CRTC the benefit which the surrounding community would derive from an FM radio station at York. The CRTC usually allows one campus radio station per market. CKLN (Ryerson's radio station) had already acquired a license in the early eighties, and CIUT (University of Toronto's radio station) had supposedly captured the final spot on Toronto's FM band in March of 1986. But Broitman and

Yigit were confident that their mandate was original enough to gain them CRTC approval.

"Of course we would go for alternative programming," explained Yigit, but what really shaped our focus was our emphasis on our application to serve North York area." It was this aspect of the 144-page application which had many effects on Radio York's programming choices. Because of the large black community in the immediate area surrounding campus and the lack of such music on Canadian airwaves, Yigit decided that this kind of programming should be emphasized in the application. "Over 25% of our music programming is black-oriented music," said Yigit, including funk, reggae, jazz, blues, rap and other related rhythms. Yigit has a diversity of deejays lined up, not only from campus, but from the surrounding community as well. Disc Jockeys range from a doctor in sociology who runs a blues show called "the Googol Dust Show," to a 15 year old rapper who hosts the "Fresh Factor Show."

The station also promised to schedule a range of community-oriented

educational programs which according to Broitman, will give Radio York that edge over other campus stations in the Metro area. "We refuse to carry wire services for news," said Broitman, "it's lousy news and since we're a North York community station, we'll highlight news about North York."

To help develop the station's coverage of community events, Broitman hired a full-time News Director, William Doyle-Marshall, former editor of *Share Magazine*—a well known place periodical in Toronto. "He's an experienced newsman who is sensitive to the diversity of the community, and students who are coming here to do news will get professional training," said Broitman. Broitman plans to have a team of 15-20 students working in the news department, and already Doyle-Marshall has conducted a number of interviews with city officials, aldermen and other political figures for upcoming current events programming. On October 14th, Doyle-Marshall has organized a forum on Ontario's Multicultural Policy which will feature a panel of prominent community speakers.

Radio York has experienced a massive transformation in the past

two years, and just walking through the doors will immediately bring that to anyone's attention. The Radio York of yesterday had programming completed fifteen minutes before airtime, misplaced albums, lounging students and smoke-filled rooms. But today, Radio York is a constant buzz of activity and the changes which the station has undergone have taken place at all levels of organization. The record collection is colour-catalogued according to musical genre. Offices have displaced the old record library and the old storage room is now a listening lounge surrounded by the station's extensive collection of music. And while the executive is readily available the equipment is always in working order, a huge feat which anyone would attest to two years ago.

Most of all though, more than a handful of students are genuinely excited about the station and its brand new image. Perhaps that's because the license is finally a reality, and that's what draws most student interest to the station. To Broitman and Yigit though, it doesn't really matter, every time they tune into CHRY—Radio York, they'll have the satisfaction of knowing they built something, together.

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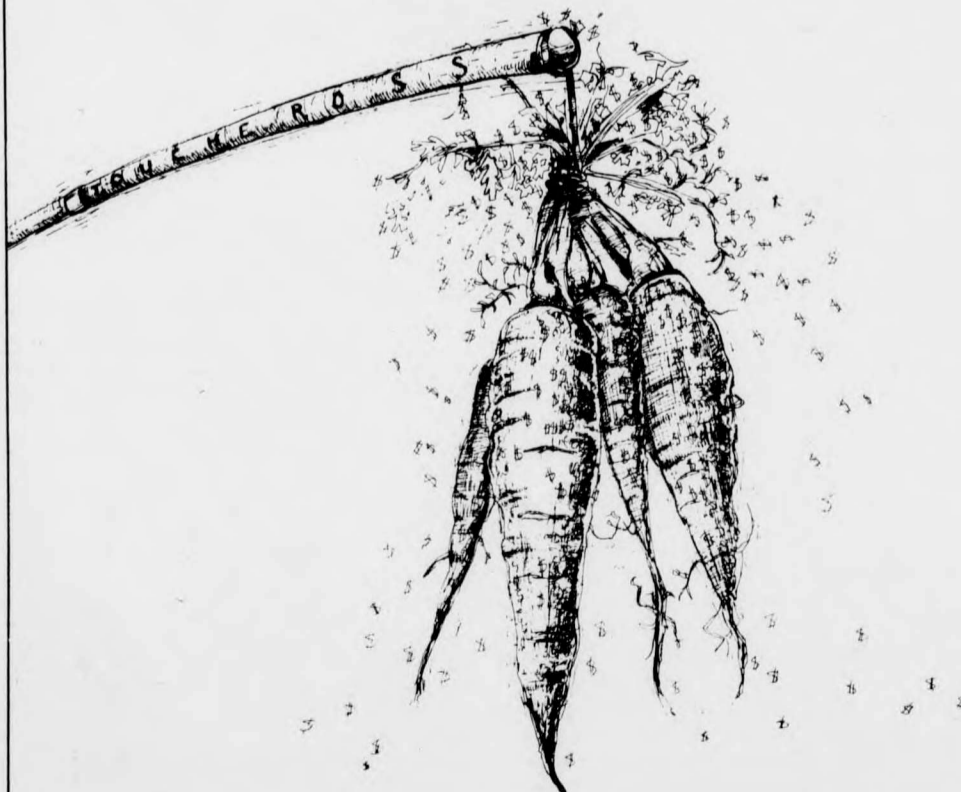
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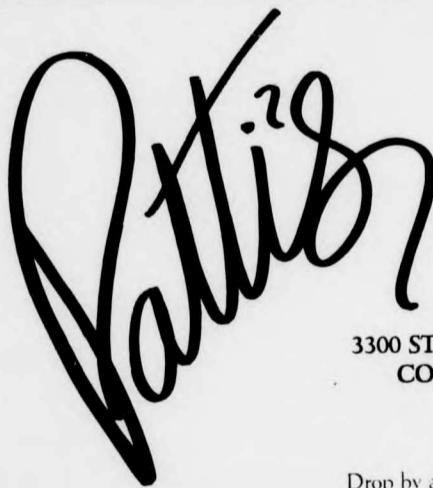
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