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Music and campus media - the inside scoop

First of all, I'd like to welcome you to the first *Soundcheck* in quite a while. *Soundcheck* used to be CHSR's regularly published magazine that let you know which shows were on and when, brought you up to date with the latest, grooviest sounds and just generally tell you about what was going on in the wacky world of CHSR. Unfortunately, it hasn't been published for some time, and that is probably one of the reasons that most students don't seem to have a clue about what CHSR has to offer and that is a real shame. But more of that later.

This resurrected *Soundcheck* is a joint effort between the folks upstairs at CHSR and the people who lurk downstairs at *The Brunswickan* - campus media uniting to let the world know about the importance of music (or something like that).

University life is all about experiencing new things in every area and that includes music. For some people, that seems to involve discovering the music of the 1970's for the first time. While there is a place for classic rock (preferably a radio station in Saint John...), it makes a lot more sense to discover new music by the bands of today. That way, you can see them perform live without waiting for hell to freeze over, or having to pay \$100 for the privilege.

So that brings us to so-called 'alternative' music - a term which brings a chill to the heart of anybody who watches more MuchMusic than is healthy. For some reason, there is a certain amount of stigma attached to 'alternative' music because it is seen as being weird, loud or just not very good. And that just simply isn't true. First, the term 'alternative' music doesn't describe one particular type of music - it has come to mean any music that hasn't quite reached mass consumption yet. That doesn't mean that it never will, it just means that the majority of the public have yet to succumb to its charms. Historically (or at least in the last few years), there have been lots and lots of bands that started off as being labelled 'alternative' but have since found their way into the current music scene - think of the likes of R.E.M., Nirvana, Green Day, The Tragically Hip, Oasis and all kinds of other people too. If you look back at CHSR charts over the past couple of years, those names were turning up way before their sales were entitling them to platinum albums.

Another reason that it is impossible to describe 'alternative' music in a few words is because 'alternative' music is the most eclectic genre of music on the face of the planet. It encompasses rock, dance, country, folk, jazz, classical, world-beat and just about every other kind of music that you can imagine, so every preconceived idea you have about 'alternative' music is probably wrong. In fact, if you ask me, it's a much better idea not to call it 'alternative' music at all, and simply think of music in terms of being good or bad - approach everything with an open mind, and then make your mind up. But that could be a whole editorial by itself, so we should move on.

Now that you're convinced of the value of this new world of music, where should you start? Fortunately, the two branches of campus media are here to help guide you through the maze of undiscovered music.

CHSR features music programming that touches on all areas of music that you can imagine, and also a whole lot more, including ethnic shows, spoken word programmes and current affairs. This issue of *Soundcheck* has a handy pull-out-and-keep guide to all the shows on CHSR, and a quick description of what to expect from them. It doesn't hurt to be a little adventurous to begin with, and very soon you will find the shows that are right for you.

The Brunswickan, on the other hand, is a little bit more varied in the music that it covers. Sometimes it may seem to shun the less-commercial side of things, but we do still want to demonstrate our love for weirder things. So we are proud to present a collection of interviews and articles that encompass the more commercial side of 'alternative' (i.e. bands you have heard of, like Sloan and The Killjoys) right through to the more obscure and underground (i.e. people you have never heard of, like The Pushkings and Duotang) stopping off at independent music giants in between (i.e. people you should have heard of, like Mark Robinson).

Everyone involved with this edition of *Soundcheck* hopes that this is more than enough to pique your interest in a new and exciting world of music, and maybe convince you to do something impulsive like tune into 97.9 FM, or read the next *Genocide* in *The Brunswickan*. You'll be glad that you did. And if you really don't care, at least make sure to recycle.

One final note though - as a student who contributes money to campus media every year, you may feel that you are not being represented by either the newspaper or the radio station. What should you do? Here are two possible answers.

1. Bitch and complain to everybody and say that you want your money back.
 2. Do something about it by getting involved and making a difference.
- I'll leave it up to you to decide what the right answer is.

- Michael Edwards

sound check

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Quick and dirty biographies

Michael Edwards conducted all of the interviews in this supplement, and did most of the layout too. He's been real busy lately. When he isn't doing that, he writes the weekly music column in *The Brunswickan*, *Genocide*, and tries his best to stay in Canada. He failed on the latter count.

Tricia Beard is the Program Director at CHSR-FM, and has been for quite some time. She practically runs the station, and tries her best to make sure that good stuff goes on the air and bad stuff doesn't. She also wrote most of the Program Guide itself.

Neil Dumbury really does try his best. He tries to do some design work in his spare time, but he doesn't have much spare time and that is the problem. Nevertheless, he did a wonderful job on the front cover, and we all love him for that.

Jon Bartlett is involved with what seems like the majority of local bands, and also runs his own record label, Help Records. His band, Steaming Toilets, are working on their debut CD, and will be playing concerts around town all weekend long. Keep your eyes open.

Andrew DeMerchaet is the Music Director at CHSR-FM - he makes up the chart every week, and spends a lot of time on the telephone. When he leaves the station, he drums for 8 Months (unless they have changed their name again) and likes to press wild flowers.

The other contributors all do stuff at the radio station or newspaper, and are really nice people. Do you need to know any more than that? Anyway, I have just run out of space so it really doesn't matter.

HEY THERE!!!
 There is a special Soundcheck Show on CHSR today at 1:30 pm featuring music by the interviewed bands and some giveaways too