

It's rarely the deejays who pick those discs

By MARCI McDONALD
Star staff writer

So you've got troubles and you think your mother hates you and your father hates you and even your cocker spaniel doesn't like you very much.

So you turn on the radio and this nice guy with the nice voice starts murmuring nice soothing things, and just happens to play your favorite Frank Sinatra and the sounds you dig, and your troubles vanish, pouff, and suddenly you're a fan of his forever and you think:

What a NICE guy and what great TASTE he has in music!

Not so, radio listeners everywhere.

That favorite radio deejay of yours isn't the guy who's picking the platters that give him the sound thousands of listeners like you have come to know and love (or hate) him by.

Nine chances out of 10 he hasn't even seen the list of records he's announcing before he sat down in front of the mike.

Exception

The people who are in complete control of his on-the-air identity and who wield the real power in the radio music world today are the quiet ones: The 17 bespectacled young men and fluffly little blondes, brunettes and redheads who staff eight of Metro's nine record station libraries and discreetly call the shots on the sounds you hear.

The only exception are the CBC station, CBL, where all deejays choose their music and CKFH, where Big G. Walters hold sway.

For the rest all but two announcers get scripted lists from their librarians, and these two choose their music only from a special group of librarian-approved albums.

At half a deejay's salary or less, these harmless-looking hatchet-wielding librarians sit among their records from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon. to Fri. and pick almost every platter that will spin every hour on every show.

Not only do they completely control the sound you're exposed to, but, so awesome is their power that, in buying, screening and programming the records to be played they can and do make or break any given singer or his song.

By simply deciding to slot a number of times enough they can help propel it to number one position. And conversely, by filing it in the waste basket they can help kill it.

Their decisions pull the million-dollar strings in the record industry across the country.

Who are these power brokers and what are their qualifications?

They're people like 32-year-old David Amer, a shy, handsome horn-rimmed six-footer who failed Ryerson's Radio and Television Arts course, then started writing commercials, announcing and operating in small town stations, eventually found himself in the music library of easy-listening CHFI where he's been for the last five years.

With no musical training to speak of, Amer is responsible for the CHFI "beautiful music" sound, which comes just about halfway between classical and the Jefferson Airplane—both of which are in his private record collection.

They are also people like Lloyd McGuire—short, quiet 36-year-old bachelor who started out selling records and has been picking CFRB platters for eight years. He doesn't have a private record collection, doesn't listen to the radio off-duty, doesn't have any particular music training and doesn't claim any specialized musical taste.

Another is 23-year-old Susan Prestwich, a petite and pretty blue-eyed blonde who got bored at her CHFI typing job, asked for a switch in jobs two years ago and within six months was taken on the permanent library staff with a two-hour show of her own to plan? She now programs six hours of music a day, with three shows of her own.

"But I didn't know a thing about it when I started," she said. "All I had was interest. I just listened to everything I could."

And still another is Pat Fedrow, the "34-ish," tall attractive redhead who has been CKEY chief librarian since 1965, after 10 years of programming under CBC's old system.

Anonymity

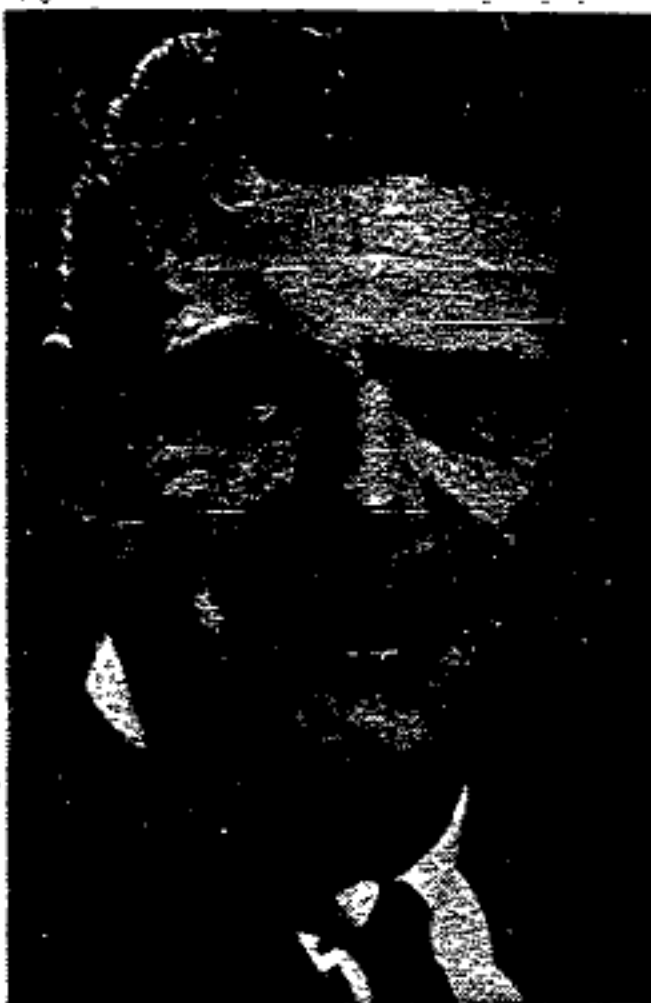
She likes Sinatra Jack Jones and Latin American music, all of which she plays.

"You can't learn the business," she said, "or be taught. It's a feeling you have to have... something I think you're born with: I could tell as soon as you tried putting a few programs together whether you'd make it or not."

Ten of the 17 librarians are men, seven of them ex-announcers and four of them former "rock jocks." One is a retired nightclub musician, another once sang with the Robert Shaw Chorus.

Only five have any classical musical training, and only one of these has a university education in music.

Of the seven girls, all have less than



FOUR OF TORONTO'S TOP DEEJAYS: RICK CAMPBELL, DON PARRISH, BILL DEEGAN AND BRIAN SKINNER

Grade 13 education and all started out as switchboard operators or typists who wanted to break their boredom by programming.

All but two are in their 20s and all but two are single.

Some started programming as recently as did CKFH's Joey Cee—five months ago. Others like CFRB's Eleanor Polley have been in the business 19 years.

The average librarian's age is 30.

They may be as young as 20-year-old Joey Cee, the little Italian bundle of energy who single-handedly chooses the sound for CKFH. Or as old as another loner, 46-year-old ex-announcer Peter Nordheimer who engineered and now programs the CHIN international sound.

They may be as unlike as CKEY's bubbling brunette Monique Sisler, 23, a Buddy Greco fan, and CFRB's chief librarian Art Collins, a dry-witted motorcycle enthusiast whose personal taste lies in either West Coast jazz or classical baroque.

But whatever their differences, the one thing they have in common is anonymity.

As CHFI's Amer put it: "Like most stations I think we like to create the impression that the announcer chooses his own music. We don't really like to talk about this."

"To some people, you see, it's an ex-

pose. They really like Don Parrish and they think he has fantastic taste in music. This is going to destroy all that."

"The trick is never usually exposed on the air," conceded CKEY wake-up announcer Rick Campbell. "The listeners are not aware that a librarian chose the music. They think that I picked it. And I guess that's one of the little magic things on the air."

Campbell has been in the business for 20 years, ever since the good old days when a disc jockey was a do-it-himselfer who selected and spun his own records.

Strict

Payola scandals in the '50s put an end to that by showing that certain records were getting a push to the top by paid-off announcers.

And so did the advent of the station sound.

All of Toronto's stations now claim personalized sounds, from "good music" CKEY through pop-rock CHUM to country and western CFGM.

This means there's a general station policy on what will and will not be played, and the music director or chief librarian automatically files certain sounds in the waste basket.

CFRB, for instance, will play a Bea-

ties song, but never one recorded by the Beatles themselves.

"My definite tastes don't really enter into my work," said Collins. "I program for the listener, not myself."

"There could be a case where all of us hate a record," said CHUM's program director Bob McAdorey. "But it'll have to be played if it's by a big name."

From the spectrum of records okayed, day by day, or week by week, the programmers draw their lists, spacing vocals and instrumentals, pacing tempos according to the time of day.

It can be such a scientific business, in fact, that a station will jealously guard some secret formula or curve it has developed for its librarian's lists.

"Gee, it takes years to work out a successful formula," wailed McAdorey, "and I'm not gonna publish it for the competition."

He also made clear that his station's sound policy, like most, is strict.

"If we hear something on the air that wasn't on the play list, somebody checks it out right away."

"We don't even consider who's on the air when we make up the music sheet. The disc jockey just doesn't rate."

Some librarians do consider who's on the air to the extent that they feed a

deejay his favorites and avoid his dislikes, within the station sound guidelines.

"As soon as a new announcer comes in," said Art Collins, "we have a little chat with him, get to know what he likes and what he'll sound complimentary with."

And, even though all the announcers protest they're happy in the hands of their trusted librarians, they conceded that when policy gets too rigid, there are still ways of getting their personalities projected into their music.

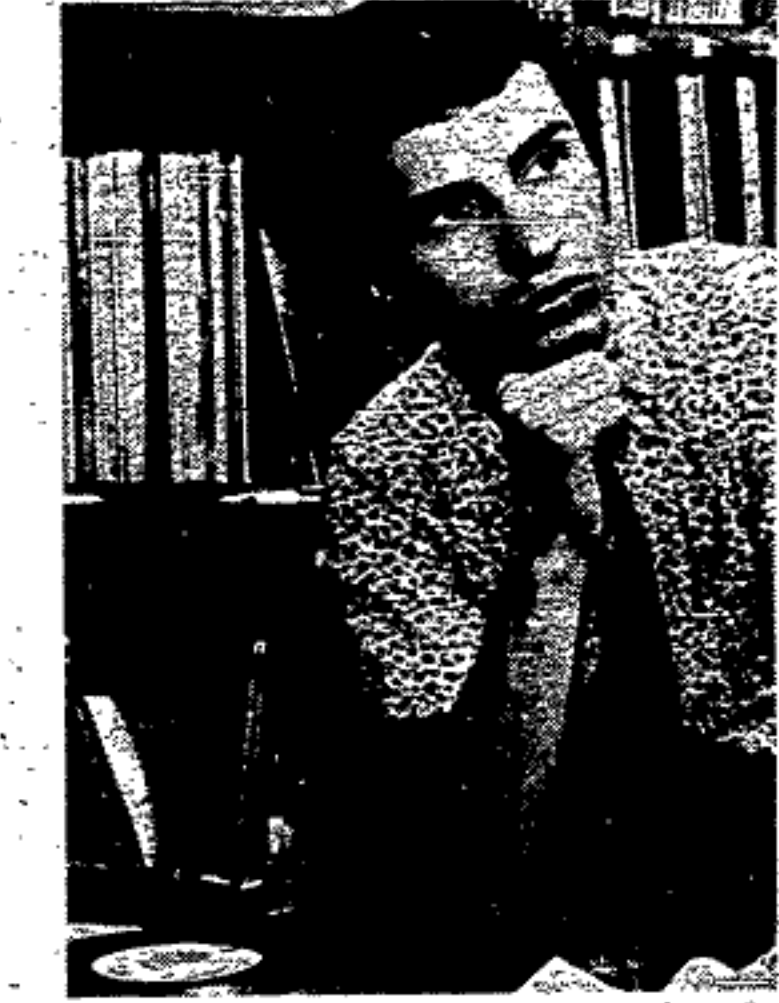
"The things you like personally you're bound to have a much warmer tone with when you announce," smiled CHFI veteran Tod Russell.

"Like I can't just say 'Lena Horne' I have to say 'the artistry of Lena Horne' because I think she's the greatest."

"And if station policy absolutely dictates that you must play something," added announcer Campbell, "there are countless ways of shooting it down. Sometimes I may just not find time to get it on the air."

But Big G. Walters, the "whole bag" rock-jock phenomenon at CKFH has the brashest solution of all.

"Lists?" he asks whimsically. "Oh, yeh, there were scripted lists. But I just ignored them."



RADIO'S REAL TASTEMAKERS: Left to right, CHUM's Sheila Conner (with DJ Bob MacAdore), CKEY's Pat Fedrow (with boss Gene Kirby), CHFI's David Amer and Susan Prestwich, CKFH's Joey Cee and CFRB's Art Collins

What makes Irving Glick run? The music that flows, man!

By MARILYN BEKER
Star staff writer

It's hard to believe Irving Glick.

The soft, soft voice, the short, dark hair, the dark-rimmed glasses, the dark, three-button suit belong to a harried law student, perhaps a Madison Ave. executive—definitely not a "rebel" composer. Which is what Irving Glick says (so very softly) he is.

And the added assertion that he is "just a producer working for the CBC"—that, too, is hard to swallow.

Prestigious

Glick, in fact, at 33 is the CBC's most important music producer—a position which, added to his presidency of the Canadian League of Composers makes him one of the most influential men in serious Canadian music.

Five years ago, he was just another student (music and art) back from Paris.

Today, he handles most of the prestigious CBC music production—the Stravinsky tributes, the Toronto Symphony concerts, the Stratford specials and much of the series, Distinguished Artists, and Concerts from Two Worlds.

"He is without question the senior producer at the CBC, in fact if not in title," says Keith MacMillan, a former CBC music producer himself and now head of the Canadian Music Centre. "And as such, his influence has been considerable."

Rapport

"Glick was the first fully trained person musically (with an MA in music) to become a producer," MacMillan continues. "So, not only was he able to bring a special knowledge to the job, but he quickly established a unique rapport with other composers and musicians."

"Since he moved in there, the increase in Canadian music programming has been fantastic. Now, John Roberts (head of the music department) deserves a lot of credit for that, but Glick, who always worked with Roberts hand in glove, deserves much of it, too."

Glick won't tell you that he's a very modest man. All he'll say is: "The last five years have been really great." And he says it not because of his instant status in Canadian music, but because it was in those five

years that he began writing music he was happy with.

Getting the time to do it has been tough, but he says "it's a very rich life." He composes every morning—hunched over a piano—between 9 and 11 a.m. Then

it's off to his tiny, fourth floor CBC office.

There, amid cracked beige walls and his own sketches, he plans programs, hires musicians, books studios and tackles the painstaking job of making

sure everything he produces is technically perfect.

"I really love this job," he says. "I came here one day when I was desperate and couldn't find work. It's good because it makes me be involved in every aspect

of music." And it allows him those two morning hours for composition.

"I write every day," he confides. "This is very important because it gives you momentum and continuity. I've been quite fortunate

that I've been composing steadily for six years with no stoppage in ideas."

Suddenly Glick's eyes light up, he leans forward in his chair and begins singing examples of his music. He looks happier than usual.

Too high

"I'm definitely not avant-garde," he admits. "I'm not electronic. I'm in the minority because avant-garde is definitely in demand. There are people with commissioning power who won't commission me because I'm not way out. Orchestras often do commission me. (He has just finished a piece for the Toronto Chamber Orchestra and is currently working on a ballet.) But organizations don't commission me."

"It seems," he says, "the only way to be significant in the world is to be diverse. But the stakes are too high."

"That's where I'm definitely a rebel. I'm a rebel, not in the sense of looking to the future, but in the sense of going my own way."

"It's a good thing I'm not composing for a living. If I were, I would be frustrated. There is no composer in Canada that can make his

living solely by composing. But I've been coddling myself, training myself to bring out the best I can."

He leans farther toward his chair and begins singing examples of his music. He looks happier than usual.

"I do my music in two main styles—one that is melodic, an 'inner' dance style (he hums a few bars of a concerto) and one that is more serious, extremely rhythmic, bitter sweet with definite jazz influences." He sings, tapping his foot and clenching and unclenching his fists.

Two styles

"For me," he explains, "my music has to do with the way I feel about things. Generally, the striving for the atomic age—computers, rockets, machines is not my character. I do not feel that age strongly. Instead, I feel that there is still such a thing as order, as beauty, as love. I've heard a great deal of contemporary music, electronic music but it doesn't express the sentiment love, or peace or the world of harmony. There are no coincident sounds. Only happenings. My music is expressively humanistic."

Bleak

"I came to music very late," he says. "I took piano lessons when I was 15 and didn't start composing until I was 18 and already involved in the faculty of music at U. of T. I worked very hard but it was extraordinarily difficult and emotionally draining. I had all sorts of conflicts."

Glick graduated from the University of Toronto with an MA, married a concert pianist and when he was 25 took his wife and his conflicts to Paris.

"I couldn't write, I had no ideas. Things were bleak for me. Most people go to Paris to be inspired. I had to come back home to Toronto where I feel important, wanted."



THE TWO SIDES OF IRVING GLICK: CBC PRODUCER AND COMPOSER