

Economist & Sun/Sun-Tribune

# DIVERSIONS

## Sound decisions

School radio station shows discretion when playing controversial music

BY JEFF MITCHELL  
Staff Writer

*Ban me? Try it  
You might cause a riot  
What the radio won't play the  
underground will supply it  
I'm a MC pirate, this loud not  
quiet  
Radical as they make, they  
make a rule I'll defy it*  
— Lyrics from *Ain't a Damn  
Thing Changed* by rapper Ice-T

**Y**ou won't hear Eminem emanating from RAV-FM. Don't tune in hoping to hear 50 Cent.

No violence, no dope, no sexual objectification. The station, broadcasting from Vaughan Secondary School at 90.7 on the FM dial, manages to tread a fine line, according to programming director Kristin Daniel, a student at the school.

The station plays the mainstream music its target demographic demands, while maintaining the high standard expected by school officials, parents and the community at large.

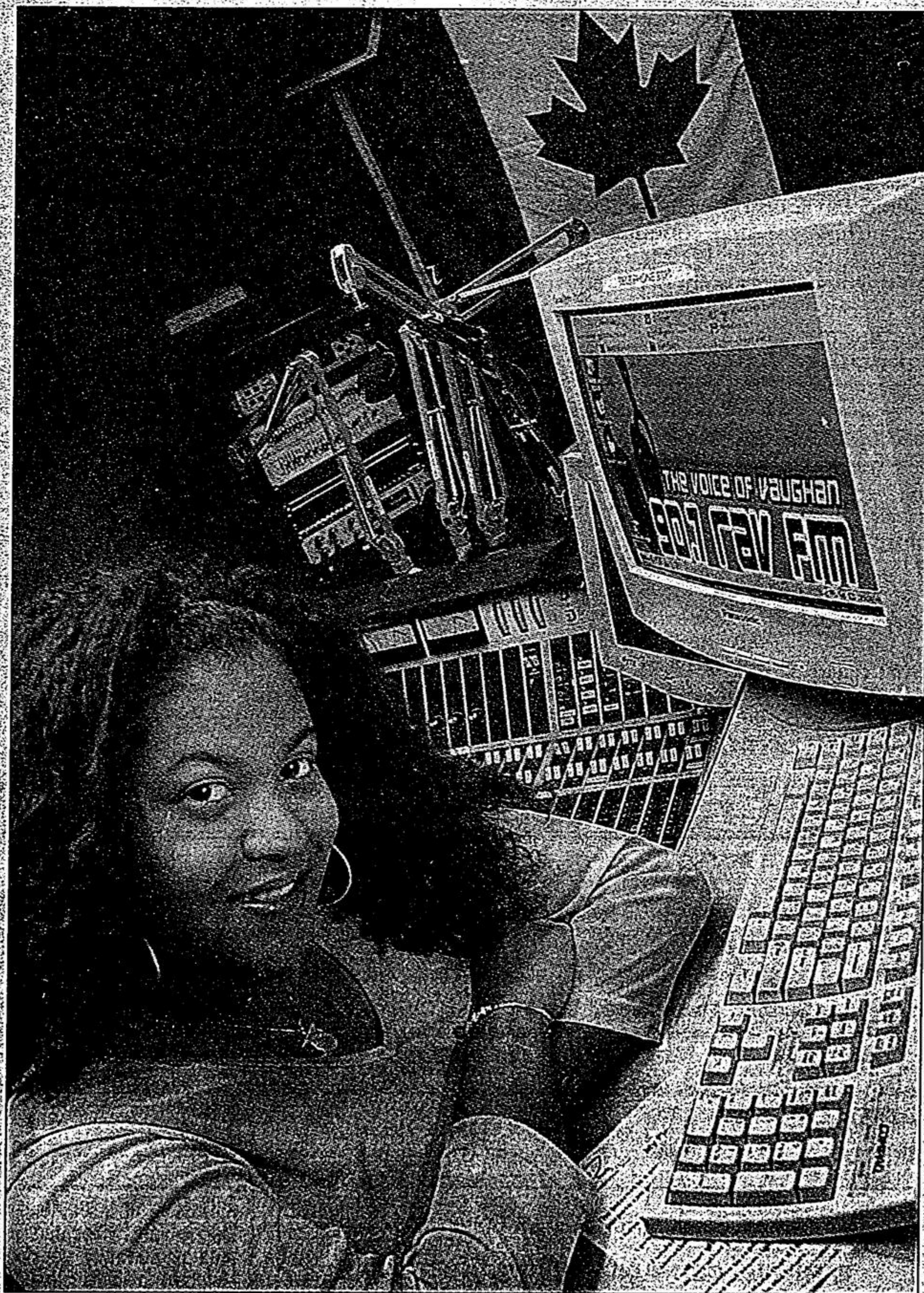
"We're very selective about the material we put on the station," said Ms. Daniel, 18, as she prepared to go live on the air last Monday afternoon.

"We try to stay away from the really hardcore content."

Under Ms. Daniel's leadership, RAV-FM has moved from a mish-mash of musical styles to an urban music format, featuring hip-hop, R&B and world music.

It can be risky territory; hip-hop and rap, in particular, present numerous hazards for a station such as RAV-FM: Coarse language, racial epithets, graphic sexual imagery, drug use, depictions of unimaginable violence, denigration of women — many of the songs at the top of the charts today are rife with problematic language.

Some artists, such as the aforementioned Eminem, are rejected



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

outright, said station manager Rob Basile. Other songs can be digitally manipulated to edit out material that's deemed unacceptable.

"If there's a song that's appealing to young people, we listen to it," said Mr. Basile, who at 29 is a part of the generation that saw today's hip-hop emerge from the streetwise poetry of rappers such as Public Enemy and Run DMC.

"If the content is suggestive, we

make one of two decisions: To edit the song or not to play the song at all."

An example of this is the tune *Slow Jamz*, by Twista, currently a hit on the urban charts. Rife with sexual imagery, the song was salvaged through some fairly radical editing. The edited version now plays on RAV-FM.

"Basically, the first verse is OK, but the rest is pretty raunchy," said Ms. Daniel.

She recognizes such manipulation might be questioned by purists, but offers this logic: If removing offensive lyrics means a popular song makes it to air on the station, the editing is worth it.

"Our radio station depends on the listeners and what they listen to," she said. "If we don't play what they want to hear, they're not going to listen."

Kristin Daniel, a Grade 12 student at Vaughan Secondary School, is program director at the school's radio station 90.7 RAV-FM. She also hosts the program *Caliente* at the station Mondays from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.



Kevin Greenspan

At the Movies

## Lion King sequel offers equal laughs

**D**id you ever wonder what was going on with Timon and Pumbaa while the story of Simba was being told in *The Lion King*?

Well, let's just say they have a life of their own.

In this animated movie, you find out where Timon came from, how Timon and Pumbaa met, and how they raised Simba from a cub to be king of the jungle.

If you know *The Lion King* well, you'll find jokes in *Lion King 1-1/2* extremely hilarious.

For example, you'll learn the real reason the animals were bowing when Simba was presented at Pride Rock — it wasn't out of respect.

You'll get to meet Timon's mother and uncle and learn all about the trials of being a meerkat.

This movie is available on DVD or VHS and is not being shown in theatres. On the DVD, you'll find special features such as the game show *Who Wants to be King of the Jungle?* — an interactive game based on the popular "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" TV show.

You'll also be able to explore Timon and Pumbaa's virtual safari and watch a music video performed by Raven called *Grazing in the Grass*.

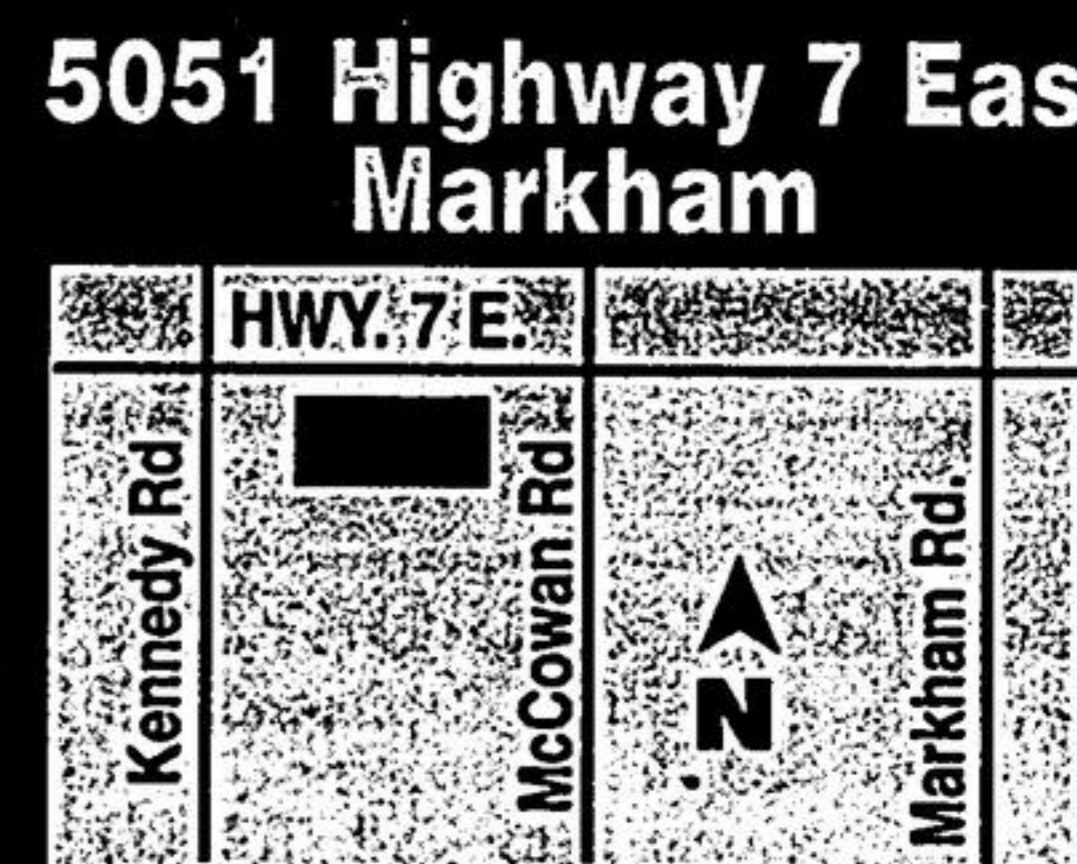
Even if you haven't seen *The Lion King* (and who hasn't!), you can still enjoy this really fun movie, although you may not get all the jokes.

Kevin Greenspan is a novice movie buff who writes a regular review of films geared to youth. He can be reached via the newsroom at [newsroom@era-banner.com](mailto:newsroom@era-banner.com)

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