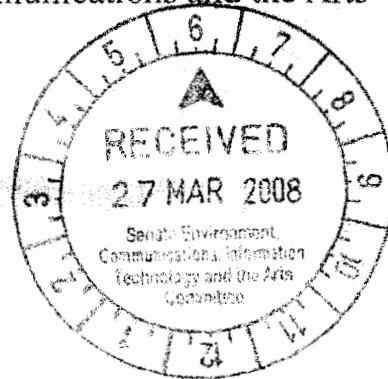


ROBYN SCHEUFFELE

March 25, 2008

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia



RE: Broadcasting in Australia

Dear Sir/Madam:

Clearly, the Code of Conduct for broadcasters is way too liberal, and the self-regulation of the broadcasters does not work.

I have attached copies of recent communications I have sent to Greg Donnelly, MLC, the ACMA, and Senator Bernardi concerning this issue. Please review these letters for background as to my gripe.

In short, over the last 8 years I have watched the Australian broadcasting morals degenerate dramatically. I can no longer turn on the TV at 7pm and watch a program with my family without either "shit, bitch, piss-off, or arse" coming over the airwaves, or the "F word being mimed over the news at 6pm. Forget about 8:30 pm programming when the "F" word can be said at any time.

Unlike videos, free-to-air viewing does not have it's warning given as the TV is first turned into a station – the warnings are given at the beginning of a program only, so if one is flicking through channels, as we all do, it's inevitable that at least one station will have inappropriate viewing. Sometimes the warnings are understated and a program that seemed suitable

for children just a week earlier suddenly becomes unsuitable without notice (eg, Vicar of Dibley). One cannot rely on the ratings given.

My suggestion to take away this self-regulation. History shows that even conservative professionals (doctors, lawyers, accountants) do a poor job of self regulation. How can we expect the arty, self expressive types to have a better grip on what is appropriate for general viewing. General viewing includes children from ages 4 to 18 – not just 18 and above. Eighteen and above can watch a program designated for general audience, but a child cannot watch a PG or M rated program – so why show the latter at an early timeslot?

I suggest that the Code needs to be rewritten by a panel reconstituted with persons of an element of maturity and foresight– persons who have children and who know that they mimic like parrots, and who know that children do NOT go to bed at 6pm (most not before 9pm), and who know that children these days can read the cover of a magazine at a checkout by age four.

It seems to me that the Code of Conduct was written by a bunch of young guys with regard only to their own tastes and stage of life!

I also suggest that a large volunteer panel of adults be formed to regularly and randomly view programming across all the stations and who can readily, quickly and easily report broadcasters who breach the new code. Any breach should result in immediate suspension of that program for a week as well as a hefty fine. There is plenty of technology out there to block, bleep, overwrite or blur out spoken or mimed swearing. The broadcasters are too lazy to use it.

I look forward to reading of your investigative results.

Sincerely,

Robyn Scheuffele

