

**((WYOUth))**

Craig Todd-Langille  
FIS 2140  
Prof. Rothbauer  
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((WYOUth) is a radio library program focusing on podcasting. The goal of this program is not to create a wave of future radio professionals, but to (a) expose young people to the possibility of participating in media creation; (b) allow them to explore their ideas in an environment that encourages their own voices; and (c) offer a tangible, consistent product of their output.

The actual content of the program is purposefully as open-ended as possible, in order to allow the participants to guide and shape it to fit their needs and interests. While this will cause some difficulties in organization, the program will provide a structure that seeks to facilitate the development and capture of participant ideas rather than determining them. We want to emphasize learning by doing and can use our mistakes to improve the program and provide better service, just as our participants will learn to improve their podcasts. This will be the best way to maintain long-term interest in the program and attract new young people to become involved. It will be targeted, at first, to an age group of nine to twelve. The strategy is to grow the program with a group that can later offer assistance and guidance to younger newcomers. As the program becomes established, three blocks will be offered: the original age group, one for thirteen to fifteen year-olds, and one aimed at those sixteen years or older.

This program will be offered on a year-round basis, with gaps during the summer and Christmas breaks. Initially, enrollment in the program will be capped at 10-12, and will be offered in two and one-half hour blocks after school on weekdays, twice each month. The primary co-ordinator of the program will be myself. Each session, however, will require at least one other staff member. Volunteer participation from older teens will be immediately encouraged and sought. As the program grows, experienced volunteers

will be distributed throughout the groups to maximize the knowledge that has been accumulated. We do not require substantial room, as small is best for recording (reducing sound pollution for the *noise floor*), and participants will need quiet and lack of distraction to focus on their piece.

Group planning can take place at available tables, and participants can take their turns using the equipment to record their segments in rotating blocks. The program will roughly follow the following schedule: 40 minutes planning/brainstorming/writing – 10 minute break – 40 minutes recording – 10 minute break – 40 minutes postproduction/distribution/promotion, with 10 minutes for wrap up and discussion of the next week's goals. Logs will be required of participants, tracking their time using equipment for recording and postproduction, basic description of content segments and audio material used in program, and as a record of activity spent on distribution and promotion. Log books will remain on site and will be property of the library. A portion of the log book will be set aside for comments and suggestions, and thorough evaluations of the program by participants will be conducted at tri-yearly intervals. Cleanup and maintenance will be performed by myself and should take no longer than half an hour following each session.

Technology poses the biggest challenge to the program. Software required for the program can be obtained via open source and freeware and library web servers used to post completed podcasts. The essential baseline necessary is one computer and one quality microphone. It would be highly beneficial and more time efficient if two computers could be made available, so one could be used for recording and one for post-production and distribution/promotion. Ideally library computers could be used for this

program, but it is likely that as set up for regular users they will not be adaptable enough for program needs. Because of the necessity of moving from rooms based on recording versus other needs, laptops would be highly desirable. Nevertheless, the program can be completed with minimal equipment. One reason for targeting the program to younger patrons is that they may not be as advanced technologically as their older peers, can gain the most from exposure to even limited equipment, and may not be as discouraged with a less ‘professional’ sounding result. The most important thing to keep in mind is we will make do with the best equipment available to us and seek to improve the resources available to the project, adding pieces slowly as it grows and technology becomes available (and drops in price). It is possible that much of technological requirements can be met by creatively seeking donations, discounts, online vendors, used products and loans. I believe that assembling our needed gear piece by piece will be, in the long term, more cost-effective and lead to greater flexibility than buying an ‘all-in the box’ solution, such as the Podcast Factory.<sup>1</sup>

Promoting the program will be accomplished through flyers and contacting local schools, asking teachers to recommend our program to students and parents. It is hoped that word of mouth will become a positive force in publicizing the program, and that the podcasts themselves will in turn become publicity for the program, and by extension, the library (although it will not be required that the podcasts discuss the library at all – this will be left up to participants). Emphasis will be placed on the open-endedness of the program, and the manner in which it bridges old and new, analog and digital technologies. The balance struck between science and the humanities, the equal appeal to boys and girls, and the many roles the program offers (producer, writer, host, engineer,

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.audiomidi.com/PODcast-Factory-P7353.aspx?cpid=1562>

editor, promoter, publicist, researcher, technician, journalist, DJ, public speaker, programmer, actor, interviewer) can all be selling points. Effort will be made to raise awareness of the role this sort of technology will play in the future lives of young people, backed up by the momentum shown in the library literature as becoming an everyday part of post-secondary education,<sup>2</sup> the workplace,<sup>3</sup> and professional development.<sup>4</sup> One particularly good idea, taken from the Cheshire Public Library Podcast program in Connecticut,<sup>5</sup> is to offer copies of the podcasts formatted on CD for lending in the library. If possible, CD copies could be provided free to participants, a move that will increase goodwill and lead to broader dissemination of the program's output.

As participants become comfortable with the program and its demands, new elements can be brought in. The issue of radio itself will be a central theme of these discussions. Of particular note can be the lag of current library materials that rarely, if ever, mention podcasting or internet radio. This allows us to discuss what is at the core of the form, and the different manners by which it has been expressed by the population. As much as possible, guests will be brought in that can offer expertise in specific areas, and we may actually be able to pursue the possibilities of ham and shortwave radio, low power FM, citizen's band and microbroadcasting. Emergent technologies such as satellite radio, VoIP, Skype, Blogging, RFID, cellular phones, peer to peer networks, wireless mesh and RSS feeds (beyond what will already be done for distribution) can also be brought into the mix. Collection materials relevant to radio can be displayed, encouraging students to read up on non-fiction focused on the topic, and enjoy novels

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<sup>2</sup> Young.

<sup>3</sup> Smith.

<sup>4</sup> Pollack.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.cheshirelib.org/teens/cplpodcast.htm>

such as Allan Frewin Jones' *Pippa on Air*, Gordon Korman's *Radio Fifth Grade*, and Ann M. Martin's *Claudia Kishi, Live from WSTO*.

It is understandable that there may be anxiety about the content of the radio show, parent response, and its representation of the library. The format the show takes will be decided by (participant) group consensus. We will, as much as possible, allow them to make choices about the structure, whether it means many short podcasts, one long podcast or somewhere in between. Group work will be emphasized, however, and comparisons made to the typical collaborative nature of radio (for example, disagreements about content can be turned into a point-counterpoint feature);<sup>6</sup> but not to the extent of overruling decision-making. Participants can decide whether to favor polish or spontaneity, as long as a completed show is delivered. The focus of the show could take many forms: news, storytelling, personality, politics, comedy, music, reviews, sports, shout-outs, technology, theatre or multi-genre variety program. ((WYOUth)) will serve as the overall brand of the program for the library, but the podcasters will be encouraged to name their own shows themselves, distinct from the ((WYOUth)) moniker.

All participants will be required to sign a form agreeing to adhere to a code of conduct that includes some limitations on the content of the podcasts. While we do not wish to restrict our participants' creativity, there are realities about what we can and can not accept. Podcasts are not currently subject to them, but we will voluntarily conform to the code (as applicable) as set out in Part 1.1 – 'Broadcasting Content' of the CRTC Radio Regulations.<sup>7</sup> These rules will be made available to our participants in our resource binder. Not only will their participation allow us to bring them into a

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<sup>6</sup> The discussion on the merits of the band Creed in Cheshire Public Library's first Podcast demonstrate how this can make for interesting radio.

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/LEGAL/Radioreg.htm>

conversation about important issues such as freedom of speech, copyright, privacy, regulation, media consolidation, licensing, fair use, communications and community representation, but exposure to the program will mean these youth will learn about these issues on their own, through their work together and by extension of creating media that enters the public realm.

## Suggested Required Materials

DIY Microphone Flags	\$5.00 <sup>8</sup>
Promotion (Flyer colour printing)	\$10.00
Resource Binder (Binder + Printing)	\$12.00
Shure SM58LC Vocal Microphone	\$118.98 <sup>9</sup> (New)
MS7201B Round Base Microphone Stand Black	\$19.20 <sup>10</sup> (New)
Players Choice Pro Series Mic Cable 25' - PROX25	\$19.99 <sup>11</sup> (New)
M-AUDIO - MobilePre USB [USB Bus-Powered Preamp and Audio Interface]	\$199.99 <sup>12</sup> (New)
Dell Inspiron 1300 Laptop	\$749 <sup>13</sup> (New)
DIY Popstopper (nylon hose + embroidery hoop)	\$5.00
Audacity [Audio Editor + Recorder]	Freeware <sup>14</sup>
LAME Mp3 encoder	Freeware <sup>15</sup>
JazlerShow [Cart Application]	Freeware <sup>16</sup>
VST Plugins	Freeware <sup>17</sup>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1139.16</b>

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<sup>8</sup> Riti.

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.axemusic.com/product.asp?numPageStartPosition=1strSearchCriteria=all&PT\\_ID=all&P\\_ID=2087](http://www.axemusic.com/product.asp?numPageStartPosition=1strSearchCriteria=all&PT_ID=all&P_ID=2087)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.axemusic.com/product.asp?P\\_ID=534&strPageHistory=related](http://www.axemusic.com/product.asp?P_ID=534&strPageHistory=related)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.axemusic.com/product.asp?P\\_ID=2918&strPageHistory=related](http://www.axemusic.com/product.asp?P_ID=2918&strPageHistory=related)

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.csctoronto.com/store/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=2201](http://www.csctoronto.com/store/product_info.php?products_id=2201)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www1.ca.dell.com/content/products/compare.aspx/notebooks?c=ca&cs=CADHS1&l=en&s=dhs&~ck=mn>

<sup>14</sup> <http://sourceforge.net/projects/audacity/>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.free-codecs.com/download/Lame\\_Encoder.htm](http://www.free-codecs.com/download/Lame_Encoder.htm)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.jazler.com/products/JazlerShow.asp>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.kvraudio.com/>

## Per Session Expenses

Paper, Pencils etc.	\$6.00
Photocopying	\$8.00
Staff Pay (2 X 3.0 hrs X \$40)	\$240.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$254</b>

## Wish List (In Progress)

2<sup>nd</sup> Laptop

WYOUth Domain name

USB Mixer (with Compression)

CD Burner

Headphones

Mobile Recorder (Olympus DM-10)

Press Hat<sup>18</sup>

Headsets (for use with Skype)

FM Transmitter (Belkin Tunecast II)

Battery powered FM/AM/Shortwave radio(s)

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<sup>18</sup> [http://www.jasoncoleman.net/images/press\\_hat.png](http://www.jasoncoleman.net/images/press_hat.png)

## Acknowledgements

Art Starts Teen Open Mic Night. Maria A. Shchuka District Library.

[http://www.library.on.ca/links/clearinghouse/training/workshopsupportmat/teens/MAS\\_YAG\\_role\\_%20meetings.pdf](http://www.library.on.ca/links/clearinghouse/training/workshopsupportmat/teens/MAS_YAG_role_%20meetings.pdf)

The Blankket [Toronto musician who performs accompanied by backup music transmitted to audience members' held battery powered radios].

<http://www.myspace.com/theblankket>

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## **Potential Resources**

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Bull, G. “Podcasting and the Long Tail,” *Learning and Leading with Technology*. 33(3) November 2005: 24-5.

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## **((WYOUth)) Resource Binder (In Progress)**

### Broadcast Bands

- AM
- FM
- Citizens'
- Ham
- Shortwave
- UHF
- VHF

### Digital Radio

- Podcasting
- Internet Streams
- Satellite
- VoIP

### Distribution

- RSS
- BitTorrent

### Other Uses of Radio Waves

- Radar
- Remote Control
- Microwave
- X-Ray
- Beepers
- Cellular Phones
- RFID
- Walkie Talkies
- Wireless Mesh

### Promotion

- Mailing Lists
- Networking
- Blogging

## Regulation

- CRTC
- FCC

## Server Bandwidth

- Mono vs. Stereo

## Software

<http://www.kvraudio.com/>

## Station Types

- Public
- Commercial
- Independent
- Community

## Terminology

- “On the Air”
- Broadcast – derived from farming term meaning ‘to spread (seed) widely’
- Nemo – ‘Remote Broadcast’
- ‘Feed the Net’ – broadcast to large multi-station network
- Noise Floor

## Uses of Radio

- Communication
- Emergency / Distress
- Music
- News
- Governmental
- Traffic
- Weather

## Voicework

- Pitch
- Power
- Pace
- Punctuation

Youth Radio

-Nathan Hale High (Seattle, WA) <http://www.c895worldwide.com/web/>