

The Secretary, Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: The Committee's examination into the effectiveness of the broadcasting codes of practise operating within the radio and television industry, with particular reference to the frequency and use of coarse and foul language (swearing) in programs.

Firstly let us say that, in our opinion, the abovementioned "codes of practice" are demonstrably inadequate, apparently not policed and regularly flouted by the media industry.

Our broad view is supported by the vast majority of respondents to the Melbourne "Herald Sun's" Voteline question: "Do you think there is too much bad language on television". (Tuesday, March 18, 2008)

Of the total of 2,207 votes cast, 87.8% said YES!

Some media spokespeople argue that few people complain about program content. In counterpoint to this assertion the above survey indicates a substantial viewer concern about the deteriorating standards of language broadcast by television.

A recent and disturbing phenomenon is the media's attempts to justify this downward trend.

Several recent examples of this media defence in relation to Gordon Ramsay's obscenity strewn program "Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares" are:

* Eddie Maguire's article captioned "IT'S GORDON RAMSAY, NOT MARGARET FULTON" (Sunday Herald Sun, March 23, 2008 pp83)

* Flip Shelton's article captioned "Ramsay, TV's turnoff" (Herald Sun, Saturday, March 29, 2008 pp94)

* Andrew's Bolt's article captioned "Baking with blue passion" (Herald Sun, Friday April 18, 2008 pps36-37)

Channel 9, not content with telecasting "Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares" on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8.30pm is now screening his equalling appalling "Hells Kitchen" on Wednesday's at 8.30pm.

Recent episodes of SBS's program "Unit One" (Thursday's 8.30pm) have included increasingly objectionable language (the F-word and the C-word). The most offensive example was when a teenager, having been denied something by his mother, said "F... you Mum". This latter comment, like all the dialogue, was presented in sub-titles.

In complaining to SBS about the obscenities we were informed that they would write to us within sixty days of the receipt of our complaint; adding that if we didn't receive a response within this time period we are entitled to take our complaint to the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Has this complaints process been designed to frustrate and wear out complainants?

The media's typical response that if you don't appreciate obscenities being telecast into your living room, change the channel, is to say the least disingenuous. What about the TV stations responsibility to society at large and the young and impressionable in particular? Especially as the latter's viewing may or may not be adequately supervised.

During your deliberations we ask that you weigh your conclusions in favour of common decency and good example and against these obscene media 'gimmicks' which set such a bad example.

Mr.& Mrs. Desmond and Josephine Kenneally

May 1st., 2008