
APPENDIX B

CBSC Decision 10/11-0627 BITE TV re *The Conventioneers*

The Complaint

The CBSC received the following complaint via e-mail on December 31, 2010:

To whom it may concern,

I am sending this to Sgt. [T.] of the RCMP, and asking him to forward to [sic] the appropriate contact as I cannot locate one for the RCMP at this moment. I am sending this to CBSC as I believe they are the proper agency. I am sending [sic] to Bite TV, but I am not interested in their response, nor their excuse. Today is December 31, 2010. I was watching Bite on New Year's Eve, at 5:30 pm Newfoundland time, a show called *The Conventioneers*, it was their Christmas Special. Near the end of the show, one of the two 'performers' donned a Santa Claus suit and chatted amongst the crowd, and later, the editors replaced some of Santa's lines, as you couldn't see his mouth move. The statements:

1. To a little girl, "What do you want, you cunt?"
2. To a boy, while standing by his dad, "Hey kid, me and your dad are going to come over and rape you." And there were a couple of others, but I was in a bit of shock and did not catch them.

It's time to stop childish losers from taking over the television, the accepted morays [sic] of society, and it's time these boys were taught a lesson. Mocking pedophilia? Mocking raping a child on tv by his parents? This is acceptable?

Surely this is illegal in Canada?

Broadcaster Response

The broadcaster wrote to the complainant on January 5, 2011:

Thank you for your email on Dec. 31, 2010.

We do take all viewer concerns and feedback very seriously and review all programs in question. We recognize that comedy is subjective in nature – it presents itself in many forms and formats to appeal to a diverse audience.

All of our programming is equipped with V-Chip information as well as warnings in front of most programming to allow our viewers to make personal choices. All of our carriers also insert their own warnings as well under "Info" in their guides i.e.: V – Violence, L – Language, etc.

Bite has recently gone through a programming shift to all comedy (in October 2010) and we have made many changes to our overall schedule to reflect this new direction. Upon receipt

of your email, we have reviewed the episode in question. This particular episode was produced over five years ago and we recognize that it doesn't represent the strategy or lineup of shows we now air. We, therefore, have decided to pull this episode from our channel. We have also decided to pull the first two seasons of *The Conventioneers* completely from our lineup until we can review each episode independently and decide whether episodes can remain in our programming. We very much appreciate you taking the time to write to us and allow us to reconsider certain content that our viewers and management find not suitable for the channel.

We apologize sincerely if we have offended you and hope you will watch Bite TV in the future and enjoy the award winning programming seen throughout our schedule.

Thank you for your comments.

Additional Correspondence

The complainant wrote back to the CBSC on February 4:

Hi and thanks for your efforts.

I am NOT satisfied, but no longer care to follow up. (Were I that parent who's [sic] child was told that the parent was going to rape him, I would SUE the ass off of BITE and *The Conventioneers*, and I would hunt down the 'comedians' and give them a lesson in the definition of social morays [sic].)

It strikes me as odd that all you can do is have them remove the show – why no fine or legal consequences for broadcasting these defamatory and disgusting comments!? I am ashamed to be a Canadian, as we sell the big lie of our 'holiness' while crap like this gets a slap on the wrist.

L.A.M.E.

Not impressed.

The complainant did send in his Ruling Request on February 22 after the CBSC clarified the complaints procedure:

Is this seriously the only procedure?!

I saw this particular program (which season I have no idea, stated below is that they are pulling two seasons) broadcast today (Feb. 22, 2011), and I see it is in the regular program line up.

Please note that the 'personality' who speaks to the viewer and introduces shows seems to be one of the 'interviewers' on the show in question. I am not certain, but it appears to be the same person.

So what was the penalty, or was there one? To make the culprits spokes persons? And continue the show unquestioned?

This is not simply 'dark humour' – that broadcast is illegal in Canada. To use a person's

image in a manipulated and edited format and speak about them as pedophiles with their own children IS NOT ALLOWED IN Canada.

Or is it?

Seriously, I want to know, as it appears nothing happened.