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Radio York launches new format Janis Joplin replaces Beatles

By STEVE HAIN

Friday, October 3 will mark a difference in the anemic programming that has been Radio York for the past two years. Gone (hopefully), will be a format that is dominated by Elton John and the Beatles and by disc jockeys who are content to mix Eno and Frank Sinatra together.

Instead, this year's edition of CKRY, which is managed by John Thomson, will "explore the potential of the medium: which includes things that may already have been done but that aren't being used now as well as ideas that no one has tried yet. For lack of a more proper term it is called progressive radio because the label experimental conjurs up images of lab coats and intricate equipment."

On Friday the new philosophy will be launched by a Janis Joplin tribute (its not a special), which will be aired in six 10-minute segments. It will concentrate on Janis' music with part of the time devoted to interviews.

Thomson cited four reasons for the previous failure of CKRY to provide listenable programming.

"Previously, the station did not attempt to relate to the university environment, to the people who

are upwardly motivated and looking for expansion rather than a restriction.

"You have a station administration that changes from year to year bringing with them, of course, different ideas. Combine that with the reality that working here is on a voluntary basis, it becomes hard to maintain the station's continuity. Volunteers cannot be slave driven. Not to mention the fact that Radio York attracts two distinct types of people: those with career ambitions and those who just want to have fun with their shows."

It's all nice and well to realize what the problems are but how can they be overcome?

"First off a distinction must be made. The people who programme shows this year are not disc jockeys, they are communicators trying to achieve a one to one relationship with their listeners. Keeping in mind that the communication of ideas is more important than the system of communication.

"Secondly, we are trying to reflect and develop the concept of the York community which includes not only the students but the Downsview area as well. This can be done by encouraging the

exploration of music as foreground instead of background programming in the form of interviews, discussions, debates and opinions.

"Any ideas proffered by students, faculty or staff are more than welcome because only through community involvement can this be a community radio station."

One small problem, though. How do you develop these ideas?

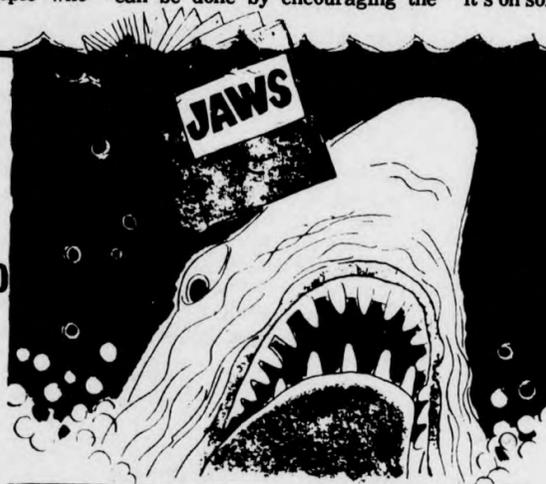
"By establishing a free-form format with certain parameters; moving towards the time when the music we play and the words we express are done so because we feel that they have something to say. The only way to achieve our goals is to make sure that everyone concerned understands what is being done and why. Then it is up to station management to make sure that the material is available to be used by the station personnel.

"It will mean that playlists will be checked and air checks will be made, but then, what station doesn't monitor its employees to ensure that station policy is being maintained? If a jock isn't keeping in line he will be asked to either adapt or leave.

Meanwhile, CKRY is off and running. Only time will reveal if it's on solid ground or in the air.

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