

Media Questions Of The Week



NEW YORK DISK JOCKEY WILLIAM B. WILLIAMS SHOWS WHAT SPURS THE PAYOLA—THE HOT COMPETITION OF THE 8,000 RECORDS A DEEJAY RECEIVES EACH YEAR

Gimme, Gimme, Gimme on the old PAYOLA

As probers turn from TV to radio, clear evidence of disk jockey bribery crops up

With the facts of TV-quiz corruption firmly fixed, evidence has begun to turn up of wholesale corruption in radio—among the entertainers who dominate that field today, the disk jockeys. The U.S. was becoming familiar with a new word, "payola," trade jargon for bribes to promote certain records over the air. The Harris subcommittee in Washington considered public hearings on payola in December. Preliminary investigation indicated that there was plenty for the probers to dig up—and so does the lively slang prevalent among the disk jockeys themselves (right).

The climate for deejay corruption is created by the enormous output of popular records. Many more are produced than can be played

over the air—and moreover, as New York's William B. Williams (above) says, "If a disk jockey had to listen to all these records, he'd go to the kookie house."

Bribes in cash or goods are paid by music publishers to plug a song in all its recorded versions, by record companies to boost their own disks and by record distributors to promote the makes they handle. Besides the deejays, others in a radio station who can influence music selection are paid.

Many disk jockeys like Williams, who makes \$65,000 a year, do not have to rely on payola. But on the following pages LIFE shows how payola does work, in stories by a disk jockey (pp. 46, 47) and a record executive (p. 48).

DEEJAY SLANG GLOSSARY

Dead Presidents—\$20 bills with Andrew Jackson portrait, \$50s with Ulysses Grant portrait, etc. used in payoffs
Bread—the cash involved in payola
Schlockmeister—a master at accumulating the schlock, or loot
Freebie—plug for a record given without payola
Charts—hit record lists in music trade magazines
Happening—a record making the charts
Breaking—a record moving up on charts
Ride—to play a record repeatedly
Nyping a platter—overselling a record
Bomb—a terrible record

CONTINUED 45

Does Drake's [lawsuit](#) against Universal Music accusing them of using bots and payola to boost streams for Kendrick Lamar's "Not Like Us" have merit?



Credit: Ben P L

Can Victor Willis of the Village People successfully sue anyone who calls ["Y.M.C.A."](#) a gay anthem?