

Imus Focuses on 'New Humor'

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... "reflect the entire spectre of emotion... relate to those things that our listeners are thinking about... things slightly more important than getting dressed... sex... politics, religion, law and order, crime, riots, the war, pollution, the lack of identity."

And he argues that sex isn't controversial, by quoting statistics (probably invented) that "people between the ages of 18 and 34 think about sex at least once every 20 minutes. WGAR is demographically designed, with our music, to appeal to this age group. This means to me that between 6-6:20 a.m., our target audience is thinking about sex." So, one of the running humor bits he uses is as chairman of the board and founder of the Columbus School of 101 Show Biz Careers. "Girls call, knowing it's a put-on, and come on as sexy as you can imagine or that they can imagine. And that's the essence of it. On the telephone, she can live out a fantasy, anonymously... become an

entertainer and provide vicarious enjoyment for all those little devils listening."

More serious

His idea of new humor is humor that relates to the more serious aspects of life and, frankly, found it difficult to explain. But it consists of poking fun to some extent. There's one running gag called "Morning Moment of Meditation" with an Imus-type character — that blond-haired, blue-eyed, El Dorado-driving, Peach Tree-shaking Brother Love. In a feverish southern Baptist accent, Brother Love is a gentleman who feels celibacy is for sissies and who asks: "When is the moral decay sweeping the neighborhoods of America gonna get to my house?" His most famous sermon cautioned the mothers of Cleveland that leaving Ken and Barbie in the children's room will find that upstairs bedroom fast becoming one big volley of the dolls.

His parody of law and order is via a character called Judge Hagin who once said that one out of every five Americans commits a crime sooner or later so the obvious solution is to arrest one out of every five Americans.

Imus uses the phone a lot, like calling McDonald's ham-

burgers and telling the guy's he is a sergeant from the Air National Guard and needs 1,200 hamburgers and getting the McDonald's man hopelessly confused on which ones are with mustard, etc., etc. Imus has also been known to call an ammo shop and try to order a silver bullet for L. Ranger or Hertz to rent a car for just a couple of hours on a Sunday for A.J. Foyt. These phone calls give listeners a chance to become performers, Imus said.

WGAR is more than just a radio station playing records. "We've created an aura of total emotional involvement," he said, "because of listener participation." The station, consulted on music by Jack Alexander, programs records on this type of rotation pattern: A record from 1955-60, a record from 1960-65, a record from 1965-70, and a current hit, blending in certain new records.

New humor is telling listeners that Lake Erie died for their sins, Imus said.

And new humor does run into problems occasionally; Imus is now being sued by a TV weatherman for something he supposedly said about him on the air.

But WGAR's new ratings tell the real story.

NAFMB President Scores Several Areas

NEW YORK—Although predicting that 1971 will be another growth year for FM radio in general, John Richer, president of the National Association of FM Broadcasters lashed out last week against "Madison Ave.'s lack of awareness of the medium's unique stereo ability to sell product. Detroit's failure to give the American public a well-engineered, reasonably priced FM/AM auto radio, and the lethargy of government in dealing with the increasing number of problems that affect all broadcasters.

"We see the indecisiveness and conflicting viewpoints of governmental agencies and legislators as detrimental to the speedy development of a total aural service that could eradicate FM radio's inequality," he said. Richer is station manager of WFIL-FM, Philadelphia.

"We are also disappointed with the attitude of many of the broadcasters in our FM fraternity who are still off fighting windmills when many of the solutions are close at hand," he said. "Many, time-worn with frustration, have forgotten that facing Detroit, Madison Ave.

and the federal government in concert as an industry is the prime factor in increasing that industry's chance for success."

But he felt the trend was reversing itself and that 1971 would be a year of even greater progress for the NAFMB. "We have keyed our strategy to continued membership growth," he said. He also pointed out that "programming and technical surveys, audience research and in-depth studies of FM's unique problems have been part of the accomplishments of FM during 1970... that the association had committed itself to a greater role as a spokesman for the industry and was satisfied with its progress.

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wish to take the personality route. And we will only handle one station at a time per consultant."

In March, Gaines will sponsor a "creative commercial and production clinic." Gaines, for Smiles, recently held a programming clinic in Raleigh and "since then 'truth sessions' have sprung up all over. I think the truth is that radio personnel had better become more realistic... and less idealistic. This has not been the Year of the Gap. It's been more like the Year of Turning the Corner. Most programmers and radio people today could be replaced by a computer and automation. With tight money, increasing overhead and costs, radio is turning the corner to a realization that creativity—not market-to-market plagiarism—is the answer. But that creative spirit has to be evident in the sales department as well as the programming department. I hope that AMS will be a part of the rebirth of radio creativity."

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Vox Jox

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We were talking, myself and this very important major market program director. "I just want you to make as much as the sales manager of your station," I said. In the gloom of the cocktail party, which he had to attend by edict of the station's manager, although he'd much rather be home with his wife and kids (it is 8:09 p.m. and the station manager and the sales manager are both home with their families) he nodded his head. "I'd just like to make as much money as some of the air personalities on the station," he said. We drank to that; the drinks were free, paid for by a record company. I thought at the time that it was a pity FCC commissioner Nicholas Johnson wasn't there to have a drink with us.

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Dave (Dave Shannon) Suckoff, once music director of WCIT in Lima, Ohio, and then engineer at WLS in Chicago, is now doing the 7-midnight show on 10,000-watt WDXR, a Paducah, Ky., Top 40 station. WDXR's lineup includes Jimmy Youngblood, Dick Dyzel, Frank Carvell and Shannon, with Ernie Michel on weekends... Hitbound on WVIC in Lansing, Mich., last week were "Born to Wander," Rare Earth; "Remember Me," Diana Ross; "Precious, Precious," Jackie Moore; "Gypsy," Gypsy; "Had a Real Good Time," Small Faces; "Someone's Been Watching," Little Sister; "They Can't Take Away Our Music," Eric Burdon; "I Really Don't Want to Know," Elvis Presley; "Superball" by the Woolies; "Black Night," Deep Purple. Seems like WVIC is slow on some things, fast on others.

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Dick Starr, program director of KYA, San Francisco, sends in the Oct./Nov. ARB. From 6 a.m.-midnight Monday-Sunday, here's the countdown: KGO 10, KSFO 9, KABL 8.6, KCBS 8.4, KFRC

8, KYA 7.9, KFOG-FM 6.1, KNBR 3.1, KSN-FM 3, KABL-FM 3, KIOI-FM 2.9, KDIA 2.8, KLOK 2.5, KNEW 2.5. In teens, KYA topped KFRC, but KFRC led a little in 18-24 year olds.

"The rock battle goes on: KYA's is pressing hard again," And he points out that KIOT-FM, his country music station, is beginning to show in the ratings now. What's interesting to note is that the average quarter hour estimates have KYA (11.4) beating KFRC (10.6) 7-midnight. That period is now being handled by KYA's Chris Edwards, but it's the recently departed Tom Campbell who did the job for KYA. Demographically Campbell was behind in 18-24, but ahead in teens. Dave Stone, KYA's 3-7 p.m. personality, also topped KFRC. What's interesting about the market is the total strength of the FM stations. They reaped a total of 24.9 on the average quarter hour basis; they're steadily growing, growing, growing.

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Now let's go to Los Angeles. Ted Atkins, program director of KHJ, sends in the Oct./Nov. ARB with the statement: "We're happy to note this book gives KHJ its best share of audience (quarter hour ratings and cumes) in the past two years." Here's the countdown 6 a.m.-midnight: KABC 7.6, KHJ 7.5, KFI 5.6, KFWS 5.4, KMPC and KNX 4.9, KRLA 4.3, KWST-FM 4.2, KPOL 3.6, KOST-FM 2.8, and KHJ-FM and KIIS 2.4. The key to power, however, is in KHJ's demographics. The station leads everybody by a hefty margin in 18-24 year olds, both men (11.6) and women (15.8). Second in men 18-24 was KRLA with 9.7, followed by KHJ-FM with 7.4. Second in women 18-24 was again KRLA with 7.7, again followed by KHJ-FM with 7.2. KHJ also leads the market in teens. It seems that KHJ, consulted by Bill Drake and programmed by Ted Atkins, just about has the market locked up. FM stations in Los Angeles have 19.4, with KWST-FM leading with 4.2.

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