
Appendix
to CBSC Decision 00/01-0613

Showcase re the movie *Police 10-07*

I. The Complaint

The following complaint dated January 21, 2001 was sent to the CRTC and forwarded to the CBSC in due course:

This is the first complaint letter I have written so you know that I'm really upset.

On Sunday January 14th, between 6 and 8:30 P.M., I saw something on T.V. that caused me to almost throw up on my living room floor. I was switching channels to find something to watch. I saw a young man enter a living room, and a minute later commit suicide in a very graphic way. I had stopped on the SHOWCASE channel. This scene was totally unexpected.

Why are suicides allowed on the T.V. at this very early time? And all kinds of other garbage. People don't want to see this stuff, or children see it. Put it on after midnight, if at all.

I contacted Roger's cable & complained. I tried several times to get someone at the SHOWCASE station to complain to; but was unable to. (Makes me think they get a lot of unhappy viewers phoning).

I hope you people at the C.R.T.C. can do something about this.

II. Broadcaster Response

The broadcaster responded with the following letter dated March 6, 2001:

We are in receipt of your letter to the CRTC, which was forwarded to us by the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council. We regret that you are offended by our programming that you viewed between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. on January 14. We are unable to identify which program you were watching but would like to take this opportunity to explain a little bit about Showcase and its programming policy.

Showcase is a Canadian specialty channel owned and operated by Alliance Atlantis Communications Inc. in Toronto. Showcase has been

on the air since 1994 and ranks as the third most-watched specialty channel in Canada. Showcase's programming mandate is to offer an alternative to other broadcasters' offerings. One way that we have achieved this distinction is to broadcast high-quality, international drama series and world-class films in our late night movie timeslot *The Showcase Revue*.

While Showcase is proud to broadcast a wide range of films, it is our policy to carefully consider each film that is aired on the network. Before we decide to broadcast a film, our Programming Department screens it to ensure that it is suitable for broadcast. The determination of suitability includes ensuring that the broadcast would not contravene applicable broadcast laws and industry codes including, but not limited to, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) Code of Ethics, the CAB "Sex-Role Portrayal Code for Television and Radio Programming", and the "Voluntary Code Regarding Violence in Television Programming."

In order to assist our viewers in making their viewing choices, we run a viewer advisory before our films and after each commercial break indicating whether they contain scenes of violence, nudity and/or coarse language. In addition, Showcase complies with the new program classification system developed by the Action Group on Violence on Television to give Canadian parents the most advanced control system in the world. This six-level rating system is used to classify any levels of violence, language or sex/nudity in all drama, feature film and children's programming broadcast in Canada.

We are also concerned with the content of shows broadcast during hours when children may be watching. Once we have decided to broadcast a program, our Programming Department schedules it at the most suitable time. For example, we air series and films that contain scenes of violence or have content intended for adult audiences after 9 p.m.. according to these codes.

It is certainly not our intention to offend our viewers but to introduce them to the wealth of unique, high-quality drama from Canada and around the world. Not all shows will suit all tastes, but we have tried to construct the Showcase schedule to deliver something for everyone.

Thank you for taking the time to voice your opinion. We do appreciate feedback and hope that this letter has addressed your concerns.

III. Additional Correspondence

The complainant sent the following letter along with her Ruling Request dated February 23, 2001:

I was not satisfied with Alliance Atlantis' reply. They state they were "unable to identify which program I was watching" between 6 P.M. and 8:30 P.M. on Jan 14/01. I was very clear in my time and in the graphic

detail I noted in my letter. They were however; able to note that they felt they were not in violation of the "Voluntary Code Regarding Violence in Television Programming." I hope this is not the case as the violence I saw was very obvious and disturbing to me as an adult.

One other thing bothered me in their reply. They state "We are also concerned with the shows broadcast during hours when children may be watching" and "air series and films that contain scenes of violence or have content intended for adult audiences after 9. P.M. according to these codes." What I viewed was an obvious omission on their part.

I hope this explains why I am continuing with this complaint.