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**Appendix**  
**to CBSC Decision 00/01-58**

**CKCK-TV re Promo for *The Sopranos* and advertisement for *The Watcher***

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**I. The Complaint**

The following complaint dated September 15, 2000 was submitted via the CBSC's online complaint form:

station: ckck-ctv regina  
program: who wants to be a millionaire  
date: Sept. 13 & 14  
time: 7pm; 7pm & 8pm

Concern: The program itself is a wonderful program for families to watch. However, the commercials aired during this time contained explicit violence and sexually suggestive scenes. The commercials in particular were: a CTV promo spot for the Sopranos (which was billed as adult television, viewer discretion advised and contained a murder, bedroom scene and beating) and an advertisement for a movie about a stalker (I believe called "the Walker") which was billed as the scariest movie of all time and contained terrifying scenes of women being stalked and attacked. If the show is rated "G", shouldn't the commercials also be "G" rated? I have phoned the station about my concerns but feel that the Council needs to enforce these rules more strictly. The same type of thing has happened several times at the CJFB-CBC when violently explicit promos were aired during the morning children's programming. When I have complained, they have withdrawn the commercials immediately. However, my children have already been exposed to the violence. I'd like to see these types of occurrences prevented altogether.

**II. The Broadcaster's Response**

The General Manager, CKCK-TV, replied to the complainant on October 11, 2000 with the following:

The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (CBSC) has forwarded to me your email of concern regarding promotional and commercial occasions which aired on CKCK Regina on September 13 and 14, 2000.

After receiving your correspondence on October 6, 2000, I viewed the program in question with respect to compliance with the applicable industry codes that are administered by the CBSC, including the code dealing with television violence, which service as a guideline for television programming.

The commercial you refer to was a nationally purchased campaign for the movie "The Watcher". Since "Millionaire" airs in the East after 9 p.m., no consideration was given for the fact that the program airs at 7p.m. in Saskatchewan, well before the watershed hour of 9 o'clock as dictated by the code. We have now put into place a special procedure that will give us the rating information and allow our traffic people in Saskatchewan to move mature rated movie commercials into programming that tuns after 9 P.M. We apologize for this situation and are confident that these new procedures will remedy the problem.

With respect to the promotional campaign advertising "The Sopranos", our company is very aware of the controversial nature of this program. We took care in making sure that graphic violence and language were not shown in the promos and that a very strong viewer advisory was included. It was important that the majority of the viewing audience was at least made aware of the content so adults could make their own decision as to whether or not they wished to watch the series. There is no question that "The Sopranos" had to be shown after 9PM, but we felt that it was important to air some promotion in a popular show like "Millionaire".

We regret that you were offended by these commercials and hope that this explanation will help. Within its schedule, CKCK seeks to offer its viewers a broad range of information and entertainment choices, understanding that not all programs will appeal to each viewer. I thank you for taking the time to make your views known and hope that you will continue to find, within our schedule, programs that you will enjoy. Please do not hesitate to call me at 306-569-6464 if you have any other comments.

### **III. Additional Correspondence**

The complainant was not satisfied with the broadcaster's response and on October 16, 2000 sent the following to the CBSC requesting a ruling by the Prairie Regional Panel:

Thank you for your email dated October 5, 2000. I originally wrote the CBSC on September 15, 2000 after phoning CKCK-TV with my complaint and not receiving a satisfactory response. I have since received a written letter of reply from [the] General Manager of CKCK-TV dated October 11, 2000 in response to receiving a copy of your email. Mr. Dunlop stated "We have now put into place a special procedure that will give us the rating information and allow our traffic people in Saskatchewan to move mature rated movie commercials into programming that runs after 9 P.M." That is a step in the right direction.

Unfortunately, he also maintains that graphic violence was not shown in the promo for "the Sopranos". The station's inability to correctly define graphic violence does not allow me to have any confidence in the network's ability to rate commercials and promos appropriately. "The Sopranos" promo contained a scene of a man being repeatedly punched in the face and a scene of a man being shot. These scenes cannot be classified as anything but graphically violent, and as such are in violation of the industry code administered by the CBSC.

[The General Manager] explained that it was important to show these scenes to make the majority of the viewing audience aware of the controversial content of "The Sopranos". If the station had bothered to use a little creativity, the controversial nature of the show could have been communicated to the viewing audience without actually showing the graphically violent scenes. At any rate, the promo should not have been shown before 9PM so that our nation's children are not exposed to "the controversial nature of this program". Putting "The Sopranos" promo on at prime time was a calculated move by the network spin doctors to intentionally create controversy and boost ratings and had little to do with warning people about the show. The warning of graphic sex and violence at the beginning of "The Sopranos" show is sufficient enough warning for "sensitive viewers" (logically, the converse term "insensitive viewers" would apply to people who find this level of sex and violence acceptable). Obviously, the protection of the minds and innocence of our children has no place on the corporate agenda of CTV.

I hope that the CBSC will decide to care about this nation's children and act to make prime time programming appropriate and safe for families to watch. "It takes a community to raise a child" and our nation's community broadcasters have a responsibility in raising our children. If our community broadcast standards continue to allow children to be exposed to violence on TV, we can expect to see our children learning to react violently in real life, particularly if they don't have a functional family which models appropriate coping skills for them.

Therefore, I am requesting that the appropriate CBSC Regional Council consider my complaint and the broadcaster's response.