

# CKDU slapped for 'explicit' material

by Gazette staff

Dal's campus radio station has been slapped with broadcasting restrictions under a ruling from a federal regulatory body.

CKDU staff are keeping tight-lipped about the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) decision which was released March 24.

In response to a total of 23 complaints since 1991, the CRTC called for a public hearing to discuss CKDU's application for license renewal and programming guidelines. The

hearing was held last December 7, in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

According to a report accompanying last week's ruling, the majority of complaints dealt with sexually explicit material and obscene and offensive language. In making its decision, the CRTC focused on two incidents that occurred in the summer of 1993.

On June 25, 1993, CKDU broadcast an 'All Day, All Gay' program, to celebrate gay and lesbian pride. A complaint from Halifax resident Wayne S. Harvey was lodged soon afterwards, citing "coarse lan-

guage" and the "reference to gay sexual preferences" broadcast during the early afternoon.

At the hearing, CKDU defended its programming, arguing the special program had been publicized well beforehand and that it was important to broadcast the material during prime time, since it was aimed at a specific under-represented target audience.

In another complaint lodged later that summer, Gene Keyes complained about the broadcast of a song at 1:20 am which he claimed dealt with suicide and necrophilia. In re-

sponse to this complaint, the DJ responsible for playing the song in question was taken 'off the air' by CKDU.

At the hearing, the CRTC said CKDU's current programming guidelines do not restrict the hours in which sexually explicit material may be broadcast and do not define what material can be considered sexually explicit.

CKDU maintained its right to broadcast whatever is appropriate during special programs that are intended for specialized audiences, including material that could be considered sexually explicit or objec-

tionable.

In the decision, the CRTC ordered the following provisions included in CKDU's programming guidelines:

1) warning messages must be aired one week and two hours before, and every hour on the hour during, a 'special program' that contains sexually explicit material;

2) sexually explicit material can't be broadcast between 9 pm and 6 am;

3) "when an occasion arises where material to be aired may conflict with generally accepted audience values regarding such matters as vulgarity, profanity or sexual behaviour, the material shall only be broadcast if it is in the proper context, is integral to the theme of the program, and has worthwhile educational value."

Sources at CKDU, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said many of the station's programmers are not pleased with the CRTC ruling. Some say CRTC's conditions are not well-defined, leaving them vulnerable to misinterpretation.

"What is defined as 'sexually explicit'?" asked one volunteer. "One person complained about the usage of the word 'thigh' in a poetry reading!"

"The terms are not defined. The listening audience is not defined. And what exactly is considered to have 'worthwhile educational value'?"

Station officials said a press release will be issued next week with a formal response from the station.



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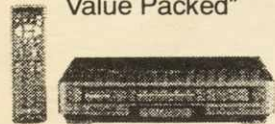
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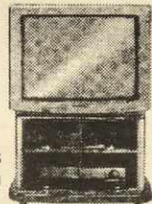


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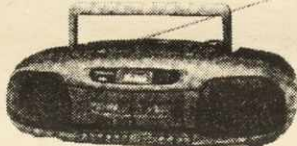
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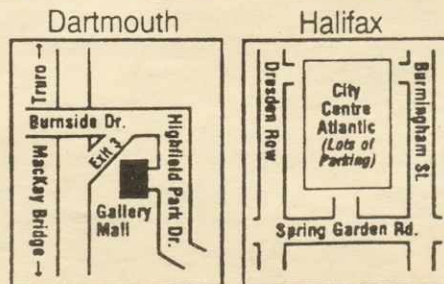
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