

To The Senate Inquiry into the effectiveness of the broadcasting codes of practice.

As discerning parents, our principal concern about what is broadcast concerns advertising. Our family does not just watch random programmes, so we avoid most of the trash served up on television.

Most of the programmes we have watched are on the ABC or SBS, so we could avoid being subjected to advertisements. Since SBS has introduced advertising into the middle of its programmes that is becoming increasingly difficult and the advertisements broadcast on SBS are worsening in violent or sexually explicit content. Occasionally, there are also programmes that we would like to watch which only appear on the commercial networks. This includes the Rugby League and the Olympics. These are programmes which many other families would also like to view, but the number of inappropriate ads which appear during them is alarming.

The worst advertisements are those promoting other programmes. Many of these are the puerile, morally lax, time-wasting programmes we choose to avoid. We have written to the television stations several times complaining of specific instances of this occurring, including during nature documentaries. We have never received any reply. From our occasional observation, the situation only seems to be getting worse. With the Olympics coming up soon, we face that decision again. We would like to be able to watch our athletes compete and celebrate their achievements with our friends. During the last Olympics, several appalling advertisements appeared again and again. This included a highly offensive advertisement about a car and several highly offensive station promotions for other programmes. Whenever we could, we muted the television or changed the channel to avoid these. It is not something we really have the time to be doing, or should have to do.

We believe that

- 1) higher standards should be applied to what is broadcast on television and other media;
- 2) that violent, offensive, sexually explicit (even mildly) or puerile reality programmes should be banned from being advertised during sporting programmes, nature documentaries, talent shows or other programmes that are suitable for children, families and other people who don't care to be subjected to that rubbish; and
- 3) stronger action should be taken concerning violation of these standards.

We should not be pandering to the lowest common denominator, but raising the standard, so that we can progress as a nation.

From Paul and Genevieve Swan