

Interested in student radio?

RYFM developing non-credit course on air

By SHELI RICHMOND

It's in the hidden spaces of York University where the most activity is found. Such a location is Radio York's—a non-professional, non-commercial, and non-competitive radio station situated in an unobtrusive corner of Vanier College. With its twenty-three returning working members and fifty to sixty new applicants, RYFM broadcasts to 65 locations on campus and expects soon to have even more air space.

Radio York has seven departments which must work together for the station to be successful. For example, there is a strong interrelation between the Advertising and the Operations departments. Pete Descrochers, Public Affairs Director, said "The Advertising department must let others know we're here and we're successful." To achieve this goal, each advertisement must be unique. The Operations department create special sound effects to make each ad as effective as possible.

News and sports are broadcast throughout the day with on-campus news being predominant. In previous years, RYFM was on teletype and received its news as quickly as any professional station. Now, however, because of the cost of such a service, news must be obtained in other ways. Since RYFM is a non-competitive station, its staff is finding that many other competitive stations are happy to help.

The Public Affairs department is very closely linked with the News department. Staff members interview people both inside and outside the university and obtain background material on controversial events. In the next few months conversations with such prominent figures as Dr. Marshall McLuhan, Pierre Berton, and Charles Templeton will be broadcast. Because it is non-competitive,

RYFM has received permission from the Canadian and United States governments and from the United Nations to air press releases that don't go on regular radio stations.

Radio York has a record library of approximately six thousand L.P.'s. Half of these are rock with the rest consisting of classical, blues, folk, jazz, comedy, instrumental, and film sound tracks. Each announcer chooses the type of music he would like to play. He must use discretion, however, for few people enjoy waking up or eating breakfast to acid rock. Most announcers play a mixture of rock, folk, and blues or 'middle-or-the-road' music. For the D.J. to know how to gear his show, he must receive feedback from his listeners. Requests come in several times a day, but the announcers would greatly appreciate hearing more from their listeners.

Promotions are also important in the operation of the radio station providing many of the records played. Record companies find that a university radio station is a natural market stimulus. Many shows, plays and movies in Toronto contribute tickets in return for short reviews of the performances on the station.

Radio York is especially anxious for people to make use of the station. Advertisements considered to be Public Service announcements, such as those for club meetings or special events on campus, are aired free. Anyone who has a show he would like to do or an interview he would like to conduct, may submit his work. If cleared by the head of the respective department, the show can go on the air. One phrase often heard on the air is, "It's your radio station. Use it!"

Radio York now has one pressing concern for the future. It wants to obtain an FM license to put RYFM on the FM radio band in most parts of Metro. Unfortunately, there is a finan-



Disc jockey Graham McEwan addresses the world from the Radio York broadcast studio.

cial problem. To obtain this license, the idea must be sold. The station manager must present summaries and speeches to the CRTC. He must set up a massive liaison system with other radio stations and he must also convince the other stations that RYFM is non-competitive and non-commercial. The station needs more money from the university to achieve such a goal.

There are other ideas in the making for RYFM. First, by Christmas the

station would like to have forty per cent of its content information and sixty per cent music. Secondly, with the full support of York's president, the station is developing a non-credit course on the air. Tests and assignments would be given on the air and listeners would mail in their work to be checked. If this proves successful, the course would then assume credit status.

Student response to the station is

generally favourable. There are many suggestions for programming ideas and interviews. The greatest number of students listen to the station at noon and dinnertime. Requests for public service announcements are numerous, a good indication of student response.

To those of you who have Willowdowns Cable: One night when you're fooling around with your T.V. channels, turn to Channel 10 and enjoy the sounds of Radio York!

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